

NYC Atheists Inc. is a non-profit, non-partisan educational association. Our meetings and membership are open and all are welcome (both non-believers and believers)- atheists, agnostics, humanists, free thinkers, skeptics, secularists, separation-of-church/state advocates and individuals who are questioning and searching beliefs.

## FUTURE MEETINGS AND EVENTS

### AUGUST

Aug.	4*	Thursday	6:00 / 7:30 P.M.	NYCA Dinner & Movie Nite (see page 3)
Aug	4**	Thursday	8:00 P.M.	NYCA Cable Show
Aug.	7*****	Sunday	10 A.M.- 6 P.M.	NYCA Street Tabling
Aug.	11**	Thursday	8:00 P.M.	NYCA Cable Show
Aug.	13*****	Saturday	10 A.M.- 6 P.M.	NYCA Street Tabling
Aug.	14***	Sunday	12:30 P.M.	NYCA Brunch, Library, Book Club
Aug.	16****	Tuesday	7:00 P.M.	NYCA Meet-Up
Aug.	18**	Thursday	8:00 P.M.	NYCA Cable Show
Aug.	25**	Thursday	8:00 P.M.	NYCA Cable Show
Aug.	27*****	Saturday	6:30 P.M.	NYCA Annual Boat Trip / Fund Raiser (see page 3)

### SEPTEMBER

Sept.	1*	Thursday	6:00 / 7:30 P.M.	NYCA Dinner & Movie Nite
Sept	1**	Thursday	8:00 P.M.	NYCA Cable Show
Sept.	8**	Thursday	8:00 P.M.	NYCA Cable Show
Sept	11	Sunday	12:30 P.M.	NYCA Brunch, Library, Book Club (Location TBA)
Sept.	15**	Thursday	8:00 P.M.	NYCA Cable Show
Sept.	20****	Tuesday	7:00 P.M.	NYCA Meet-Up
Sept.	22**	Thursday	8:00 P.M.	NYCA Cable Show
Sept.	29**	Thursday	8:00 P.M.	NYCA Cable Show
Sept.	29*****	Thursday	6:30 P.M.	NYCA Monthly Meeting

## CHECK FOR LAST MINUTE CHANGES CALL 212-330-6794

- \* **Dinner: Pier 17 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Food Court – South St. Seaport**
- \* **Movie: Southbridge Towers – 66 Frankfort St. - Community Room**
- \*\* **Manhattan Cable Channel 67 / RNN Cable Channel 109**
- \*\*\* **Palace Diner – 122 East 57th St. ( Lexington / Park)**  
**Brunch Cost: Order from Menu — Reservations not required.**
- \*\*\*\* **MANHATTAN LOUNGE - 1720 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. ( 89 / 90<sup>th</sup> St. )**
- \*\*\*\*\* **352 7th Avenue / 16th Floor (29 / 30th Street)**
- \*\*\*\*\* **Columbus circle – Broadway / 60<sup>th</sup> St. – in front of Time Warner Bldg.**  
**First shift: 9:45AM – 1:30PM / Second shift: 1:30PM – 6:00PM**
- \*\*\*\*\* **Pier 63 – West 24<sup>th</sup> Street / Hudson River**

**SEE PAGE 8 FOR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

**PRESIDENT'S SERMON**  
**IS RELIGION A SERVICE BUSINESS ?**



I just returned from a conference held in Middle America, Indianapolis Indiana. The meeting was attended by people who have an interest in Fire Departments and Fire Fighting. (also an interest and hobby of mine). The profile of the majority of the attendees was white, patriotic and religious.

During lengthy and detailed discussions on the impact and the future of Fire Departments in the era of terrorism, I asked the question, *What should the United States do to reduce the threat of terrorism?* All agreed that we had to respect others, even if their beliefs and traditions were different than

in the United States (a pluralist society). I then asked, *How about our religious Fundamentalists, are not they a problem?* Most agreed that they were not only a problem in the war on terrorism and they were also a threat for our American society. But the people at the meeting offered no solutions.

