



The Separationist

Volume 22, Issue 10

October 2015

Ed Brayton:

The Dover Trial, Ten Years Later

Sunday, October 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.

Please join us for the October monthly meeting of the Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry!

On December 20, 2005, Judge John E. Jones III of the the U.S District Court of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, handed down a 139-page decision in the case of *Kitzmiller et al. v. Dover Area School District*. He had decided in favor of the plaintiffs, a group of concerned parents who had sued their school district over a new requirement for ninth grade biology. At issue was an attempt by some members of the Dover school board to insert creationism into the classroom by calling it "intelligent design."

The judge, who had been appointed to the bench in 2002 by President George H.W.



Bush, ruled that this was an unconstitutional violation of the separation of church and state. He declared that the school board's decision to adopt a religiously-informed policy was one of "breathtaking inanity."

Ed Brayton, a former stand up comedian, is the creative force behind the blog "[Dispatches From the Culture Wars](#)". He has appeared on the Rachel Maddow Show and the Thom Hartmann Show and, he states, is nearly certain he is "the only

person ever to make fun of Chuck Norris on C-SPAN."

At our monthly meeting, Ed will tell the story of the behind-the-scenes shenanigans that went on during the Dover trial, then take a look at what has happened in the last ten years with efforts to get creationism into public school science classrooms. He'll talk about the ever-evolving strategies of the creationists and how losing that case forced yet another shift in strategy.

When: Sunday, 10/18/15 at 4pm

Where: Gage Hall, 4 Archdale Street

Cost: Free and open to the public!

After the meeting, join us for dinner at Leaf Restaurant.

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](#).

October 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Play Date	2	3 Movie Club
4	5	6	7	8	9 Bee City	10 Corn Maze Pot-luck
11	12 Happy Hour	13	14	15 Play Date Atheist Alliance of America conference (Atlanta)	16 AAA Conference Camp Quest SC Family weekend (Atlanta)	17 AAA Conference Camp Quest SC
18 AAA Conference Camp Ouset SC Speaker meeting	19 Girls Night Out	20 Play Date	21	22	23 Firetruck Museum	24 Volunteer Activity Movie Club
25 Book Club	26	27	28 Team Trivia	29 Play Date	30	31 

Upcoming SHL Events, cont.

Play Date—Wannamaker Sprinklers

Thursday, October 1, 2015, 9:00am

Wannamaker County Park, 8888 University Blvd, North Charleston

Join us at the play ground and then we will play in the sprinklers!



Remember to bring towels, sunscreen, swim-suits and snacks!

This is the last sprinkler event of the year!

Interested in an activity but don't see it listed? Let us know! Volunteers are always welcome to lead events such as bridge walks, bowling, billiards, biking, bocce, board games, etc.

Contact

**president@lowcountryhumanists.org
with your ideas!**

SHL Movie Club

Saturday, October 3, 2015 3:15pm

Terrace Theater, 1956 Maybank Hwy, James Island

Join us for a viewing of the film [Pawn Sacrifice](#) on Saturday, October 3, 3:15pm at the Terrace Theater on Maybank Hwy on James Island. We'll meet in the lobby at 3:00.

In a gripping true story set during the height of the Cold War, American chess prodigy Bobby Fischer (Tobey Maguire) finds himself caught between two superpowers when he challenges the Soviet Empire. Also starring Liev Schreiber and Peter Sarsgaard, PAWN SACRIFICE chronicles Fischer's terrifying struggles with genius and madness, and the rise and fall of a kid from Brooklyn who captured the imagination of the world.



Following the movie we will discuss the film over dinner at a nearby restaurant. Please wait in the lobby for everyone to exit (some of us like to stay for all of the credits).



Upcoming SHL Events, cont.

Bee City

Friday, October 9, 9:30am

Bee City, 1066 Holly Ridge Ln, Cottageville

BEE CITY is just a stone's throw from the beautiful Edisto River just three miles north of Givhans State Park on Hwy 61, near Givhans, SC between Summer-ville and Walterboro.

The **PETTING ZOO** has become quite an attraction. The petting zoo consists of domestic and exotic animals, which include deer, monkeys, lemurs, wallabies, alpacas and llamas.



