

November, 2018 Newsletter of the Lake Superior Freethinkers

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First Sunday - Radisson Hotel -

9:00 AM Social - 9:30 Breakfast - 10:00 Presentation

Free and open to the public.

Jan Resberg, Chair/President 715-919-0513

Sue Anderson, Social Director 218-728-1361

Program

Dr. David Cole – On Accidents of Birth

Dr. Cole received his Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of California. He taught at the University of Delaware before coming to the University of Minnesota Duluth in the 1980s. He served a year on the staff of a Colorado Congressman working on tax, intellectual property, and railroad issues. His publications range from the philosophy of language, the nature of mental representations, the limits of artificial intelligence, and the reversibility of death to a co-authored book on the transformations of 20th Century domestic life by household technology.

"Accidents of Birth" - While some are born to poverty, others enjoy benefits and privileges that came to them solely as a result of being born to particular parents in a particular time and place. For example, Warren Buffet attributes much of his success to the fact that he "won the womb lottery", as he puts it. I will critically examine this idea, considering the extent to which inherited traits are accidents, and how this affects whether people deserve the benefits or hardships that result from the circumstances of their birth.

New Jersey Priest Abuse Hotline Flooded by Calls

A hotline set up by NJ officials for citizens to report sexual abuse by priests was so overwhelmed that the state had to assign more workers to the hotline.

See <https://tinyurl.com/ycx645d3>



The Puritans celebrated Thanksgiving because they were saved from the "Indians." I think we've been celebrating because we were saved from the Puritans. (Anonymous)

	<p>Militant Christian Eric Rudolph: planted explosives at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, then 2 abortion clinics and a bar in 1997-98. 4 dead, over 100 wounded</p>
	<p>Islamic Militant Osama bin Laden: led al-Qaeda terrorist network; planned 9/11 attacks and countless other atrocities. Over 3000 dead, full toll unknown.</p>
	<p>Militant Atheist Writes books and gives lectures.</p>

(Richard Dawkins)

Here's Why Evangelicals Believe They're the Most Persecuted Group in America

By Valerie Tarico - October 12, 2018

A recent Pew study found that white American Evangelical Christians think they experience more discrimination than Blacks, Hispanics, Muslims, Atheists or Jews. The answer is right there in the Bible.

<https://www.alternet.org/news-amp-politics/why-evangelicals-believe-theyre-most-persecuted-group-america>

Mark Twain, "Bible Teaching and Religious Practice"

*"Mark Twain" (Samuel Langhorne Clemens), Europe and Elsewhere.
New York: Harper & Brothers. 1923. (article 33 of 35).*

"The Christian's Bible is a drug store. Its contents remain the same; but the medical practice changes ...

The world has corrected the Bible. The church never corrects it; and also never fails to drop in at the tail of the procession - and take the credit of the correction. During many ages there were witches. The Bible said so. The Bible commanded that they should not be allowed to live. Therefore the Church, after eight hundred years, gathered up its halters, thumb-screws and firebrands, and set about its holy work in earnest.

She worked hard at it night and day during nine centuries and imprisoned, tortured, hanged, and burned whole hordes and armies of witches, and washed the Christian world clean with their foul blood.

"Then it was discovered that there was no such thing as witches, and never had been. One does not know whether to laugh or to cry ... There are no witches. The witch text remains; only the practice has changed. Hellfire is gone, but the text remains. Infant damnation is gone, but the text remains. More than two hundred death penalties are gone from the law books, but the texts that authorized them remain!"

U.S. Senate Calls for Global Repeal of Blasphemy Laws

Senators James Lankford (R-OK) and Chris Coons (D-DE) have introduced a resolution that calls for the “global repeal of blasphemy, heresy, and apostasy laws.”

As AHA Legislative Director Matthew Bulger explained, “Blasphemy laws are meant to terrorize and endanger religious and secular minorities in their home countries, threatening free expression with long jail sentences or execution.” Bulger emphasized, “The new resolution urges countries that maintain these laws to act to protect religious and nonreligious minorities from torture or imprisonment by repealing them immediately.”

The wording of the resolution is identical to H.Res.439, which was introduced in the House in May of 2017 by *Representative Jamie Raskin* (D-MD) but went nowhere. A similar bipartisan resolution was introduced in 2015, but died in the House, too.

<http://friendlyatheist.patheos.com/2018/09/20/u-s-senate-introduces-resolution-calling-for-global-repeal-of-blasphemy-laws/>

God's love is unconditional and eternal

UNLESS YOU

Are gay (Lev 18:22)
Commit adultery (Ex 20:14) (including even admiring another woman: Matt 5:27-30)
Have long hair (1 Cor 11:14)
Are not circumscised (Gen 17:10)
Are a murderer (Ex 20:13)
Are not a murderer (Ex 32:27)
Are an alcoholic (Prov 20:1)
Are a woman (Gen 3:16)
Are circumcised (Gal 5:2)
Have sexual intercourse (1 Cor 7:1-40)
Have damaged male organs (Dea 23:1)
Use birth control (Gen 38:1-10)
Are pregnant or give birth (Lev 12:1-8)
Cross dress (Deu 22:5)
Have premarital sex (Deu 22:13-21)
Urinate in public (1 Sam 25:22)
Speak his name in vain (Lev 25:16).

Mrs. Newt Gingrich, the Catholic Church, and Newt

The November issue of the Atlantic features a terrific article, “Newt Gingrich Says You’re Welcome,” by McKay Coppins. Gingrich was the who pioneered the destructive tactics and ideology of Donald Trump.

“According to a transition official [after Trump’s election] Gingrich had little interest in giving up his lucrative private hustles, and was never really in the running for a Cabinet position. Instead, he had two requests: That Trump’s team leak that he was being considered for high office, and that Callista [his third wife], a lifelong Catholic, be named ambassador to the Holy See ...

“The Vatican gig was widely coveted, and there was some concern that Callista’s public history of adultery would prompt the pope to reject her appointment. But the Gingriches were friendly with a number of American cardinals, and Callista’s nomination sailed through.

“In Washington, the appointment was seen as a testament to the self-parodic nature of the Trump era – but in Rome, the arrangement has worked surprisingly well. Robert Mickens, a longtime Vatican journalist, told me that Callista is generally viewed as the ceremonial face of the embassy, while Newt – who told me he talks to the White House 10 to 15 times a week – acts as the ‘shadow ambassador’.”

More Tales of Clergy Sex Abuse

The October 20 Economist has a short piece on the new film, “Kler” (Polish for clergy), which has been seen by 3 million people in predominantly Catholic Poland since its release on September 28. The film, “inspired by real events,” is about three priests and their “drinking bouts, sexual trysts, and lucrative business deals. The film also shows the damage caused by pedophilia. On screen, actors read the testimony of adults who were abused by priests as children.”

If you can read Spanish, try Pepe Rodriguez’s – *The Sex Life of the Clergy and Pederasty in the Catholic Church: Sexual Crimes of the Clergy Against Minors: A Drama Silenced and Covered Up by the Bishops*. In the first book, Rodriguez estimates that 60% of priests in Spain are sexually active, 26% have “touched” minors of either sex, and 7% have “committed serious sexual abuses with minors.”