Later that evening, I asked a group of the attendees *Why were they religious?* (They know that I am an Atheist).

The net of their reasoning was that religion offered them SERVICES, i.e. community, rites of passage, a place of safe haven for their children and inspirational messages. **God was never mentioned** as a reason. I asked them what about morality, god, and the church? They responded that the fear of heaven / hell really had no impact; what they wanted was a **code of conduct** and they said that their local churches were the only ones really trying to do it. Government and the schools were a total failure.

I asked them were they satisfied with their church? They replied, Yes and No. Their church needed a good refreshing. Churches have gotten too expensive, too impersonal and react too slowly to social change and needs.

**I concluded that the commitment of the average person who calls themselves religious is not that solid. We Atheists must take advantage of this opportunity and, most important, get organized and fight back against the religious fundamentalists.**

**ONLY THROUGH A LARGE AND INVOLVED MEMBERSHIP CAN WE CONTINUE OUR PROGRESS AND HAVE AN IMPACT.**

Contact me: Ken Bronstein at [NYCATHEISTS@AOL.COM](mailto:NYCATHEISTS@AOL.COM) or 212-535-7425.

**PAST EVENTS**

**JULY 4<sup>th</sup> Monday**  
**BARBEQUE AND FIRE WORKS**

We all want to thank, Elaine and Eric Stone, for hosting, our second July 4<sup>th</sup> barbeque. The hospitality, food and drink were great. We were also entertained by the very funny Marc Furstenberg, a comic discovered by one of our members. After the barbeque, most of us returned to the city to see the Macy's fireworks display.

**July 7, Thursday**  
**NYC Atheists Movie Nite**  
After dining at the South Street Seaport foodcourt, we all enjoyed *12 Angry Men* with Henry Fonda, Lee J. Cobb and Jack Klugman.

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**July 7, 14, 21, 28 Thursday**  
**NYC Atheists Cable Show**

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**July 9, Saturday**  
**NYC Atheists Street Tabling**  
Columbus Circle, Broadway / 60<sup>th</sup>

**July 10, Sunday**  
**NYC Atheists Brunch / Library / Book Club.**  
After brunch, we moved to the NYCA Library and Book Club Meeting.

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**ATHEISM  
IS AN  
CONCLUSION  
NOT A BELIEF**

**July 16, Saturday**  
**NYC Atheists Street Tabling**  
Columbus Circle, Broadway / 60<sup>th</sup>

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**July 19, Tuesday**  
**NYC Atheists Meet-Up**

**NYCA members and guests**  
**enjoyed a lively discussion.**

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**July 28, Thursday**  
**NYC Atheists Monthly Meeting**

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Our 2005 Essay Contest winner Casey Karr, a psychology student at New York University, read her winning essay, titled *Separation of Church and State: Basis for a New Nation, Genesis of Conflict* and answered questions from our members about her essay.

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### FUTURE MEETINGS

**NYC ATHEISTS DINNER**  
**AND MOVIE NITE**

**Date: August 4, (Thursday)**

### Dinner Info:

**Time:** 6:00 - 7:15pm

**Location:** Pier 17 - 3rd floor Food Court. Pier 17 is the building on the East River pier at South Street Seaport.

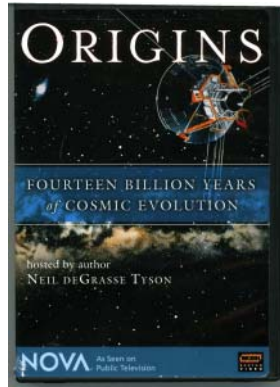
Purchase your meal at one of many food stalls and look for us sitting at the tables overlooking the harbor.

### Movie Info:

**Movie:** *Origins*

**Time:** 7:30 P.M.

*Origins* is the award winning PBS-NOVA production that explains how did the Universe, our planet, and life begin? Narrated by Neil deGrasse Tyson, Director of the Hayden Planetarium in New York City.