The **NATURE CENTER** features snakes from South Carolina as well as lizards, turtles, frogs & alligators. It's an enjoyable educational experience for every age, young and old.

Corn Maze Potluck

Saturday, October 10, 2015, 5:00pm—10:00pm

West Farm, 2641 Cooper Store Road, Moncks Corner

Come out for an amazing evening of fun for the whole family. Activities include a 2.8-mile butterfly-themed corn maze, FSI (Farm Scene Investigation: solve the mystery and save Farmer Joe), and a hay ride. Especially for children: a pint-sized corn maze, hay-bale maze, play area, covered corn kernel box, tire climb activity, and a farm zoo with cows, goats, pigs, sheep, and chickens.

We'll meet at the party shed that SHL has reserved. Please mention you are there for the Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry event when you pay to get in so you will receive the corn maze attraction discounts listed below.

Please bring a main dish, side dish, and/or dessert to share. Non-alcoholic beverages only, please. You may also wish to bring your lawn chairs, mosquito spray, and flashlights: the corn mazes are even more fun when the sun goes down!

[R.S.V.P.](#) to attend with your family and guests!

West Farm Admission Rates:

Ages 3 to adult, general admission (no corn maze attraction): \$5.25

Ages 12 to adult, discounted admission includes the corn maze attraction: \$8.40

Ages 3 to 11, discounted admission includes the corn maze attraction: \$4.20

Ages 2 & under: free



Children aged 11 and under must be accompanied by an adult inside the corn maze.

The facility accepts cash or credit, as does the food truck, concessions and pumpkin sales. However, the apple slingshot, animal feed, and the kettle corn vendor only take cash.

Directions and more information:

http://www.westfarmcornmaze.com/west_farm_corn_maze_006.htm

Phone: 843-408-2284

The West Farm facility closes at 10 PM on October 10.

Upcoming SHL Events, cont.

SHL Happy Hour

Monday, October 12, 2015, 6:00pm

Southside 17 Bar & Grill, 4950 Centre Pointe Drive (Tanger), North Charleston



Join us for a fun and relaxing evening of stimulating conversation over drinks (alcohol is optional) and yummy food

(Mondays are 1/2 price burger night!) with old and new friends! Everyone is welcome. Don't be shy – come join us!

Play Date—Gahagan Playground

Thursday, October 15, 2015, 10:00am

Gahagan Park, 515 W Boundary St, Summerville

Join us at the playground!



Atheist Alliance of America Annual Convention

Thursday, October 15—Sunday, October 18, 2015

Crowne Plaza Hotel, 1325 Virginia Ave, Atlanta GA

The AAA national conference starts Thursday, October 15th and it'll be a weekend filled with great speakers, great people and good times!



This is a chance to attend a national group's convention fairly close to home!

Did you know? Dues-paying members of SHL are eligible to apply for a stipend to offset costs associated with attending atheist/humanist/secular conferences, camps, and events!

Contact treasurer@lowcountryhumanists.com for info.

Camp Quest South Carolina Family Weekend

Friday, October 16—Sunday, October 18, 2015

Crowne Plaza Hotel, 1325 Virginia Ave, Atlanta GA

The 2015 Camp Quest South Carolina Family Weekend event will be held 10/16–18/2015 in conjunction with Atheist Alliance of America's 2015 national conference in Atlanta at the Crown Plaza (Airport). Highlights



Upcoming SHL Events, cont.

include Parenting Beyond Belief workshop by Dale McGowan for parents, Why Evolution is True presentation for kids by Jerry Coyne, and Atlanta's Biggest Freethought Halloween party!

If you are interested in participating with the activities and attending the speakers with Camp Quest then the family weekend camp is for you! If you are interested in dropping your children off during the convention then the mini camp is your best option. There is something for everyone, so please check out all of the options.

The Family Weekend will run from Friday evening through Sunday morning, and will be open to parents with children of all ages. For more info and registration, [click here](#).

