



Humanists Hawaii

NEWSLETTER

August 2006

August meeting at Krauss Hall

Humanism and Life in the Here and Now

Discussion led by David Mielke

*August 27, 2006
10:30 a.m.*

*Krauss Hall 112
University of Hawaii*

For some time our group has concentrated its attention on the wide application of Humanism in the world surrounding us. We've heard presentations and discussed Humanism in relation to current morality and politics, in relation to various arts, legal and illegal forms of prejudice toward atheists, gays, women, racial minorities, etc.

These are all important applications of Humanistic thought. Applications that cry out for our active participation. However, during the next few meetings of 2006, we'd like to focus our attention on our American roots. That is, reexamining our origins as an American organization and our current roots and beliefs.

Generally speaking, I think our group regards Humanism as a broad category of mainly [ethical philosophies](#) that affirm the dignity and worth of all people, based on the ability to determine [right and wrong](#) by appeal to universal human qualities — particularly compassion and [rationalism](#). Humanism thus promotes the methods of science, openness of thought, and democracy. Humanism is an assumption and a basic component of a multitude of various approaches to [philosophical](#) systems, and is also incorporated into many schools of religious thought.

Humanism entails a commitment to the search for truth and morality through human means in support of human interests. In focusing on the capacity for self-determination, humanism rejects transcendental justifications, such as a dependence on [faith](#), the supernatural, or divinely revealed texts. Humanists endorse [universal morality](#) based on the commonality of [human nature](#), suggesting that solutions to our social and cultural problems cannot be [parochial](#).

For this meeting, I invite all members to read and reflect upon the interview with Herb Silverman beginning on page 4 of this newsletter. Herb is one of the most active people in Humanism today. His thoughts on the Secular Coalition, politics and "positivism atheism" are central to Humanism and quite worthy of consideration – even debate, if necessary.

Let's use this meeting to determine our perception of the role of Humanism today. And the methods and activities we will use to achieve its goals.

Some parts of my announcement are taken from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia on the net. The references are Wikipedia's and are quite encyclopedic.

Interfaith meeting to explore similarities

Speakers from 12 different faiths will explore their common beliefs at an interfaith symposium Sept. 4, 2006.

The ways various religions perceive an eternal being, what righteous acts are encouraged and the role of sacred foods and fasting will be explained.

The program, sponsored by All Believers Network, will be from 9 am to 4:30 pm at Jisso Center, Seicho-

No Ie Hawaii, 47-451 Hui Aeko Place, Kaneohe.

Kent Keith, author of *The Paradoxical Commandments*, will be keynote speaker.

The \$20 cost for reservations by Aug. 25 (\$25 later) includes a continental breakfast, served after 7:30 am, and lunch.

Call Saleem Ahmed, 371-9360, or register online at www.allbelievers.net.

Center for Inquiry Responds to President Bush's Block of Embryonic Stem-Cell Research

Issues White Paper Analyzing the Administration's Policy

Secular Humanism Online News

On Wednesday, July 19th, President Bush issued the first veto of his presidency, rejecting a bill that would have removed some restrictions on federal funding of embryonic stem-cell research.

Stem cells are primal undifferentiated cells that retain the ability to copy of themselves when they divide differentiate into other cell types.

The Center for Inquiry vigorously opposes the Bush administration's policy on this issue, which it describes as "as ill-advised as it is harmful." The Center's Office of Public Policy, located in Washington, DC, has prepared and issued a white paper on embryonic stem-cell research – analyzing in more detail arguments for and against such research. The Center believes that this paper will contribute significantly to the continuing debate over this important issue.

Paul Kurtz, chairman and founder of the Center for Inquiry, declared that "a religious coterie in Washington is attempting to thwart scientific progress, all on archaic grounds, by claiming that the 'soul' is implanted in a biological process." Kurtz pointed out that such antiscientific attitudes increasingly threaten America's future as the preeminent scientific and technological nation. "Bush has blatantly defied the will of the American people; this research will most likely continue unabated in Europe and the Pacific Rim," said Kurtz.

Ronald Lindsay, Legal Director of the Center's Office of Public Policy and author of the Center's white paper, said that as a result of Bush's veto "immeasurable potential good resulting from scientific research in which [embryos] could be used will be delayed or lost needlessly."

