

Director of American Humanist Association to Speak in SF



The **Director of the American Humanist Association** will speak in San Francisco at Schroeder's on **Sunday, July 12, at 6:00 PM.**

Roy Speckhardt, executive director of the Washington DC based American Humanist Association (AHA) will speak on growing the freethought movement. His talk is jointly sponsored by East Bay Atheists, San Francisco Atheists and CFI San Francisco.

"Growing the Freethought Movement in a Faith-Based Society"

Is it worth risking offense to spread the freethought message? Can we be clear about our identity without rustling progressive faithful feathers? Humanists, atheists and other freethinkers, be they religious or secular in their approach to philosophy, can unite to bring freethought to the forefront of our faith-based society.

HisHis commentary on freethought and progressive political issues frequently appears in print and other media. Also speaking will be Maggie Ardiente, the AHA's director of development, who will provide an overview of what the AHA is doing for freethought today.

Info: [Larry Hicok](mailto:larry@larryhicok.com) 510-222-7580

[Schroeder's Restaurant](#), rear dining room, 240 Front Street. SF Financial District, 2 blocks north of Market, between California and Sacramento Streets. Use California Street cable car, or BART/MUNI Embarcadero stop. Parking on street or at nearby garage. Restaurant and bar remain open after meeting.

July Program Meeting: Tommi Avicelli Mecca



This month our guest speaker is writer, artist and activist [Tommi Avicolti Mecca](#). Tommi (and John Radogno) entertained us at our Summer Solstice Picnic last year, and he was our speaker at January's meeting. Join us!

We'll send an update later with details of his talk. Meanwhile, mark your calendar!

6:00 pm Saturday, July 25, 2009

[Schroeder's Restaurant](#), rear dining room, 240 Front Street. SF Financial District, 2 blocks north of Market, between California and Sacramento Streets. Use California Street cable car, or BART/MUNI Embarcadero stop. Parking on street or at nearby garage. Restaurant and bar remain open after meeting.

San Francisco Atheists is an affiliate of American Atheists. You can help American Atheists fight for your rights by joining for \$35 per year. As a subscriber of this newsletter, you can also request a free 6 month trial membership. Join at www.atheists.org or call 908-276-7300.

East Bay Atheists Meeting



This month, East Bay Atheists watches James Carroll's documentary, *Constantine's Sword*, a serious examination by a liberal Catholic of the barbaric history of Christianity. Carroll begins his exploration with the recent scandal at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. Evangelical Christians had acquired considerable power in the institution, and were forcefully pressing all non-Christians to accept Jesus. Carroll focuses on the plight of a Jewish cadet, beginning his chronicle of Christianity's tradition of hatred of the Jews from the

time of Constantine to the Holocaust. While accepting the myth of the historical Jesus, he points out the many myths surrounding Constantine's proclamation of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire. Also mentioned is Constantine's barbaric behavior in having his wife and son killed.

The official dislike of the Jews as Christ killers found perfect expression in the forced conversion of Jews around Europe, followed by the Inquisition, which understandably questioned just how sincere the newly Christian Jews were in their acceptance of Jesus. A few centuries later, we have the wholesale liquidation of the Jews in the Holocaust. Here Carroll leaves out the part played by the followers of Luther, instead concentrating on the alliance between the Vatican and the Fascists, especially the Nazis.

Later we learn how Carroll, a Priest in his early years, left the clergy to have a family, mainly because he strongly disapproved of the reactionary politics of the Church. Like many others in his generation, the Vietnam War forced an awakening in his consciousness.

Carroll understands just how dangerous the ideology of obedience to authority in the name of religion is. The enemy is evil, and we are good. With God on our side, we shall conquer evil. Unfortunately this time honored religious tradition is far more deadly now, as we live in the era of weapons of mass destruction — not the make believe ones that justified the invasion of Iraq, but the real one's found in the arsenals of many governments around the world. Many of these governments are dangerously influenced by religious fervor.

Please join us in watching this documentary, and then discussing it.

Meeting is **Sunday, July 19**, 1:30 - 3:30 PM in the Berkeley Main Library, 3rd Floor Meeting Room. 2090 Kittredge Street, One Block From Downtown Berkeley BART.

BART Access: From the downtown Berkeley BART Station, walk 1.5 blocks south on Shattuck Avenue, then turn right on Kittredge. The library is a half block down the street on the left.

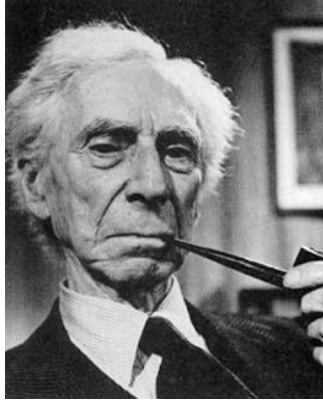
Parking: The city parking lot at Allston & Harold Way, a short block from the library, is \$5 for the entire day on Sunday. If you don't mind walking, take University to MLK, turn right and then instead of proceeding left on Allston to the parking lot, turn right. In several blocks you will see parking on the side streets.

Information: Larry Hicok, Coordinator: 510-222-7580 Ski Grabowski, Treasurer: 510-652-8350

Joke Of The Month



Quote Of The Month



"I am myself a dissenter from all religions, and I hope that every kind of religious belief will die out. I do not believe that, on the balance, religious belief has been a force for good.... I regard it as belonging to the infancy of human reason, and to a stage of development which we are outgrowing."

-- **Bertrand Russell**, *"Skeptical Essays"*, 1928

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