



**Humanists of Sarasota Bay, Inc.**  
Sarasota, Florida

## **HUSBAY NEWSLETTER**

**AUGUST 2021**

### **FFRF: Records reveal link between the Trump White House, Capitol Ministries**

The Freedom From Religion Foundation has recently acquired records confirming that senior officials in the Trump administration used taxpayer-funded time and resources to organize extremist weekly bible studies, including a large event at the Museum of the Bible.

Although Capitol Ministries fortunately appears to no longer be active in the White House, it has not gone away. The group's founder and president, Ralph Drollinger, remains active on Capitol Hill and at the state level haranguing lawmakers to legislate according to his homophobic, misogynistic, xenophobic version of Christianity.

The stated mission of Capitol Ministries, a Christian nationalist organization, is to "evangelize elected and appointed political leaders and lead them toward maturity in Christ." Drollinger was the likely inspiration for the citation of Romans 13 by then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions to justify the Trump administration's egregious family separation policy, literally putting kids in cages after separating them from their parents.

Capitol Ministries held a December 2019 event at the Museum of the Bible, where it said attendees "heard from White House cabinet members, U.S. senators and representatives about the importance of teaching God's word to people in political power and how the Washington, D.C., bible study they regularly attend impacts their lives personally and professionally."

FFRF sought public records related to this event from all the departments involved, and the records, although they took well over a year to arrive, confirm several high-level officials' involvement and the use of staff time to organize and promote the religious event.

The records further reveal details of the event, including an email describing the event as having a panel of "100 new ministry leaders and their wives." This casual sexism is par for the course for Drollinger, who has said mothers who work outside the home are sinners: "Women with children at home who either serve in public office, or are employed on the outside, pursue a path that contradicts God's revealed design for them. It is a sin."

From the Freedom from Religion Foundation

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

I am pleased to announce the lectures and events for 2021-22. The Board has put together a varied program for 2021-22 which we hope will be of interest to all members.

ALL LECTURES, UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED, WILL BE AT THE CENTER FOR ARTS AND HUMANITY, 1226 N. TAMIAMI TRAIL, SARASOTA 34236 (Corner of 13th and Tamiami Trail) Suggest if coming west on Fruitville, you turn right at Coconut and proceed to 13th St., turning left. All lecture dates are on Mondays.

October 4--6pm Welcome back reception (Wine, soft drinks, snacks); 7pm Surprising Stories and Facts about Florida, Kate Holmes, Sarasota Historical Society

November 1--7 Words That Can Change the World--Joe Simonetta, author, speaker

December 6--Sarasota County Homeless Project for the Mentally Challenged, Megan Howell, Executive Director, Founder, Second Heart Homes

December 1--Renew your membership

December 20--Annual Meeting 7pm (Most likely on Zoom but not final.)

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Haiku Quintets: [dandana.us/fivepalms](http://dandana.us/fivepalms)

**May We Long Endure\***

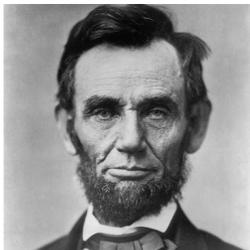
this nation conceived  
twelve score and five years ago,  
we are met again

a new battlefield,  
it is for us, the living,  
to meet this grave test

a great task remains  
before us, this century:  
may we long endure?

let us not forget,  
in our time's divided land,  
Lincoln's hopeful words:

government of ALL people,  
by ALL people, for ALL people,  
shall not perish from the earth.



\*Phrasings adapted from Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, November 19, 1863



Richard Dawkins's goldfish.

**FREETHOUGHT FLORIDA**

**MARCH 4—6, 2022**

**Marriot Orlando Airport Lakeside**

***Save the date***

**Humanism** is a progressive philosophy of life that, *without theism or other supernatural beliefs*, affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good. To learn more go [here](#).

## Nine Nasty Words: English in the Gutter: Then, Now, and Forever

Reviewed by Karen R. Koenig

**“Readers seeking a sterile understanding of profanity with all the lewdness and bawdiness sanitized away and air-brushed out will likely find *Nasty Words* beyond their comfort zone. But those who love words and the magic and mischief they make in life will be spellbound.”**

Two paradoxes within *Nine Nasty Words* make it a most enlivening read. The first is of profanity embraced by the masses while also being held in puritanical quarantine in certain quarters. The second is McWhorter’s personal anecdotes and guy-on-the-next-barstool’s witty and often cheeky asides juxtaposed with his brilliant, erudite, dizzying command of the English language.

This is not a book for those who are easily offended. Readers seeking a sterile understanding of profanity with all the lewdness and bawdiness sanitized away and air-brushed out will likely find *Nasty Words* beyond their comfort zone. But those who love words and the magic and mischief they make in life will be spellbound.