**Where:** Southbridge Towers Complex - 66 Frankfort Building. The complex is located between Water/Pearl and Fulton Street near the South Street Seaport.

**Directions:** Southbridge is easily reached by Mass Transit: (within easy walking distance)  
Subway: Fulton Street Station – A,C, J, M, Z,3, 4, 5; City Hall Sta. 6. Buses: B51, M1, M15, M22, M103

The easiest / best way to enter the complex is to walk east along Fulton Street (towards the South Street Seaport), then through the walkway on Fulton Street by the side of the Footlocker store.

As you enter the walkway, notice the large map on the wall that locates the buildings in the complex. Walk straight through two courtyards, to 66 Frankfort. The Community Room is located on the first floor.

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**NYC ATHEISTS: BRUNCH / LIBRARY / BOOK CLUB**

**Date:** Sun., Aug 14, 12:30 P.M.

**Where:** Palace Restaurant  
122 East 57<sup>th</sup> St. (Lexington / Park)  
After brunch, we will move to the NYC Atheists' Library and hold our Book Club meeting.

We continue reading from *Science and Religion* edited by Paul Kurtz. Pages 309 - 331: *Whence Religious Belief?, Searching For God In The Machine, Science And The Unknowable.*

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**NYC ATHEISTS**  
**ANNUAL BOAT RIDE**  
**AND FUND RAISER**

**Date:** Sat., August 27, 6:30 P.M.



**Location:** Pier 63 - West 24rd Street / Hudson River

**Cost:** Members: \$25, Guests: \$35

Join NYC Atheists members and guests on our second annual NYC Atheists Harbor Cruise and fund raiser.

Enjoy the world's greatest skyline as we cruise around Manhattan Harbor. This is a once-in-a-lifetime experience as we travel aboard the retired New York City Fireboat, Harvey.

The Fireboat Harvey is on the National Registry of Historic Places.

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### AGE OF CALENDARS

**SOLSTICE - 4,500,002,005**  
**HEBREW - 5765**  
**CHINESE - 4701**  
**GREGORIAN - 2004**  
**ISLAMIC - 1425**

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## **The Center for Atheism (CFA)**

The Center for Atheism (CFA) is being established by New York City Atheists as a separate and independent national organization to propose, develop and as a catalyst for new national activities supporting the objectives of atheists, agnostics, humanists, free thinkers, skeptics, secularists and Separation-of-church/state advocates. CFA will accept proposals and suggestions from individuals and other secular organizations that will foster our goals.

**New York City Atheists Inc. continues, and remains focused on our local metropolitan New York City area, which consists of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.**

Local organizations are welcome to adapt and to optimize the programs described below.

### **CFA Program #1:**

#### **The Focus.**

The Focus will be a single source to provide links to articles of interest to atheists, agnostics, humanists, free thinkers, skeptics, secularists and Separation-of-church/state advocates from major newspapers, magazines, other secular sources, and will be emailed weekly. The newsletter format: organized by publication, a brief article description and link to the publication's website.

Example: Publication: NY Times, Article description: July 24, 2005 – *Separation of church and state* Sunday Laws legislation

Link: [www.nyt.com/xxx/yyyy/](http://www.nyt.com/xxx/yyyy/)

The newsletter will also cover and report on other CFA activities. We would like your comments and suggestions.

### **CFA Program #2:**

#### **Blood and Organ Donation Program – B.L.O.O.D. Benefiting Lives Of Others Donations.**

How did the B.L.O.O.D. concept develop? Members of NYC Atheists were discussing how to react to the Day of Prayer which occurs on the first Thursday in May year, May 5, 2005).

The Secular response is the National Day of Reason [www.nationaldayofreason.org/](http://www.nationaldayofreason.org/), which we concluded has had little impact.

Another option for the Day of Prayer is a counter- demonstration such as the one that the Idaho Atheists group held at the Idaho State Capitol.

