



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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Silver and Gold

George Will, well-known conservative and libertarian columnist opines that our Constitution is a “Frame” to protect the more valuable document that is our Declaration of Independence. The Declaration arose from the Enlightenment, that period of history which marked a return to Renaissance principles that human knowledge is more important than the dogma of authoritarian rule which has dominated most of human history. “Frames are important, and silver is precious, but what is framed is more important and gold is more precious,” writes Will in the in the July 2019 issue of the *National Review*. (<https://www.nationalreview.com/2019/07/declaration-of-independence-illuminates-constitution/>). Our Constitution is silver, but the Declaration of Independence is gold.

Self-described Constitutional Originalists, perhaps valuing silver more highly than gold often dismiss the Declaration. A couple of examples will serve to illustrate my point: Consider the phrase oft used by Originalists, “Life, Liberty, and Property,” which is derived found in the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution. The “golden” version of these points is of course, “Life, Liberty, and Pursuit of Happiness” from the Declaration. Please note that the Founders who created the Constitutional Frame were all white, male, landowners. It should be no surprise their personal prejudices leaked into the building of the Frame. The Electoral College vote is perhaps the most glaring example of the Constitution being out of step with the Declaration. The 17th Amendment, which called for State’s populations to elect National Senators directly; before it’s passage in 1912 Senators were elected/appointed by State Legislatures. Without Electoral College George W. Bush

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Inside This Issue

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Meltdown

I've been enjoying this fall season a lot the last couple of weeks. Living where I do, in Holladay at the foot of Mt. Olympus, the view is spectacular. The mountain itself is awesome as you must look up to see the top of the mountain from where I live. While most residents in this valley are seeing the sun rise, it's nearly an hour or more before we see the sun here. Lately, in the late afternoon and near sunset, the sun really brings to life the autumn colors. And for the last couple of days, the foliage colors are enhanced by the mountain being snowcapped. It's delightful to be able to sit and take a good long look.

I chose Meltdown as the title of this column because Amy bought me the latest Scientific American titled "Meltdown," which is referring to the main article, "The Coming Collapse." The article is about the ongoing study of the Thwaites Ice Shelf and glacier on the Antarctic continent and how those studies have them predicting that the shelf will break off a lot sooner than previously predicted. The shelf covers about 1,000 square kilometers extending out some 50 kilometers and is part of a much larger glacier which holds enough ice to raise sea levels by about two feet. This coming collapse would be more surprising if we hadn't been seeing news about giant icebergs coming off Antarctica for decades. One thing the findings of these studies points to is that things are happening sooner than the estimates from thirty years ago. The article is well written, fairly long and packed with information.

Thinking about thirty years ago reminded me of one of the dumbest examples ever used to poo poo the scientific prediction that melting ice will raise sea levels. It goes something like this. If you have a glass of water with ice in it and the ice melts, the level in the glass does not rise. Well, that is basically right, but the fact is that most of the ice on this planet is not in the oceans, it is on land, i.e., mountain glaciers, Antarctica, Greenland, northern areas of Canada and Russia. That's the kind of crap you hear on talk radio and garbage web sites where real science is nowhere to be found.

Another Magazine I have been reading lately is the one I now receive as a member of the Population Connection. It's a high-quality magazine with articles like "New United Nations Population Estimates and projections." This latest issue also states the prediction that the global population will reach 8 billion on November 15 this year. I feel this group is also on the right track as they advocate for the empowerment of women as one of the main ways to slow population growth. I think you should check them out.

—Robert Lane

Silver and Gold

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would not have been elected President; much less the twice-impeached one.

Why are rights enjoyed by some citizens not enjoyed by fellow citizens who live in different state? Isn't the right to vote shared by all? Why don't we have national standards about how elections are administered; voted on, counted, and accepted. Why are all women not able to make determinations on how, when, and if they reproduce?

The United State of America is a wonderful place to live, but not quite perfect. One of the finest features of our Constitution is that it can be amended. I support the concept that is the first line: We the People. Couple this with Lincoln's, "of the people, by the people, and for the people," from his Gettysburg Address and the result what I think should be philosophy of our government.

—Wayne Wilson



Humanists of Utah meetings are open to the public and free of any admission charge. A discussion and light refreshments follow the speaker's presentation. Come join us and **bring a friend!**

Disclaimer: The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of Humanists of Utah nor the American Humanist Association. Reprinting of articles is permitted for humanist groups promoting the interests of humanism if attribution is properly stated.



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Humanists of Utah

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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.

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All Public in person
meetings are CANCELLED
again until further notice
Due to the Pandemic



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A Chapter of the American Humanist Association

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