Lindsay believes that the Bush administration's policy is based on a flawed and indefensible view of the moral and developmental status of the embryo. The Bush administration considers spare embryos from IVF procedures, which are destined to be discarded, as the equivalent of human persons, even though they lack most of the capacities and properties of human persons and have absolutely no prospect of developing such capacities and properties.

"The Bush policy on stem-cell research demonstrates once again that slipshod science and misguided ethics combine to make bad policy," said Lindsay. Once again, the Bush administration has chosen the interests of fantasy and mythology over those of reality and science.

The white paper can be read and downloaded as a printable PDF file by going to www.centerforinquiry.net/StemCell.pdf.

State of Hawaii Data Book 2005 Now Available on the Internet

Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism

The Dept of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT) has released the 38th annual edition of the *State of Hawaii Data Book* on the DBEDT web site. It may be viewed or downloaded at <http://www.hawaii.gov/dbedt/info/economic/databook/db2005/>. The *State Data Book* is the most comprehensive source for geographical, social, economic, and political information relating to Hawaii.

"The 2005 State Data Book not only contains statistics collected from other sources but also the results of studies done by DBEDT," said DBEDT Director Theodore E. Liu. "With diminishing data services from the private sector, this report remains the main resource for Hawaii-specific data."

The *State of Hawaii Data Book* is produced by the Department's Research and Economic Analysis Division. The new, 2005 edition features 797 tables.

Here are just a few examples of interesting information that can be found in the new *State Data Book*:

- 2005 was a record year for tourism and construction in Hawaii.
- Visitor arrivals reached 7.4 million and \$11.9 billion in spending, while private construction permits topped \$3.5 billion, up 28% from 2004.
- Most Hawaii visitors from California: 1.9 million
- State that sent fewest visitors: Delaware, 5,897
- Hawaii visitors from Japan: 1.5 million
- On July 1, 2005, the state's population age 65 years and over accounted for 13.7% of total population.
- The C&C of Honolulu and Kauai County had the highest proportion of this age group at 14.1%.
- Hawaii ranked 13th highest in the nation in 2004 for workers holding more than one job – 7.6% of all jobholders in Hawaii compared with 5.4% nationally.
- The sales receipts for establishments with no paid employees (proprietors) grew at a faster rate for Hawaii (30%) than for the nation as a whole (25%) between 2000 and 2004.
- Top names for new baby boys in 2004 were: Joshua, Noah, Ethan, Elijah, Jacob, Matthew, Michael, Tyler, Dylan, Micah
- For girls: Emma, Isabella, Emily, Kayla, Madison, Taylor, Mia, Chloe, Alexis*, Alyssa*, Hannah* (*Tie)
- Marriages performed in Hawaii last year: 28,843, but only 9,225 involved Hawaii residents
- Average age of groom: 33
- Average age of bride: 31
- Percentage of those previously married: 38

Letters by HH people

To Our Senators

In honor of the defeat of the flag protection amendment

The senate saved the folks in the USA from being committed to Hades. To worship a flag is idolatry. The command is: No Idols; No Graven Images. It would be like the Swastika worshiped by National Socialists but for the US it would be an idol for National Plutocracy.

Thank you Sens. Inouye and Akaka for saving us from the wrath of U-Know-What.

Ed Corl

Andi and Jack Sechrest

Jack Sechrest is a member of the national Board of Directors of the AHA and founder and chairman of Humanists of West Suburban Chicagoland

Dear Mr Sechrest:

I saw a neighbor last night at the store and she asked me why we don't send our local Newsletter to their family. I was shocked as I didn't know she was a Humanist! She said she sends in her dues each year and never hears from us.

Am I disappointed? Am I frustrated? Am I a little unhappy? Yes, yes, yes!

I have asked AHA national to share with us names of Humanists who live on this small Island in the middle of the Pacific because we have an active group, I pay my dues to the National Chapter, and we have a great little Newsletter and a great Website.

Does it seem fair when we are trying to attract Humanists to meetings, to get them involved with local functions or to give other members assistance?

I wish there were some way that you would let us know who in Hawaii is a paying member.

"Andi" van der Voort

Andi,

I appreciate your disappointment in not getting access to other AHA Members in your area. That is exactly the situation I work with. I am still finding AHA members who have never let me know that they were there, and the AHA protects the list to the point of exasperation.

I talked with Jamie Padula at AHA headquarters. He will help you with direct mailings. You could send your newsletter to him and he would forward it to the members in your area . . .

