



# The Separationist

Volume 22, Issue 1

January 2015

## Horus Gilgamesh Why I Care - A Case for Atheist Evangelism Sunday, January 18, 2015, 4 PM, Gage Hall, 4 Archdale St, Charleston

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### About SHL

The *Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry* was founded in 1994 by a group of local non-theists in Charleston, South Carolina.

Our members are freethinkers of many kinds. We call ourselves agnostics, atheists, skeptics, secular humanists, rationalists and scientific naturalists. We welcome you and all who are interested in participating in our friendly community, either as members or observers.

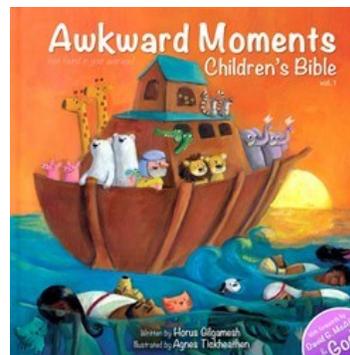
The purpose of our non-profit, educational organization is to promote the non-theistic, human-centered viewpoint as a valid contribution to public discourse and to strive to maintain the First Amendment guarantee of separation of state and church.

We are starting 2015 off with an amazing speaker! **Horus Gilgamesh** is the author of the #1 Amazon Best-seller [Awkward Moments \(not found in your average\) Children's Bible](#). You won't want to miss this one!

### Why I Care - A Case for Atheist Evangelism

After many years of full-time ministry around the globe, Horus left his faith behind and began the journey to become a bestselling author and activist to strategically challenge the status quo of Christian culture and Biblical literacy in America today. The author will share how his own beliefs have dramatically shifted since the release of his first book and how he once again considers himself an active evangelist of reason. Horus recently made

headlines after receiving multiple death threats that forced him to cancel his appearances



at the Atheist Alliance of America National Convention and he will reveal to our group who he believes is responsible. Despite writing under a pen name to avoid the limelight, Horus continues to provide the atheist community with a unique voice of compassionate urgency and wry wit. Please join us for an engaging conversation, a sneak peek at upcoming projects, and a few surprises.

Learn more about Horus Gilgamesh and AWMCB at: [www.awkwardmomentsbible.com/](http://www.awkwardmomentsbible.com/) and follow him on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/AwkwardBible](http://www.facebook.com/AwkwardBible).

**When:** Sunday, January 18, 2015 at 4pm  
**Where:** Gage Hall, 4 Archdale Street  
**Cost:** Free!

SHL will provide light snacks during the check-in and social period prior to the meeting.

We will be going to Leaf Restaurant after the meeting and everyone is invited to join us.

**Please note: for security purposes, no video or photographs of the presentation will be allowed.**

## Sunday Quest Sunday, January 18, 2014, 4 PM Gage Hall, 4 Archdale St, Charleston

Sunday Quest, our humanist youth program, will provide our children an opportunity to learn about humanism and all of its life-affirming ideals. Modeled after the Harvard Humanist Learning Lab and other secular Sunday schools, our goal with Sunday Quest is to create a safe space for children to explore their developing worldviews, think for themselves, connect with their

community, and build a strong ethical foundation. Each class will offer fun, interactive games and activities.

Scheduled during our third-Sunday monthly speaker presentation at Gage Hall, Sunday Quest will be geared toward children ages 5-12 years old. This is a drop-off program, and we welcome parents to attend the speaker presentation. If space allows, children

older than 12 years old may attend as program assistants and children younger than 5 years old may attend with a parent. The program will last approximately an hour to an hour and a half.

Space is limited, so **pre-registration is required**. Please email [president@lowcountryhumanists.org](mailto:president@lowcountryhumanists.org) to register your child(ren) or for more information.

# Upcoming SHL Events

Events sometimes get added after The Separationist is posted. Keep up to date with SHL events by signing up for our [email lists](#) or [meetup](#), or check postings on our [website](#) and [facebook](#) group.

## SHL Movie Club

Saturday, January 3, 2015, 2:45pm

Terrace Theater, 1956 Maybank Hwy, James Island

Join us for a viewing of the film [Wild](#). We will meet in the theater lobby at 2:35pm. Following the movie we will enjoy dinner at a nearby restaurant.

Based on the memoir [Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail](#) by Cheryl Strayed, *Wild* is about her 1995 solo hike of more than a thousand miles of the Pacific Crest Trail as a way to heal herself following her divorce, the death of her mother, and years of reckless, destructive behavior.



