



# The Separationist

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December, 2016

## SHL Solstice Potluck and Book Auction

Sunday, December 18, 2016, 5:00 PM

### Home of Esther Lapin

3226 Heathland Way, Mt. Pleasant

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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.

After a long and stressful election season, we all could use a chance to relax and celebrate, to share revelry and stimulating conversation. Fortunately, that is exactly what we will have at **SHL's annual Winter Solstice Potluck**, to be held on Sunday December 18, 2016, at 5 pm at the Mount Pleasant home of Esther Lapin.



Please bring an appetizer, salad, main dish, side dish, beverage or dessert to share. Also, bring humanism themed books, CDs, or DVDs for our annual book auction run by SHL's founding president, Herb Silverman. Proceeds will be donated to our [Charity of the Quarter](#).

We hope to see you there, and we would like to extend a special invitation to people on our mailing list who rarely come to meetings, as well as past speakers who are not members.





**There will not be a meeting at Gage Hall this month — we will return to our regular meeting format in January.**

# 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.

## December 2016

Sun      Mon      Tue      Wed      Thu      Fri      Sat

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 <a href="#">Happy Hour</a>	8	9 <a href="#">Jazz Night</a>	10
11 <a href="#">Cookie Contest</a>	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 <a href="#">Potluck</a>	19	20	21  First Day of Winter	22	23	24
25 <a href="#">Movie Club</a>	26	27	28	29	30	31 

# Upcoming SHL Events, cont.

## SHL Happy Hour

Wednesday, December 7, 2016, 6:00pm

Manny's Neighborhood Grille, 1680 Old Towne Rd,  
Charleston (West Ashley)

Happy Hour is always a fun and relaxing evening of stimulating conversation over drinks (alcohol is optional) and yummy food among old and new friends! Better than ever after a fire, this month we will be meeting at Manny's in West Ashley. We are all very excited to get back to one of our favorite places and we hope to see you there!

*RSVP requested via [Meetup](#) or [Facebook](#).*



**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](mailto:president@lowcountryhumanists.org) with your ideas!**

## Jazz Night

Friday, December 9, 2016, 7:00pm

How Art Thou Café, 1956 Maybank Hwy, Charleston  
(James Island—next to the Terrace Theater)

Join us for our very first Jazz Night! We're very excited about this, and believe it will be a fun night. Cost is normally \$7 but we will get a \$2 group discount. We will be going to How Art



Thou Cafe on James Island next to the Terrace Theatre and enjoying music from jazz guitarist Jack Wilkins.

[www.howarthoucafe.com](http://www.howarthoucafe.com)

[www.jackwilkins.com](http://www.jackwilkins.com)

Because of the discount and the demand/room we must rsvp with the café by **December 2**. We cannot guarantee a seat for you if you don't rsvp.

*RSVP required via [Meetup](#) or [Facebook](#).*

See an event you want to attend? We'd love to have you join us! Some events ask for an RSVP which you can easily do via [Meetup](#) or [Facebook](#). This gives the event organizers a count of how many are attending which is especially important when making reservations at restaurants, providing supplies, etc.

# Upcoming SHL Events, cont.

## Cookie Contest

Sunday, December 11, 2016, 1:00pm

Home of Steffi Green, 2 Lamboll St, Charleston



Please join us for our awesome SHL Cookie Contest. If you would like your cookies/cakes/sweets to be judged, please make sure the ones you bring are homemade. There will be prizes awarded for



- 1) Best Looking Cookie/Sweet
- 2) Best Tasting Cookie/Sweet
- 3) Best All-around Cookie/Sweet

Steffi will provide snacks and beverages. We will have some kid-specific games as well and there is a play-room so it will be a fun event for both kids and adults!

From Steffi Green, SHL Family Activities Coordinator:

I am trying to get more families involved in going to play dates and to do that I created a short survey to get a sense of how often people want play dates, where they want to do play dates, their kids ages, and where the bulk of the families live. Your feedback is appreciated and will help us plan fun activities for your family.