I most strongly encourage every chapter to become a membership chapter. I don't think there need be any serious losses of membership if you construct a "friends" list and continue with business as usual. There is that second class of associates that have the rank of visitor instead of member, however, the AHA provides benefits are valuable and worth going for.

. . . I'll carry these concerns to the Board and Administration, and follow through as far as I can go.

Jack Sechrest, HWSC

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See scheduled events, pictures of officers and current and archived newsletters at our website:

www.hawaii.humanists.net/

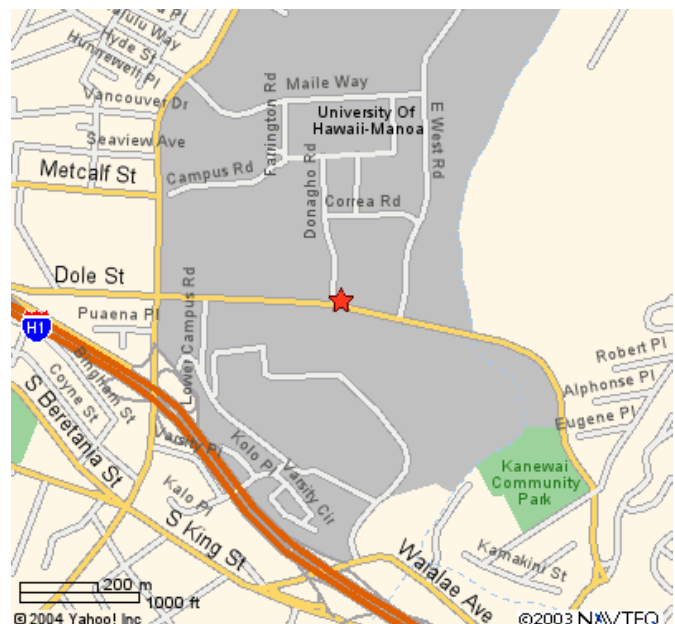
If you'd like to receive your personal email at the prestigious Humanists.net address, contact WebMaster Mike at the address or phone number above.

HH's Meeting Place

Room 112 Krauss Hall

Driving on Dole Street past the University, turn mauka on East West Road then ewa on Correa Road. Drive to the end and turn makai toward the circle with the big tree. There's free parking on part of the circle, on the other side of Krauss Hall and various lots around campus. The entrance to Krauss Hall 112 is at the Diamondhead end of the lily pond.

We'll have an HH sign by the door. Hope to see you all.



Herb Silverman, President, Secular Coalition for America

interviewed by [Marilyn Westfall](#), [theinfidels.org](#)

Herb Silverman has been a Professor of Mathematics at the College of Charleston since 1976. In the 1990s, after learning that atheists were ineligible, by law, to hold elected office in South Carolina, he ran for office and pursued overturning the law in court, succeeding with this effort after a eight-year battle and a unanimous decision by the South Carolina Supreme Court. He currently serves as President of the Secular Coalition for America, and publishes, lectures, and debates.

Marilyn Westfall is a member of the Board of Directors of [theinfidels.org](#)

Herb Silverman, thank you for agreeing to this interview. I'd like to ask you first about the Secular Coalition for America. You have been a creative force in the organization and now serve as its president.

1. Tell us about the genesis of the Secular Coalition. How did the idea for this project come about, and whom can we thank for bringing the organization to fruition?

You say "genesis" and I say "evolution." Many fine national nontheistic organizations had for years been doing their own thing with little backing for worthwhile efforts of other organizations. So in 1998, I sent a letter to leaders and suggested we could have a more significant impact if we began cooperating.

A couple of years later, several national leaders agreed to meet, exchange ideas, and focus on the 95% we had in common rather than the 5% that set us apart. This led to the "Coalition for the Community of Reason," which met periodically. Though talk is good, some of us were hoping to see such talk lead to joint action and activism. Instead, an inordinate amount of time was spent on process and debating whether we should be a publicly visible organization or simply a forum to exchange ideas.

When these differences became irreconcilable, in 2002, four of the ten organizations meeting as the Coalition for the Community of Reason evolved into the Secular Coalition for America. Those four founding members were Atheist Alliance International, Institute for Humanist Studies, Internet Infidels, and Secular Student Alliance. Instead of a loose confederation, the Secular Coalition became a formal organization with an activist mission: To increase the visibility and respectability of nontheistic viewpoints in the United States and to protect and strengthen the secular character of our government as the best guarantee of freedom for all. Since then, three more national organizations joined the Secular Coalition: American Humanist Association, Freedom From Religion Foundation, and Society for Humanistic Judaism.