## SHL Book Club

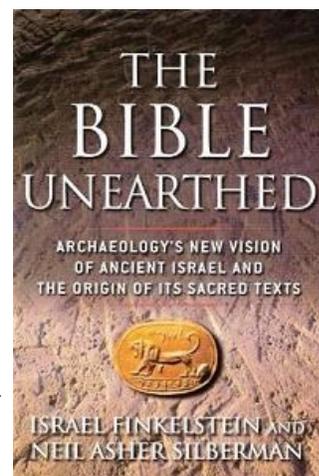
Sunday, January 25, 2014, 4:00pm

Barnes & Noble, 1812 Sam Rittenberg Blvd, West Ashley

Our next Book Club meeting will be on January 25th at 4:00 PM at the Barnes and Noble on Sam Rittenberg Blvd in West Ashley. We will discuss our book selection until 5:30 then go to a local establishment to eat and have further discussion — bring your ideas for dinner (we usually vote for a relatively quiet venue so we can socialize).

The selection for January is [The Bible Unearthed](#) by Israel Finkelstein and Neil Asher Silberman.

All are welcome and we don't require or expect attendees to have read the book. Remember if you purchase from Amazon through the link on the SHL homepage, SHL gets a portion of the purchase price.



## SHL Happy Hour

Tuesday, January 13, 2015, 6:00pm

Coleman Public House, 427 West Coleman Blvd, Mt Pleasant



Join us for a relaxing evening of stimulating conversation over drinks (alcohol is optional) and yummy food among old and new friends! Don't be shy — come join us!

SHL is affiliated with the Amazon Associates program! Our organization earns up to a 15% commission on items purchased at Amazon.com through the links on our Website. So, if you are buying the book club book (or anything else from Amazon), this is a super-easy way to contribute to SHL! Simply use the link at <http://lowcountryhumanists.org/default.php>

**SHL will not have Girls Night Out or trivia this month.**

## Charity of the Quarter

SHL collects donations for a local charity each quarter, and donates the full amount under the name *Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry*. Our first Charity of the Quarter for 2015 is **Meals on Wheels of Charleston**.

Meals on Wheels of Charleston provides free, hot, nutritious meals and daily monitoring for seniors in need. This program serves low-income seniors who are homebound or have moderate to severe physical restrictions.

Through a network of staff and volunteers, MOW packages and delivers hot noon meals to house-bound seniors. While there, the meal deliverers check to see if the clients are stable, comforta-

ble, and safe. Many of the clients live in substandard housing, have serious health conditions with little to no family support. Clients are referred by medical staff, family, friends, hospice, and other human services organizations.



MOW Charleston serves seniors in Downtown and the Charleston Peninsula, North Charleston, West Ashley, Ravenel/Hollywood, and James/Johns/Wadmalaw & Edisto Islands.

*Four times a year SHL collects donations on behalf of a worthy local charity. You can donate by cash, credit card, or check at our monthly meeting or by mailing a check to*

SHL  
PO Box 32256  
Charleston SC 29417-2256

*Make checks payable to SHL and note COQ in the memo line.*

*Or securely [donate online!](#)*

### Bearman Cartoons



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### Atheist Missionaries



bearmancartoons@yahoo.com

# Herb Silverman

## 7 Conversations to Have With the Atheist in Your Family

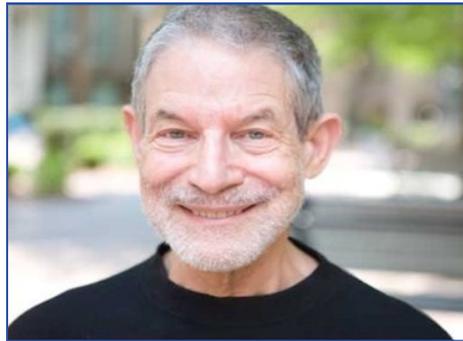
Recently I gave suggestions on what religious people should not say to the atheist in the family. Here are conversations and suggestions that might improve family relations, especially at holiday gatherings.

### 1. Listen to the atheist.

You might have preconceived ideas on why a family member “turned his back on God.” You are probably wrong. Try to understand and respect his point of view, even if you disagree. That’s a prerequisite for most conversations, especially ones that can become touchy or emotional. Listening to the atheist will be an added incentive for the atheist to listen to you.