Nasty words have a quirky kind of power we can actually view via PET scans. When we speak ordinary words and sentences, the left, logical side of our brain lights up, and when we curse, the right, emotional side illuminates. Hence, McWhorter views profanity as not merely words, but something “clad in the guise of words, like those little chocolate liquor bottles; to approach these with thoughts of Godiva and Russell Stover is missing their point, which is what’s sloshing around inside of them.”

The point of the book is that the power of these

words, vested as they are “with the power of transgression,” lies in what’s sloshing around inside *us*. They are a part of language as well as of our emotional repertoire.

Therefore, unsurprisingly, much “profanity in English tends to consist of words of one syllable ending with a consonant.” Such construction packs a perfect punch for intense affective expression. This is why though *which* words are frowned upon changes over time, the fact that *some* words are assigned taboo status will likely always be the case.

McWhorter traces the history of each nasty word—plus others that didn’t make the starting lineup— by detailing linguistic origins, transformations of spelling and meanings over time, usage in general and specifically in the arts, and their standing in today’s society. He delineates three historical strands of profanity: when the worst you could say was about religion, then about the body, and nowadays about groups of people.

*Damn* and *hell*, deemed profanity lite, do not even make McWhorter’s list of nine nasty words in spite of the enormous impact they had hundreds of years ago when damning someone to hell was the worst vitriol you could wish on someone. Showing “a split between public ideals and private reality,” *damn* and *hell* are today used liberally and openly, but with a whiff of forbiddenness still clinging to them, compelling people to use words like darn and heck to avoid stepping into what might be perceived as dirty waters.

For the rest click [HERE](#)

### HUSBAY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Helgager, President

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This is Vol 2 Issue 7 of the HUSBAY

Newsletter edited by Bob La Salle.

It is published monthly and delivered by email to our members. If you have anything you would like published herein, please send it to:

Husbaynewsletter@gmail.com

## Special Interest Groups

Here is a list of Special Interest Groups (If you have an idea for one, please let us know).

### SIG Names

**Current Affairs (CAF):**

**Life's Experiences (LEX):**

**Non-Fiction Review (NFR):**

**Creativity (CRE):**

**Roundtable (RT):**

**Science Technology & Medicine (STM):** What have you learned, and would like to share

**Open Forum (OF):**

### Focus of the Group

Events discussed during the current news cycle

Your memorable experiences to share with the group

Reviews of non-fiction books, magazine articles, films and TV  
Includes short stories, poetry, blogs; in other words fiction  
writing (including reviews) as opposed to non-fiction review.

A discussion of a topic selected by the SIG hosts

This SIG will happen on dates when no one has stepped up to  
do a presentation on any of our previously existing categories.

Check our website for specific information by clicking [HERE](#).

**We need members to step up and help** us develop programs for our SIG (Special Interest Group) meetings! Do you have a story to tell? A book to review? A rant? Do you have a career experience or hobby to share? A talk about a technology you like? A topic you would like covered? (We can find a speaker.) Have you written a book? Let us know ASAP!

Please respond to Dave Helgager at [dbhelgager@comcast.net](mailto:dbhelgager@comcast.net) or

Barry Zack at [barryzed@gmail.com](mailto:barryzed@gmail.com)

## Monthly Meetings

**Summer lectures** will be planned depending on the state of the COVID-19 pandemic

Link to Zoom meeting will be provided the day of meeting.

**Next Board meeting** June 17, 1:30 (Members contact Dave Helgager for link to attend meeting)

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONT.

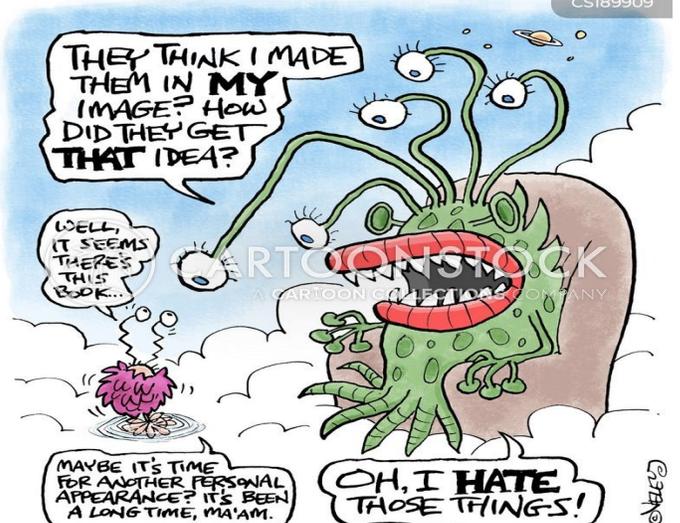
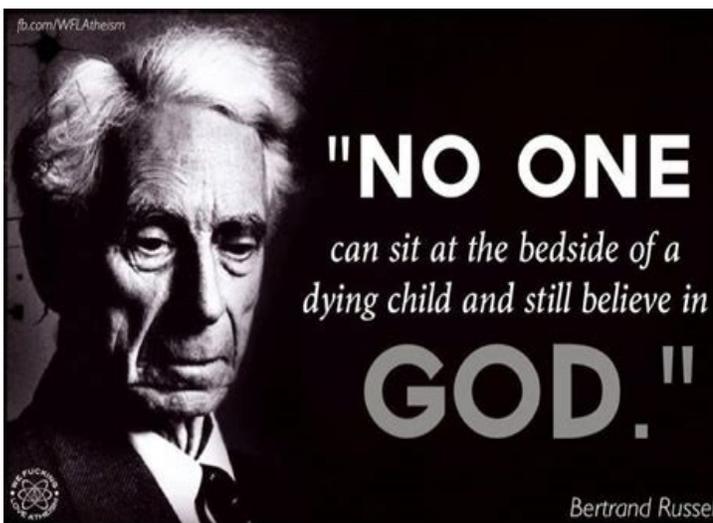
January 3--New Year's Party, 7pm-9pm (Drinks, Snacks, Music provided.)