2. It seems the Secular Coalition has developed fairly rapidly considering that it now has several member organizations supporting it and employs a full-time lobbyist, Lori Lipman Brown. How hard was it to structure the organization and to bring together various groups to form a non-profit? Give us a sense of what the coalition member organizations contribute, and the kind of work Lori has done and continues to do.

Member organizations are committed to making a political difference in our culture. That is why we filed under a section of the IRS code that allows unlimited political lobbying. Our primary initial focus was to raise enough money to hire a lobbyist to Congress and finally give the freethought community a voice in Washington. All seven member organizations are contributing as best they can. Donations include money, significant dedicated time of professional staff, promotion through fundraising events, mailings, and/or advertisements, and office space and support.

On September 19, 2005, Lori Lipman Brown became our first Director/Lobbyist, and the first and only registered lobbyist for freethought in Washington DC. We also hired Ron Millar as Associate Director. It is a pleasure to see how well they interact and complement each other. We are especially grateful that, despite taking significantly lower salaries than they were used to, they agreed to accept positions in a cause to which they were so committed. In a short time, Lori has done an excellent job of increasing the visibility of nontheism in the media and working with other DC groups on issues of common concern.

3. I've seen Lori's appearances on FOX, notably with Bill O'Reilly. In fact, FOX seems to be most interested in giving non-believers air time, either on television or radio. Are we non-believers foils for conservative media personalities? Why do you think we lack media coverage by mainstream networks and cable offshoots?

Lori did a terrific job on O'Reilly! They may invite us hoping for a food fight, but it gives us a chance to get our message out and surprise others by showing how reasonable we sound. I think some mainstream networks are so concerned about the so-called "liberal bias" that they avoid giving us a forum. They often prefer countering voices from the religious right with voices from the religious center or left, ignoring those of us whose moral choices are based on evidence rather than faith.

4. Let me ask you a few questions about yourself. I hope you don't mind. Many atheists are children of religious families. Tell us a bit about your childhood. Did you have a religious upbringing? When did you realize that you were an atheist?

I was born and raised a Jew who had a *Bar Mitzvah* in the Orthodox tradition. I now support

Secular Coalition member, Society for Humanistic Judaism. I stopped believing in God before I had even heard of the A-word. At 15, when I read Bertrand Russell's *Why I am not a Christian*, I learned there was a word (atheist) to describe my lack of god beliefs. My family was disappointed that I stopped performing rituals, but we never discussed theological views. Here is the only prayer I ever recite, and then only to tease my wife Sharon: "Thank God I was not born a woman." Really, this is a daily morning prayer of Orthodox male Jews! There is no comparable prayer for women.

5. A few years ago, you wrote the sermon "Positive Atheism" and delivered it at a UU church; you also submitted the sermon for a contest sponsored by the UU Infidels and won the Robert Ingersoll award for best sermon on atheism. What inspired you? What are the origins of "positive atheism?" How do you balance rightful criticism of theism with your message to remain positive, as atheists?

I used the term "positive atheism" because I was so often asked why atheists were so negative. I even had people tell me they didn't think they could go on living if they stopped believing in God. At my sermon, I wore a T-shirt that said, "Smile, there is no Hell." I pointed out that this is an important message of positive atheism. We don't believe in hell or eternal punishment, and that's worth smiling about.

Critical thinking about politics or religion is not negative. Most people agree when it comes to politics, but think it is rude or disrespectful to criticize religious beliefs. Respect for religious faith, whatever that faith might be, plays an important role in perpetuating human conflict. I mentioned in my sermon that "we must not be so open-minded that our brains fall out." I think the best way for atheists, or anyone else, to remain positive is to have a sense of humor.

6. You once ran for office in South Carolina, where you live and teach, to test the law that no atheist could hold public office. You spent 8 years in court to overturn this religious test. What was that like? Did you receive a great deal of support? What did the general public have to say about your challenge to the law?

The experience changed my life in many wonderful ways. Before 1990, I was an apathetic atheist. It didn't seem any more important for me to say I was an atheist than to say I was a round-earther. It seemed like the sensible default position. When I learned that atheists in South Carolina could not hold public office, I became committed to this civil rights issue.