### 2. Look for common ground.

You and your atheist family member might differ on God beliefs, but you likely have a lot more in common than what sets you apart. You probably appreciate the same foods at family dinners. And since watching holiday football games has become somewhat of a national religion, you might all be cheering for the same team. Talk about those



**Herb Silverman** is founder and President Emeritus of the [Secular Coalition for America](#), author of [Candidate Without a Prayer: An Autobiography of a Jewish Atheist in the Bible Belt](#), and Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Mathematics at the College of Charleston.

common interests and why you are grateful that you can still get along so well. If you also think behavior is more important than belief, say so.

### 3. Explain how your religious beliefs have changed since childhood.

Your atheist family member might assume that her religious views have matured, but yours have not. If appropriate, tell her that you accept the evidence for evolution (even if you believe God was behind it) and you no longer believe that Noah gathered pairs of all animals including polar bears in a Mideast ark and watched as the rest of humanity drowned. However, if you have

the same religious beliefs you had when you were five years old, you might wish to skip this suggestion.

### 4. Invite the atheist to ask you questions.

Undoubtedly, he has frequently been asked why he became an atheist. He will appreciate the opportunity to ask you why you believe as you do. Both of you might come out with a better understanding of each other.

### 5. Ask for her favorite quotes about religion.

Most atheists are familiar with biblical quotes directed their way, either to convince them to believe or to put the “fear of God” in them. Your atheist might quote Thomas Jefferson: “It does me no injury for my neighbor to say there are 20 gods or no God. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg.” Or Robert Ingersoll: “The hands that help are better far than lips that pray.” Or Abraham Lincoln: “When I do good, I feel good. When I do bad, I feel bad. That’s my religion.” If she doesn’t give these quotes, you can give them your-

## Herb Silverman cont.

self and offer to discuss them with her. She'll love you for it.

### 6. Mention that being a minority within the family is not so bad.

Describe how you, too, are a minority in the family, or ways in which everybody in the family is a minority within the larger com-

munity. That's why you can all appreciate the importance of treating minorities with respect.

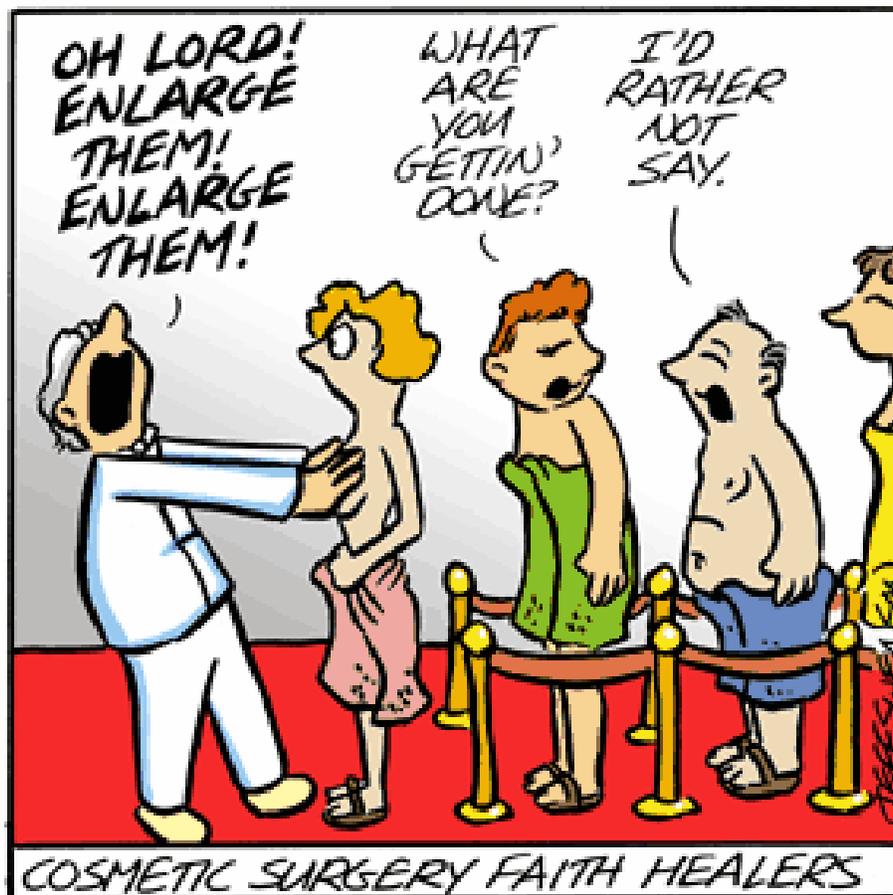
### 7. Discuss the reason for the season.