February 12--Darwin Day Luncheon, Saturday, 11:30 at Marina Jacks, Scientist from Mote Marine (Speaker and subject yet to be determined.) This year we celebrate on Darwin's actual birthdate. Details for reservations, etc. in January.

March 7--Dr. Matthew Edlund, What Constitutes Good Sleep Health?

April 3--Annual Carl Sagan picnic--4-7pm at Turtle Beach Pavilion (Directions and what to bring will be provided at a later date.)

SPECIAL NOTE: Summer lectures under consideration and will be announced sometime in 2022.



## CHURCH & STATE | Once They've Overturned *Roe v. Wade*, What Will Christian Nationalists Try Next? From the Humanist

One year from now, you might be holding the Summer 2022 issue of the *Humanist* and reading very bad news: Abortion is illegal in dozens of U.S. states.

Unthinkable? Not at all. The US Supreme Court has accepted a case that provides the justices with a vehicle to overturn *Roe v. Wade* outright or so fatally undermine it that, in effect, it's no longer in force. Many legal observers believe the court's conservative majority is ready to trash *Roe*—and when that happens, reproductive justice advocates believe that in at least twenty-four states, legislatures will enact abortion bans.

The case, which will be heard during the high court's term that begins in October, focuses on a Mississippi law passed in 2018 known as the Gestational Age Act. The law prohibits abortions in Mississippi after fifteen weeks except in the cases of a medical emergency or severe fetal abnormality. (There are no exceptions for rape

or incest.) Under *Roe*, abortions are permitted until a fetus is viable, around twenty-four weeks, so the Mississippi statute is in clear violation of that decision.

Mississippi legislators passed the law knowing it ran afoul of *Roe*. The governor of Mississippi at the time, Phil Bryant (R), openly admitted that the law would be challenged in court. It was. A federal court struck down the legislation, as did the 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals. The state duly appealed the case, *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, to the US Supreme Court, which accepted it.

Much of the speculation about a post-*Roe* America has focused on the disparities of treatment that women—especially poor women—will face. If the Supreme Court returns the issue to the states, abortion will be legal in some but illegal in others. Women of means will have the resources to travel to obtain abortions. Poor women will not.

For the rest click [HERE](#)

## Religious Liberty Isn't More Sacred than Other Rights From the Humanist

**WHEREAS ONCE THE COURTS** sought a balance between peoples' right to freely exercise their faith or philosophy and the right to be free from government-sponsored indoctrination, now judges are abdicating their responsibility to keep government secular. Instead of recognizing that government support of religion violates our Constitution's First Amendment Establishment Clause, the courts are changing their jurisprudence to assert that any hesitancy to provide government support of religion is some kind of illegal discrimination *against* religion. That's opening the doors to taxpayer-funded vouchers for religious schools, public dollars funding proselytization, and government symbols that favor one religious view over others.

Furthermore, when there's a conflict between religious rights, and other civil and human rights (especially LGBTQ+ rights), the courts are deciding that religious rights matter more. That's leading to LGBTQ+ folks (and potentially many

others) getting denied public accommodation services, like wedding cakes from bakeries and flower deliveries from florists. Combined with other court decisions (like *Citizens United*), businesses are allowed to deny support for reproductive rights to their employees and treat people differently because of the business owners' sincerely held religious viewpoints—however bigoted those might be.

The Equality Act was introduced to add protections for LGBTQ+ individuals from discrimination because there are currently no federal laws that explicitly protect them and only twenty-one states have passed bills that affirm the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals. Meanwhile, at least two dozen anti-LGBTQ+ bills were proposed in 2021, many of which target transgender youth. The Equality Act's protections, overwhelmingly supported by Americans, prompted harsh criticism from the religious right and other conservatives who claim they undermine religious freedoms. But, in reality, it is just an excuse for these groups to complain about their presumed right to discriminate.

For the rest click [HERE](#)