SHL monthly meeting

Sunday, October 18, 2015, 4:00pm

Gage Hall, 4 Archdale St, Charleston

Join us for our monthly meeting with speaker Ed Brayton. See [page 1](#) for more information.

Girls Night Out

Monday, October 19, 2015, 6:00pm

La Nortena, 6275 Rivers Ave, North Charleston

A fun night for secular girls to socialize! Nursing infants okay, but otherwise adults only, please. RSVP via [Facebook](#) or [Meetup](#).



Play Date—Saul Alexander Playground

Tuesday, October 20, 2015, 3:30pm

Laurel Street Park, 650 S. Laurel Street, Summerville

Join us at the playground!



Firetruck Museum

Friday, October 23, 2015, 10:00am

North Charleston Fire Museum, 4975 Centre Pointe Dr, North Charleston



Kids of all ages will love the interactive displays and hands on equipment.

The North Charleston Fire Museum and Educational Center is proud to house the largest collection of professionally restored American LaFrance fire apparatus in the country. With over 20 vehicles in our collection, dating as far back as 1780's, the North Charleston Fire Museum has become renowned as destination for fire history and the preservation antique fire apparatus. All the pieces in our collection still run and can fight fire just like the day it was produced.

Upcoming SHL Events, cont.

Tours and exhibits allow our visitors a glimpse into the life of a firefighter along with the changes and advancements that have occurred in firefighting throughout time.

Adult Admission – \$6.00

Children 12 and Under – **Free***

(*with accompanying Adult)

Volunteer Activity Beehouse at Sweetgrass Garden

Saturday, October 24, 2015, 9:00am

Sweetgrass Garden, 3121 Plow Ground Rd, Johns Island

Sweetgrass Garden is a wonderful charity that grows fresh food for the needy in the Charleston area.

We will be working on a Bee House at the garden, providing a home for these important and imperiled pollinators and also a source of honey for the farm. If there are enough volunteers, we can also help with other farm related activities.



Tools will be provided and no experience is needed. Please come help. To RSVP: [email our volunteer coordinators](#).



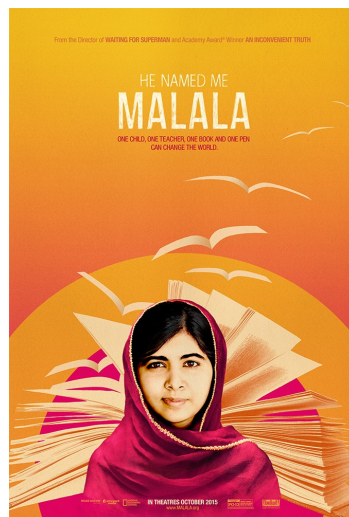
SHL Movie Club, part 2

Saturday, October 24, 2015, time TBD

Terrace Theater, 1956 Maybank Hwy, James Island

Bonus movie club! This movie looks so wonderful that we are scheduling a second movie club this month.

Join us for a viewing of the film [He Named Me Malala](#). Since showtimes are not posted this far in advance, please check our [website](#) or [Facebook](#) group posting, or subscribe to the movie club [email list](#) or [SHL Meetup](#) for updates.



HE NAMED ME MALALA is an intimate portrait of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Malala Yousafzai, who was targeted by the Taliban and severely wounded by a gunshot when returning home on her school bus in Pakistan's Swat Valley. The then 15-year-old was singled out, along with her father, for advocating for girls' education, and the attack on her sparked an outcry from supporters around the world. She miraculously survived and is now a leading campaigner for girls' education globally as co-founder of the Malala Fund.

Acclaimed documentary filmmaker Davis Guggenheim (An Inconvenient Truth, Waiting for Superman) shows us how Malala, her father Zia and her family are committed to fighting for education for all girls worldwide. The film gives us an inside glimpse into this extraordinary young girl's life – from her close relationship with her father who inspired her love for education, to her

Upcoming SHL Events, cont.

impassioned speeches at the UN, to her everyday life with her parents and brothers.