The family has gathered for a reason. It might be a holiday, an anniversary, or some other special event. No matter, you can

end with some aphorism that all nice people, religious or not, can appreciate. The reason for every season can be a hope for "peace on earth and goodwill toward men and women." Better yet, even a discussion about a family plan to bring everyone closer to attaining what might be that dream.

This piece was originally posted December 22, 2014 on [herbsilverman.com](http://herbsilverman.com)

### Freethunk!



## Time to Join/Renew!

**It's time to pay your dues for the 2015 calendar year.** Our largest expense is bringing in outstanding speakers for the monthly meetings. Although we usually balance things out with a handful of local guests who do not request travel or honorarium, the regional and national figures require us to pay travel costs and/or a small honorarium. We occasionally invest in sponsorships or marketing initiatives to hopefully reach potential new members such as an setting up an informational table at the Flowertown Festival and sponsoring a light display at the Holiday Festival of Lights. Finally, there are smaller costs such as the rental fee for Gage Hall, credit card processing fees, meeting refreshments, PO Box rental, member perks such as stipends for attendance at Humanist/Atheist/Freethought events, and more.

We are proud of the fact that we do not require membership to attend our activities. Instead, we hope that you see the great value in your annual donation to maintain a robust

and active secular humanist organization in the Charleston area.

Membership is open to all who support the purposes for which this organization is founded. The available membership levels and corresponding dues (new members and renewals) are:

- Individual \$35.00
- Family \$50.00
- Sustaining \$100.00
- Benefactor \$150.00
- Lifetime \$500.00

Dues are tax-deductible, as we are a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. (As we like to joke, we are also a "non-prophet" organization!)

There are 3 easy ways you can join/renew:

- You can pay by cash, credit card, or check at our monthly meeting.



- You can also mail a check to:

SHL  
PO Box 32256  
Charleston SC 29417-2256

Make checks payable to SHL and note "Membership" and level in the memo line. Please include your name, address, phone number, and email address.

- Or securely [pay online](#) and select your membership level in the dropdown box.



Free Press MODIFIED

## Member Perk: Stipends

SHL offers five stipends annually to dues-paying members to help offset costs associated with attending an atheist/freethought conference or convention, or to attend a free-



thought summer camp. Some examples of eligible events are the American Atheists convention, Freedom From Religion Foundation con-

vention, American Humanists convention, Camp Quest, and Camp Inquiry, among others.

Stipends are available to dues-paying members. A member may not receive a stipend two consecutive years, however different members of a family membership are eligible even if another family member received a stipend the previous year.

Stipends cover up to \$200 of registration, travel, and lodging costs. Food and drink expenses are not eligible for stipends.

A stipend request must be pre-approved before attending your event. To see whether your event

qualifies or to inquire about stipend availability and to apply, or if you have questions about the stipend program, contact [treasurer@lowcountryhumanists.org](mailto:treasurer@lowcountryhumanists.org).

Stipend recipients must write a short essay about their event experience and submit it along with their receipts to [treasurer@lowcountryhumanists.org](mailto:treasurer@lowcountryhumanists.org) within 30 days of the completion of the event. The essay will be published in an issue of *The Separationist*. Parents may assist young children who attended camp with their essays but the essay should reflect the child's own words as much as possible.

## Member Essays

*Over the next several issues we will publish essays from members who enjoyed an SHL stipend in 2014.*

### Camp Quest

**By Miranda DeNice McClain, age 10**

This summer I went to Camp Quest. The reason Camp Quest is different from other camps is that it is for atheists. That means someone who does not believe in God.

I did lots of science activities at camp. Every day we would go to Morris lodge and choose an activity to do like board games, geology and radioactive hide and seek. In the morning we did cabin activities like extracting strawberry DNA. After lunch we went to the lake to swim. I had fun playing with my new friends. We played shark or tag, marco polo and built sand castles.

I made a sonic screwdriver pen from Doctor Who! We did the Holi festival too. It was super fun, we threw paint dust at each other. I sneezed a puff of color.

I loved camp Quest because there were kids who think like me. I was free to be myself with no one to bully me for being different.

And I liked Charlotte the Unicorn.



## Our Officers

President: Amy Monsky  
Vice President: Herb Silverman  
Treasurer: Jason Gregory  
Secretary: Laura Kasman  
Newsletter Editor: Sue Edward

## Contact us!

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SHL is a non-prophet  
organization!

# SECULAR HUMANISTS



## OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

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## The Separationist

The Newsletter of the Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry

*Opinions expressed in The Separationist are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of SHL.*