Thanks!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9MDHF9W>

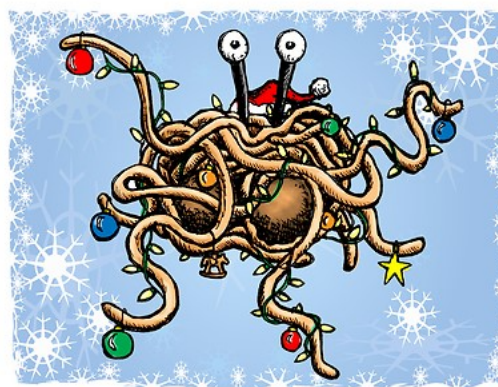
## SHL Potluck and Book Auction

Sunday, December 18, 2016, 5:00pm

Home of Esther Lapin, 3226 Heathland Way, Mt. Pleasant

Join us for our annual December potluck and book auction. [See page 1](#) for details.

SHL will not be playing trivia in November or December. Trivia will resume in January.



## Events, cont.

### SHL Movie Club: Fences

Sunday, December 25, 2016, time TBD

Terrace Theater, 1956 Maybank Hwy, Charleston  
(James Island)

Join us for a viewing of the film *Fences* on Sunday, December 25, at the Terrace Theater. **Showtimes are not posted this far in advance so please check [Meetup](#), [Facebook](#), [our website](#), or [subscribe to the Movie Club email list](#) for updates.**

[FENCES](#) is directed by Denzel Washington from a screenplay by August Wilson, adapted from Wilson's Pulitzer Prize-winning play. The film stars Denzel Washington, Viola Davis, Jovan Adepo, Stephen McKinley Henderson, Russell Hornsby, Mykelti Williamson, and Saniyya Sydney. The film is produced by Scott Rudin, Denzel Washington and Todd Black.

Following the movie we will discuss the film over dinner at a nearby restaurant.

**RSVP requested via [Meetup](#) or [Facebook](#).**



## Mark Your Calendars!

The Holy City will be the host of two, count 'em, TWO major secular conferences/conventions in 2017!

### [American Humanist Association](#)

#### [Annual Conference: June 8–11, 2017](#)

The American Humanist Association, the oldest and largest humanist organization in the United States, has held an annual conference since its founding in 1941



so that humanists, atheists, and freethinkers can gather together for a weekend of informative lectures, networking,

and fun activities.

### [American Atheists](#)

#### [Solar Eclipse Convention: August 19–21, 2017](#)

We will present a conference focused on science, space, technology, and (of course) atheism featuring prominent academics, scientists, and community leaders during the weekend and, on Monday, will host an eclipse watch-party (narrated by a surprise special guest!) in Charleston.



## AMERICAN ATHEISTS

Charleston is the last major city in the path of the eclipse's path. This is the first total solar eclipse to cross the continental United States since the 1970s!

There will be opportunities for SHL members to volunteer at the conference and convention. Needs are still being evaluated so stay tuned!

## SHL Store

SHL is pleased to announce that t-shirts, mugs, bags and other merchandise featuring our logos and slogans can now be purchased at our [online Zazzle store](http://www.zazzle.com/lowcountryhumanists).

We hope you will show your pride and help support SHL by shopping at our new store: <http://www.zazzle.com/lowcountryhumanists>.



## 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 Q4 2016 is [Trans Love Fund](#).

The Trans Love Fund is a program of We Are Family, an organization dedicated to providing resources, support and leadership development to

LGBTQ+ youth. The Trans Love Fund is dedicated to helping the transgender community of South Carolina through providing microgrants to trans-identified individuals for medical, legal, and emergency living expenses.

We believe that all people have the right to live as their most genuine selves, and seek to make that possible by financing the

care of trans people in South Carolina. We seek to create trans inclusive spaces, collaborate with other organizations to create increased access to resources, and spread education and awareness of trans issues.



*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!](#)*

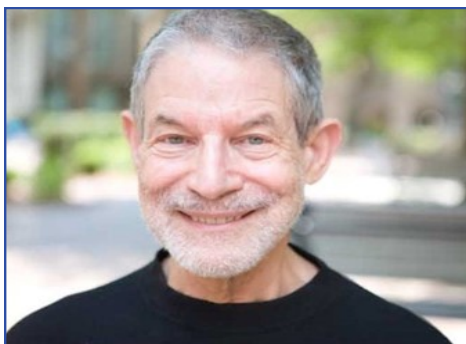
**A BIG Thank You goes to everyone who supports SHL's Charity of the Quarter. Your generosity raised \$400 for our Q3 charity, Birthdays for All!**

# Herb Silverman

## Post-Election Healing: An Atheist's Perspective

This presidential campaign has been the most divisive and hate-filled in my lifetime, and I am both shocked and disappointed by the outcome. However, here are a few thoughts on turning some campaign lemons into lemonade as we move forward.