"One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world." – Malala

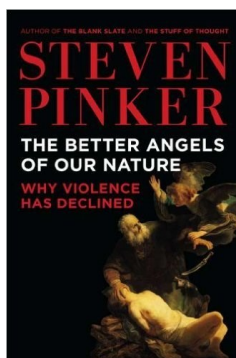
Following the movie we will discuss the film over dinner at a nearby restaurant. Please wait in the lobby for everyone to exit (some of us like to stay for all of the credits).

SHL Book Club

Sunday, October 25, 2015, 4:00pm

Barnes & Noble, 1812 Sam Rittenberg Blvd, West Ashley

Book Club will continue the discussion of Steven Pinker's *The Better Angels of Our Nature*.



A provocative history of violence—from the New York Times best-selling author of *The Stuff of Thought* and *The Blank Slate*. Believe it or not, today we may be living in the most peaceful moment in our species' existence. In his gripping and controversial new work, New York Times bestselling author Steven Pinker shows that despite the ceaseless news about war, crime, and terrorism, violence has actually been in decline over long stretches of history. Exploding myths about humankind's inherent violence and the curse of modernity, this ambitious book continues Pinker's exploration of the essence of human nature, mixing psychology and history to provide a remarkable picture of an increasingly enlightened world.

We look forward to seeing everyone to discuss the book. Remember, it is not necessary to have participated in the previous discussion or to have even read the book

to join in the discussion. As usual, we will go to dinner after the discussion at a local restaurant of our collective choosing.

If you have come across any books you would like to recommend for our reading pleasure, please send that information to Yvonne Michel at michel.yvonne@gmail.com.

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>

Team Trivia

Wednesday, October 28, 2015, 7:00pm

Steel City Pizza, 1440 Ben Sawyer Blvd, Mt Pleasant

Come out for a night of trivia and socializing! This is a team event and is free.



Our team **Happy Humanists** is officially registered, so our points are cumulative and will be going for season totals.

Team Trivia offers trivia nights at various places throughout the Charleston area on different days and times. Team members are welcome to play using the team name at any Team Trivia night.

Upcoming SHL Events, cont.

And if you would like to organize an SHL trivia night in your part of town let us know. Organizers are responsible for checking in using our team name, welcoming players, and using any winnings from the previous week to purchase appetizers for the team. Contact president@lowcountryhumanists.org for more info.



Play Date—Riverfront Park

Thursday, October 29, 2015, 9:30pm

Laurel Street Park, 650 S. Laurel Street, Summerville

Join us at the playground!



Become a dues-paying member of SHL!

Membership is open to all who support the purposes for which this organization is founded. Your dues help provide a variety of programs and activities for young and old alike.

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 organization. (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.



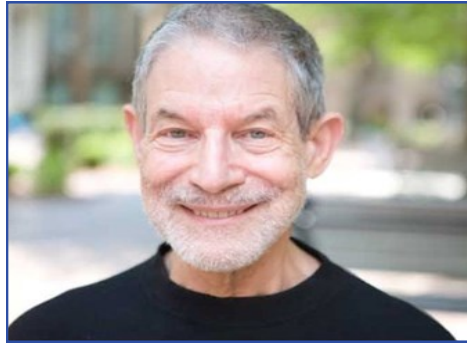
Herb Silverman

Who is God's Candidate?

Republican presidential candidate Ben Carson said he would not support a Muslim for president because the Islamic faith is inconsistent with the U.S. Constitution. He later added that whoever takes the White House should be "sworn in on a stack of Bibles, not a Koran." Here is my very qualified agreement with Ben Carson: Strict adherence to the Koran is inconsistent with the Constitution, but so is strict adherence to the Bible. Lawmakers take an oath to follow the Constitution, so I don't see why they should swear on the Koran, stacks of Bibles, or any other so-called holy books. President John Quincy Adams was sworn in with his hand on a book of U.S. laws to demonstrate that he recognized a barrier between church and state and that his loyalty was to our nation's laws above all else. Teddy Roosevelt also did not use a Bible at his swearing in ceremony.

So would I vote for a Muslim for president? It would depend on the position the Muslim takes on issues important to me, just as it would for Christian, Jewish, Hindu, or atheist candidates.