As an educator, my campaign to change the law by running for Governor was an opportunity to educate the public about discrimination against atheists. I think most South Carolinians now believe atheists should be allowed to hold public office, but I hope to see the day they will actually be willing to vote for a candidate who happens to be an atheist. The best thing that

happened to me during my gubernatorial run was that I met my wife Sharon – in Church. She heard me speak at the Unitarian Church and offered to help in my campaign. She became my one and only groupie.

7. Returning to your roll as a spokesperson for non-believers, I'd like to ask you about your debate on the topic "Does American Religion Undermine American Values?" The debate was held in Oxford, England. How did the debate come about? Who was your opponent? What did you gather about the way the English regard America's latest "religious awakening?"

I was invited because I was president of the Secular Coalition for America. My opening line received a nice laugh: "You just heard Richard Lowry (Editor of *National Review*) mention what it's like to be a conservative in New York City. Now I'll talk about what it's like to be an atheist in South Carolina." Here is where I received the most applause: "In the melting pot called America, we are one nation under the Constitution (or maybe under Canada), but not one nation under God. In fact, given how the religious right opposes the teaching of evolution, or any scientific or social view that conflicts with a literal interpretation of the Bible, we are really becoming one nation under-educated."

If we weren't such a powerful country, I think the English would regard our "religious awakening" as quaint and amusing. Instead, they regard us as scary.

8. Lastly, what do you forecast, in regards to American politics and religious influence? What are the greatest problems we non-believers face? What hopeful indications do you see?

I'm more comfortable working for change than prognosticating change. I don't think of us as non-believers. We believe in a lot of things. We just don't believe in any gods. Christians are also non-believers in all gods, except for one (or maybe three). I think we can become more influential if we promote a positive evidence-based agenda. We need to minimize whining about past injustices or unhappy religious upbringing. We won't win friends and influence people on the basis of victimhood. I expect we will be viewed in a better light when more atheists come out of the closet. While just about everyone personally has friends who are atheists, most probably don't know they have atheist friends.

Finally, I am hopeful that we can become more like the Christian Coalition. Though we disagree with everything they stand for, they had a terrific model. They brought people together who had common interests and made the nation take notice. We must build and sustain coalitions among freethinkers, as well as between freethinkers and liberal religionists. We must show our strength in numbers and work for opportunities to get a place at the media and political tables.

Mt. Soledad Cross Dishonors Veterans, Say Humanists

American Humanist Association

On August 14, President George W. Bush will signed legislation granting federal ownership of the [Mount Soledad Easter Cross](#), renamed the Mount Soledad Veterans Memorial after litigation commenced 17 years ago. It is a 29-foot Latin cross that has for decades been on city property in San Diego, CA. The legislation allows the federal government to purchase the property so it can preserve the cross as a national military war memorial.

"This is an attempted end run on the US Constitution," said Fred Edwards, director of communications for the American Humanist Association (AHA). "That the federal government would intervene in a purely local church-state dispute is an example of election-year politics at its worst. Other such local cases have been settled without so much fanfare."

Christian crosses on federal parklands have been ruled unconstitutional in the past.

Bush's signing of the legislation was allowed to proceed without delay despite a request for a temporary restraining order by the plaintiffs. The request was denied on Friday by US District Court Judge Barry Moskowitz, though he noted that he would hear arguments addressing the constitutionality of the transfer once it is completed.

"It is disappointing that Judge Moskowitz declined the request," commented Roy Speckhardt, executive director of the AHA. "Transferring control of the cross to the federal government does nothing to resolve the basic issues of the case."

The lawsuit challenging the Mt. Soledad cross was begun 17 years ago by Philip Paulson. Paulson has been an active member of the AHA for over 30 years and is a local Humanist leader in San Diego. Steve Trunk recently joined Paulson in his suit. Both Paulson and Trunk are atheists and veterans of the Vietnam War, and they have argued that they are effectively treated as second-class citizens by the government's sanction of the memorial.

"Recognizing and honoring the sacrifices of our veterans is important," continued Speckhardt. "But the issue here is that the Mount Soledad Easter Cross can only be construed as propagating the Christian faith. That excludes the scores of nontheists, Jews, Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, and others who are citizens—rendering them second-class. To view the cross as a veterans memorial fails to consider that many non-Christians gave their lives for this great nation. Therefore, this supposed memorial dishonors many who are among America's bravest veterans."