The Idaho counter-demonstration was very successful, but was a special local situation. The Idaho Atheists got the demonstration location on the state capitol steps because the local Day of Prayer group had not reserved it first. If such future opportunities occur, they should be pursued.

We felt we need something national in scope--with punch. One of our NYCA members mentioned that his company recently had a nationwide Blood Donation Day for its employees, and he suggested that we could do the same.

**BINGO ! – Religious people pray and hope for miracles (P&H). We use rational reasoning and Scientific evidence (RR&SE).**

Then someone suggested that at the same time, we also have an organ donation sign-up program. Now, Atheists really do believe in the hereafter; our body parts

continue to live: post mortem.

Finally, we decided that we should not wait until next May 2006 to implement the B.L.O.O.D. program.

We also agreed that we should do it twice a year. The first B.L.O.O.D. day will be Election Day, the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November - November 8, 2005 and the second one will be on the Day of Prayer, first Thursday in May - May 4, 2006.

Any individuals or organizations interested in participating in the B.L.O.O.D. program please contact CFA [centerforatheism@aol.com](mailto:centerforatheism@aol.com). Specific program details will be announced shortly.



**Benjamin Franklin, 1706-1790  
Founding Father, author,  
inventor and volunteer fireman.**

"I have found Christian dogma unintelligible. Early in life, I absented myself from Christian assemblies," said Franklin.

"Lighthouses are more helpful than churches."

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**JOIN**

**NEW YORK CITY ATHEISTS**

**SEE APPLICATION**

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**Vincent Van Gogh – 1853-1890**  
**Dutch painter**

"I can very well do without God both in my life and in my painting, but I cannot, suffering as I am, do without something which is greater than I am, which is my life, the power to create."

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***Patterns: Do Prayers for the Heart Patient Help?***

**By NICHOLAS BAKALAR**  
**Published: New York Times,**  
**July 26, 2005**

Prayer from a distance - whether Christian, Muslim, Jewish or Buddhist - did not significantly improve the outcome for common elective cardiac procedures performed on a group 737 patients, a new study reports.

The research, published July 16 in *Lancet*, also examined the effectiveness of bedside music, imagery and MIT therapy, a touching technique that was found effective by some measures.

Half of the study participants were randomly assigned to a group that was prayed for, and half to a group that was not prayed for. In addition, half were assigned to MIT therapy and half were given standard care.

Neither prayer nor MIT therapy nor the two together were effective in reducing the number of deaths in the hospital, cardiovascular problems that emerged or hospital

readmissions. But the group that received MIT therapy did have less emotional distress before the procedure and a slightly lower mortality rate six months later.

Dr. Mitchell W. Krucoff, a professor of medicine at Duke and the lead author on the study, believes that reducing stress before a medical procedure may have significant clinical benefits.

Dr. Krucoff said the results did not mean that prayer failed. "The most important point may be that this is an exploration coming from the mainstream, not the fringes, of modern medicine," he said.

"What we're trying to do is figure out how important it may be to better integrate intangible human capacities into high-tech health care," he added. "We definitely think there are important reasons to believe that what a community does at a distance or what a loved one does at the bedside prior to a procedure may belong in the systematic armamentarium of high-tech medical care."



**Thomas Jefferson, 1743-1826**

**U.S. President, author, scientist, architect, educator, and diplomat.**

"The Christian god can easily be pictured as virtually the same god as the many ancient gods of past civilizations. The Christian god is a three headed monster; cruel,

vengeful and capricious. If one wishes to know more of this raging, three headed beast-like god, one only needs to look at the caliber of people who say they serve him. They are always of two classes: fools and hypocrites."

"And the day will come when the mystical generation of Jesus, by the supreme being as his father in the womb of a virgin will be classed with the fable of the generation of Minerve in the brain of Jupiter. But may we hope that the dawn of reason and freedom of thought in these United States will do away with this artificial scaffolding, and restore to us the primitive and genuine doctrines of this most venerated reformer of human errors." –*Thomas Jefferson, Letter to John Adams, April 11, 1823*

"Religions are all alike – founded upon fables and mythologies."