I would not vote for any candidate who claims that a god told him or her to run. That eliminates current candidates Ben Carson, Mike Huckabee, Rick Santorum, Bobby Jindall, and John Kasich. Former candidates Rick Perry and Scott Walker also received messages from their god to



Herb Silverman is founder and President 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.

run, but God apparently changed his mind because they both dropped out. Given the number of candidates God supports, he/she/it must have a commitment problem or is hedging bets like a wealthy contributor. God used the same strategy in 2012, when he backed Herman Cain, Michelle Bachmann, Rick Santorum, and perhaps others. God's track record hasn't been so good.

I hope candidates in the next Republican debate are asked if they could support an atheist for president. In a 2012 Gallup Poll about whether people would vote for a well-qualified candidate who happens to be in one of eight different categories, atheist scored lowest—just below gay or lesbian, and Muslim. The good news is that the 54 percent positive vote for atheists was the highest ever. And I'm optimistic it will continue to rise.

The issue for me is not so much the faith of the candidates, but whether they would try to impose their faith on others through public policy. There was a time that Republicans worried about this. When John F. Kennedy was running for president in 1960, some were concerned that he would take orders from the pope. Kennedy calmed many fears when he said, "I believe in an America where the separation of church and state is absolute." He also governed in a way consistent with that view. Unfortunately, times do not always change for the better. Another Catholic presidential candidate, Rick Santorum, called JFK radical for believing in separation of church and state.

When Kentucky county clerk Kim Davis cited her deeply held Christian beliefs as a legitimate reason to violate her oath of office and discriminate against gay couples, several Christian presidential candidates supported her right not to issue the marriage licenses she was legally required to issue. Mike Huckabee, who must believe America is or should be a Christian theocracy, supported Davis, saying, "The Supreme Court is not the Supreme Being, and they cannot overturn the laws of nature or of nature's god."

Religious freedom gives people the right to discriminate privately, but not the right to break the law or refuse to do your job. And where were

Herb Silverman cont.

these Christian conservative supporters of Kim Davis when Charee Stanley, a Muslim flight attendant who refused to serve alcohol to her customers, was fired because her job duties conflicted with her religious faith?

Some states have banned Muslim Sharia law in this country, and I certainly wouldn't want to live under Sharia law. However, this has not been a big fear of mine in the United States.

But if we were we to live under Sharia Law, here's what we could expect: government policy would be based on religious doctrine; when science and religious doctrine conflict, we would follow religious doctrine; religion would be taught and promoted in public schools; only abstinence would be acceptable sex education; homosexuality and gay marriage would be illegal; women would have fewer rights than men; abortion would be illegal; and there

would be no separation of church and state.

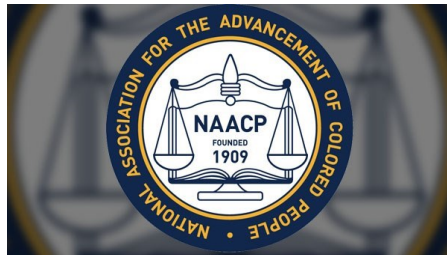
But wait! Isn't this what Christian extremists and many Republican candidates are now promoting? As an atheist, I'm almost inspired to say, "Thank God we live in a secular country."

This piece was originally posted 9/23/2015 on herbsilverman.com

Charity of the Quarter

SHL collects donations for a worthy charity each quarter, and donates the full amount under the name Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry.

Our Charity of the Quarter for Q3, 2015 is the Charleston Chapter of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which seeks to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination. This is a worthy cause any time and anywhere, but especially now and here considering the recent racially moti-



vated murders at Emanuel AME Church.

Founded February 12, 1909, the NAACP is the nation's oldest, largest and most widely recognized grassroots-based civil rights organization. Its more than half-million members and supporters throughout the United States and the world are the premier advocates for civil rights in their communities, campaigning for equal opportunity and

conducting voter mobilization.

Founded in 1917, the Charleston Branch of the NAACP is a local unit of the NAACP, the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization.

Four times a year SHL collects donations on behalf of a worthy 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!](#)

SHL Board for 2015-2016

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SECULAR HUMANISTS



OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

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The Separationist

The Newsletter of the Secular Humanists of the Lowcountry

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