**1. Sexual Assault:** This used to be synonymous with attempted or actual rape. Fortunately, the definition has expanded, bringing support for women to come forward when men act inappropriately. I'm encouraged by the song of Nobel-prize winning Bob Dylan, "The Times, They Are a-Changin'." But for women who think the times have not changed enough to allow them to go public, I recommend an even older song, "I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter." Write down all relevant details in a letter to yourself. Drop it in the mail and when you receive your postmarked letter, place it unopened in a safe deposit box to be unsealed at an appropriate time. Undoubtedly, several women associated with Donald Trump now wish they had followed this procedure.



**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.

**2. Evangelical Divide:** Here I'm cautiously optimistic, with emphasis on "cautiously." Donald Trump has inadvertently exposed the hypocrisy of many white evangelical Protestants who vote Republican because they believe Republicans represent "Christian values." It's hard to make a case for Donald Trump being a better family-values Christian than Hillary Clinton, yet many evangelicals enthusiastically endorsed him despite his deplorable un-Christian behavior. Do they now suggest that a candidate's religious beliefs might not matter so much? Surely lots of Christians recognize the danger of ignoring social justice issues to focus exclusively on an anti-abortion

agenda. Some might even worry that religious leaders are selling their own souls for personal power and political influence instead of pursuing their more traditional mission of saving souls.

**3. Political Correctness:** If political correctness means you can't speak openly and honestly about controversial topics or act in ways that might offend some people, then count me out. I was a politically incorrect liberal before it became cool (thanks, Bill Maher). For instance, I refused to open car doors for my dates or pull chairs out for them as a teen in the 1950s, which might explain why I didn't lose my virginity until graduate school. Today that behavior would go unnoticed, so I sympathize with Trump supporters who don't appreciate political correctness. I hope this election has taught people that we not only have the free-speech right to be politically incorrect, but also the right and responsibility to call out bigotry. And violence and assault are not just politically incorrect—they're criminal. We must not go back to the "great" America of the 1950s



## Herb Silverman, cont.

when privileged white, heterosexual, male Christians were legally allowed to discriminate against the “other,” whom they viewed as second-class citizens.

**4. Outsiders:** The two surprise vote getters during this campaign were Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump, both populists outside the political mainstream who would like to end government business as usual. I do, too, which is why I voted for Sanders in the primary. Although Trump and Sanders differ on almost all issues, they have one thing in common: They are probably both atheists, though neither is “politically incorrect” enough to acknowledge it. Which leads me to the next lemon.

5. Atheists in Public Office: Recent polls have shown that about 25 percent of Americans have no religion, with the percentage higher for younger Americans and higher still for the better educated. On the other hand, polls also show that atheists are among the least trusted group in America. Although religious tests for public office are unconstitutional, the electorate seems to apply an unwritten religious test that requires candidates to express some sort of religious belief. The Secular Coalition for America has learned (privately) that at least 24 Congressional members don’t believe in God, but they are unwilling to come out of their atheist closets for fear it would literally be

“politically incorrect.” Only when they do, and when more open atheists run for and win public office, will the atheist taboo finally be broken. A secular US Constitution helped make America great. When religion mingled with politics is no longer business as usual, then we together can make America even greater. With less importance placed on religion in this presidential election, I’m hoping future candidates will be judged on their political positions and their character, rather than on their professed religious beliefs. That’s the politically correct and morally correct thing to do.

This piece was originally posted 11/10/2016 on [OnFaith](#)

### **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

*There are 3 easy ways you can join/renew:*

- Pay by cash, credit card, or check at our monthly meeting.

- 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.

## SHL Board for 2016-2017

**Alex Kasman**, President

**Sue Edward**, Vice President

**Garrett Gehlhausen**, Treasurer

**Bonnie Cleaveland**, Secretary

**Ed Stephens**

**Tom Amon**

**Steffi Green**

# SECULAR HUMANISTS



## OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

## Contact us!

SHL  
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[president@lowcountryhumanists.org](mailto:president@lowcountryhumanists.org)

SHL is a non-prophet  
organization!

## Find us online! We're (nearly) omnipresent!



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[Facebook Group](#)



[YouTube](#)



[Facebook Lounge](#)



[Web](#)



[Facebook Families Group](#)



[Email Lists](#)



[Yahoo Families Group](#)



[Facebook Page](#)

## 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.*