"I do not find in orthodox Christianity one redeeming feature."

"Christianity is the most perverted system that ever shone on man."



**Sir Charles Spencer "Charlie" Chaplin, Britishborn actor, director, and producer, 1889-1977.**

"By simple common sense I don't believe in God, in none."

## Members View Film Debunking Religion

Thirteen members of New York City Atheists attended a screening of *The God Who Wasn't There*, a documentary film narrated by former fundamentalist Brian Flemming. The hour-long film, which debunks Christianity and calls the story of Jesus "a myth" was shown at a small new theatre at 59 East 59<sup>th</sup> St. on July 23. One NYCA member said she was intrigued by the film's revelation that the myths attached to Jesus actually dated back some 100 years before the birth of Christ and were originally myths about other gods like Zeus. Stories such as the Virgin birth, the North Star, the Jesus as a precocious child and the martyrdom, billed as the life of Jesus Christ, were originally tales connected with many other gods in pre-Christian times, according to the film.

Also intriguing, some members said, is the return of narrator Brian Flemming to the fundamentalist school he attended as a child. Flemming questions the school's headmaster about how he can justify teaching untrue, unproven, unscientific beliefs as facts to vulnerable young people. The headmaster, exasperated with the direction of the interview, finally gets up and walks off camera.

The film uses drawings, time-lines, clips from other films, interviews and humor to get its points across in a simple and entertaining way. "We must support efforts like this film to popularize secularism," said NYCA Cable show host Dennis Horvitz.

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## Recall Notice Grace Church newsletter Mora, Minnesota

The maker of all human beings is recalling all units manufactured, regardless of the make or year, due to a serious defect in the primary and central component of the heart.

This is due to a malfunction in the original prototype unit's code named Adam and Eve, resulting in the reproduction of the same defect in all subsequent units. This defect has been technically termed "Sub-sequential Internal Non-morality," or more commonly known as S.I.N., as it is primarily expressed.

Some other symptoms: Loss of direction; lack of peace and joy; fearfulness; foul vocal emissions; selfish or violent behavior; idolatry; amnesia of origin; depression or confusion in the mental component; rebellion.

The manufacturer, who is neither liable nor at fault for this defect, is providing factory authorized repair and service free of charge to correct this SIN defect.

The repair technician, Jesus, has most generously offered to bear the entire burden of the staggering cost of these repairs. There is no additional fee required.

The number to call for repair is all areas is: P-R-A-Y-E-R. Once connected, please upload your burden of SIN through the REPENTANCE procedure.

Next download ATONEMENT from the Repair Technician, Jesus, into the heart component.

No matter how big or small the SIN defect is, Jesus will replace it with: Love; joy; goodness; faithfulness; peace; gentleness; patience; self-control; kindness.

Please see the operating manual, the B.I.B.L.E. (Believers Instructions Before Leaving Earth,) for further details on the use of

these fixes.

WARNING: Continuing to operate the human being unit without correction voids any manufacturer warranties, exposing the unit to dangers and problems too numerous to list and will result in the human unit being prematurely impounded. For free emergency service, call on Jesus.

DANGER: The human being units not responding to this recall action will have to be scrapped in the furnace. The SIN defect will not be permitted to enter Heaven so as to prevent contamination of that facility.

Thank you for your immediate attention.

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### Judges Consider Quran use for oaths Winston Salem Journal,6/21/2005

The state's judges will be asked this week to decide whether witnesses in North Carolina courtrooms can be sworn in on a Quran rather than a Bible. The move comes after Guilford County judges rejected an offer last week by the Greensboro Islamic center to donate copies of the Quran, the Muslim holy book.

The Administrative Office of the Courts will ask the opinion of the state's judges when they meet this week at judicial conferences in Asheville and Wrightsville Beach, said Dick Ellis, a spokesman for the office.

