



The Utah Humanist

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Humanists of Utah is a Chapter of the American Humanist Association. We are a nonprofit corporation organized to advocate and promote ethical, rational, and democratic humanism among our membership and the larger community.



Humanism is a rational philosophy informed by science, inspired by art, and motivated by compassion. It affirms the dignity of each human being and supports individual liberty consonant with social and planetary responsibility. Humanism advocates participatory democracy, the open society, human rights and social justice. Free of supernaturalism, it recognizes human beings as part of nature and holds that values—be they religious, ethical, social, or political—have their source in human nature, experience, and culture. Humanism thus derives the goals of life from human need and interest rather than from theological or ideological abstractions, and asserts that humanity must take responsibility for its own destiny.

—*The Humanist*,
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The Moth Snowstorm: Nature and Joy ~Book Review~

The Moth Snowstorm: Nature and Joy by Michael McCarthy presents a compelling picture why we love the natural world. With a little nudge towards broadening our rational thought processes due to the overwhelming majesty of the wildness around us, he encourages us to dwell for at least a moment beyond what we can understand through our senses and then take care of that wildness.

He says, “We think of ourselves, especially since the decline of Christianity in the West, and its replacement by our current creed, liberal secular humanism, as rational beings entirely; we pride ourselves that, faced with a Problem, with a capital P, we may employ Reason, with a capital R, and naturally find a Solution, with a capital S. We believe that this will deliver, every time. Rationality is ingrained in a million mindsets. Yet the world does not always work like that (as those who lived through the two world wars, mired in chaos and evil, knew only too well). And there is another way of going about things in dealing with the mortal threats that our planet now faces, which is to consider, not what we do, but who we are.

“Most of us probably think we know. We do not give it a second thought. But in the last thirty years or so, a new understanding, by no means yet widespread or popularized, has begun to dawn of what it means to be human, based on a simple but monumental perception: the fifty thousand generations through which we evolved as hunter-gatherers are more important to our psychological make-up, even today, than the five hundred generations we have spent since agriculture began and with it, civilization. We possess the culture of the farmers, the subduers of nature, and the citizens who came after with their settled lives and their writing and law and architecture and money, yes of course we do, but deep down, beneath culture in the realms of instinct, at the profoundest levels of our psyche—the new vision has it—we remain the children of the Pleistocene, the world that was not subdued, where we lived as an integral part of it, in coming to be what we are. The legacy inside us has not been lost, and in many ways is controlling....

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September

Thursday, September 13, 2018
Eliot Hall
First Unitarian Church
569 S 1300 E, Salt Lake City
7:30 PM

Humanists of Utah will hold a Discussion Group format on the subject: *How can the evangelical religious movement support the most misogynistic, racist, immoral, and dishonest person to ever serve as President of the United States?* Board member Craig Wilkinson, MD will lead the discussion. All opinions are welcome to be aired.

The meeting will be held in Eliot Hall at the First Unitarian Church. The Discussion will be followed by informal discussion with light refreshments. The meeting is open to the interested public and while there is no admission charge, donations are always welcome.

Please come and bring a friend.

Support the AHA

Humanists of Utah urges you to support the American Humanist Association.

The AHA is dedicated to preserving individual rights and promoting nationally the philosophy of humanism.

Membership brings you the *Humanist* magazine and *Free Mind* newsletter six times a year.

Annual membership is only \$45.00 (**\$35 Introductory Rate**) and can be paid with plastic. Phone (800) 743-6646 or write to:

American Humanist Association
1777 T Street, NW
Washington DC 20009

Nature and Joy

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“Surveys have demonstrated that, shown different landscape images, people overwhelming favor one form in particular, one of open grassland interspersed with trees and a view to the horizon, and if possible water, and animal and bird life....

“The profounder implication...[is] that there persists, deep inside us, deep in our genes, an immensely powerful innate bond with the natural world...

I believe the bond is at the very heart of what it means to be human; that the natural world where we evolved is no mere neutral background, but at the deepest psychological level it remains our home, with all the intense emotional attachment which that implies—passionate feelings of belonging, of yearning, and of love...

“And there, at last, is the possibility of a new defense of nature, one more robust and all-encompassing than either the hopeful idealism of sustainable development or the hard-faced calculation of ecosystem services; there, may be the beginnings of a belief and an argument with which to shield the natural world in the terrible

century to come. The natural world is not separate from us, it is part of us...

“[We must] register the true degree of the planet’s predicament and the real magnitude of the processes we have set in train which may bring about our ruin...If loss of nature becomes a sort of essay subject,...we may lose sight of...the great wounding that it really is.”

Michael McCarthy then discusses the beauty of the earth and the losses that have and will ensue. He encourages us to become the kind of people who stay in touch with our own love of the earth, as difficult as that may be.

But isn’t that what being a humanist is? Thoughtful contact with our own home for the joy of it? And through that joy, we are made whole.

—Lauren Florence, MD



Notes:

- ◆ *General Meetings* are for all members and the general public. There are no admission charges.
- ◆ *Discussion Group* meetings are open to everyone. A different book or topic is covered every month.
- ◆ *Board Meetings* are planning and business sessions. They are open to all members.
- ◆ Eliot Hall is in the First Unitarian Church located at 569 South 1300 East in Salt Lake City.
- ◆ RE 201 is upstairs in the East Educational Building at the First Unitarian Church.

Humanists of Utah is enrolled in Smith's Inspiring Donations program. If you have a Smith's Fresh Value card, you can register it to benefit Humanists of Utah. Simply visit www.smithsfoodanddrug.com/inspire, create an account, associate it with your Fresh Values card number, and then enter NPO Number: KQ330 within your "account summary." All future purchases will now benefit HoU.

—Leona Blackbird

Upcoming Events

Meeting	Topic	Date	Time	Place
General Meeting	Discussion <i>Can we understand our political situation?</i>	Sept 13	7:30	Eliot Hall
Board Meeting	Chapter Business	Sept 20	7:30	Eliot Hall
General Meeting	Marijuana	Oct 11	7:30	Eliot Hall
Board Meeting	Chapter Business	Oct 18	7:30	Eliot Hall



Happy Humanist

Humanists of Utah

A Chapter of the American Humanist Association

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