**As Atheists, we should never swear or give oaths that refer to god or require the placement of ones hand on a bible.**

**You have the right and must insist upon a secular oath.**

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## 'Call to arms' on evolution

By Dan Vergano and Greg Toppo,  
USA TODAY – March 24, 2005

Nearly one-third of science teachers who participated in a national survey say they feel pressured to include creationism-related ideas in the classroom.

And an alarmed science establishment is striking back in defense of teaching evolution.

"I write to you now because of a growing threat to the teaching of science," National Academy of Sciences chief Bruce Alberts says in a letter to colleagues March 4. He calls on academy members "to confront the increasing challenges to the teaching of evolution in public schools." The nation's top scientists belong to the congressionally chartered academy.

Albert's plea comes as the National Science Teachers Association prepares to release the survey at the group's meeting March 31. "Teachers are under attack all the time and need more support from scientists," he says.

Gerry Wheeler, executive director of the National Science Teachers Association, calls the letter "a good call to arms" to scientists. "I'm hoping it will give teachers the energy to make sure they stand for high-quality science teaching."

To most scientists, evolution is defined as changes in genes that lead to the development of species. They see it as a fundamental insight in biology.

Creationism is the belief that species have divine origin.

Another alternative to evolution is called "intelligent design." Proponents believe some cellular

structures are too complex to have evolved over time.

Alberts complains that creationists, under the guise of intelligent design, have attempted to push evolution out of textbooks and classrooms in 40 states. The latest flashpoint is in Kansas, where an local school board contest April 5 features a candidate who supports teaching intelligent design in science classes.

The academy has only rarely strayed into school fights over evolution so it does not appear to be "meddling" in local affairs, Alberts says. But now, he says, "one of the foundations of modern science is being neglected or banished outright from science classrooms in many parts of the United States."

Says Stephen Meyer of the Seattle-based Discovery Institute, which promotes intelligent design: "My first reaction is we're seeing evidence of some panic among the official spokesmen for science." He says Alberts is wrong — that intelligent design is not creationism but a scientific approach more open-minded than Charles Darwin's theory of evolution.

Biologists retort that any reproducible data validating intelligent design would be welcome in science journals. "If there were indeed deep flaws in parts of evolutionary biology, then scientists would be the first to charge in there," says Jeffrey Palmer of Indiana University in Bloomington.

Meyer counters that scientific leaders such as Alberts block a fair hearing of evolution alternatives. "There are powerful institutional and systematic conventions in

science that keep (intelligent) design from being considered a scientific process," he says.

"Oh, baloney; they aren't published because they don't have any scientific data," says Barbara Forrest of Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, co-author of Creationism's Trojan Horse: The Wedge of Intelligent Design.

In his letter, Alberts criticizes Lehigh University biochemist Michael Behe, a leading proponent of intelligent design, as being representative of the "common tactic" of misrepresenting scientists' comments to cast doubts on evolution.

Behe calls this "outrageous," saying he simply points out that even establishment scientists note the complexity of biological structures.

Susan Spath, of the National Center for Science Education, a non-profit group that defends evolution, says proponents "need to work together more proactively in educating the public about these issues. The silver lining may be that this is an opportunity to enhance public understanding of science."



Lance Armstrong – Cyclist

### Quote from ET Magazine

"If there was a god, I'd still have both nuts."

# NYC-ATHEIST ACTIVITIES



Recent Monthly Meeting



NYCA Cable Show Host: Dennis Horvitz



Recent Second Sunday of the Month Brunches



Recent Street Tabling Event

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## NYC ATHEISTS — 2005 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 2005 MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

- Basic – \$ 25    Supporter – \$ 100    Founder – \$ 250    Patron – \$ 500    Life – \$ 1000  
 Senior (Age 65 or greater) – \$ 20    Full Time Student – \$ 10    Military (Active) – \$ 15

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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