In harmony with Humanist opinion and that of church-state separation groups, judicial rulings have consistently declared the cross a sectarian religious symbol and have found its placement on government-

owned land a clear breach in the Jeffersonian wall separating church and state. On May 3 a federal judge had ordered that the city of San Diego remove the cross by August 1 or risk a \$5,000 per day fine. That order was blocked by Supreme Court Associate Justice Anthony Kennedy and later rendered void by congressional legislation transferring ownership of the land to the federal government.

Humanist Statement on the Hezbollah-Israeli War

American Humanist Association

The conflict between Israel and Hezbollah that exploded in July constitutes a humanitarian disaster. Public debate is largely focused on questions of blame and whether the Israeli response to Hezbollah provocation was disproportionate. Many humanists believe, however, that the underlying conflicts and controversies that led to the hostilities must also be addressed if peace is ever to come to the Middle East.

The present conflict is the product of a toxic mix of religious and historical differences, leading both sides to subordinate their sense of common humanity to the crisis mentality of their in group. It seems unlikely to us that something resembling peace will ever come to the Middle East until and unless the antagonists rediscover their common humanity.

In this context, the principle of the separation of religion and government becomes critically important. It follows that US policy toward the Middle East should more explicitly reflect the goal of secularism than it does now. If we genuinely want the countries in that region to become more democratic and stable, we should start by putting more emphasis in our public and private diplomacy toward advocating the separation of religion and government in their societies.

Reform can and should begin at home. Fundamentalist Christians, who fervently believe that chaos in the Middle East is a necessary first step to the achievement of their millennial goals, heavily influence our present administration. Such sectarian fortune telling has no place in a rational country's calculation of its national interest. Future historians will see the present high level of influence as a singularly bizarre aberration. Humanists are convinced that mainstream America must decisively reject "prophecy" as a guide to national policy.

Christian fundamentalists have a right to hold their own religious views, but the rest of us should not be coerced into following national policies that are harmful to the national interest and which extend human suffering abroad.

Carleton Coon is the Vice President of the American Humanist Association, former US Ambassador to Nepal, and author of *One Planet, One People, Beyond 'Us vs. Them.'*

"Who Killed the Electric Car?"

review by Ed Spivey Jr., SojoMail

They say you're not paranoid if people are really out to get you. The same can hold true for conspiracy theorists who walk the earth in constant vigil against the dark collusion behind every thwarted effort for human good. Those twitchy bands of nervous nellys – their pockets stuffed with yellowed news clippings on the Kennedy assassination – are no doubt high-fiving the release of "Who Killed the Electric Car?" a documentary that, at least in this one case, proves them 100% correct.

In 1992, after a billion dollars in research, General Motors produced 200 EVs, an all-electric vehicle that would comply with California's mandate that a zero-emissions car comprise up to 10% of the total fleet sold in that state. To those lucky few who were able to lease one, the car quickly became an object of love, smugness, and downright obsession. As promised, the car could travel at highway speeds for up to 100 miles on a single charge, more than enough for the average daily commute. The drivers reported nothing but passionate praise for their new rides, and environmentalists saw this as the first wave of a technology that would dramatically reduce air pollution and dependence on foreign oil.

They were wrong.

The movie is generous in its blame for the unconscionable demise of this miracle car, and aims its first barbs at a fickle driving public suspicious of anything new. It's bona fides for fairness thus established, the filmmakers quickly focus in on the real culprits: GM and the oil companies.

If the film is to be believed (cue conspiracists), GM soon realized the EV would compete against its gas-fueled cars. Additionally, the company worried about dealers losing their primary profit centers – periodic maintenance and replacement parts that electric cars would never need. Servicing the EV meant occasionally rotating the tires and replenishing the

windshield washer fluid. A car company that had for decades built planned obsolescence into its vehicles had inadvertently produced a car that owners might never need to replace.

For their part, oil companies financed a multimillion dollar lobbying campaign against California's air quality regulations. Chevron purchased the patents of a superior battery that would have given the EV even more range, and then kept that technology from the marketplace. The pro-oil Bush administration weighed in by promoting hydrogen technology and then pressured a California regulatory agency to kill the zero emissions requirement in favor of this unproven fuel. In hopes of delaying the proven electric technology, other automobile manufacturers - including the now-green Honda and Toyota – hopped on the hydrogen promotional bandwagon despite the fact that production and infrastructure is decades away, if not a complete pipe dream.

Eventually, GM recalled all 200 of its electric cars and crushed them, sometimes within view of their heartbroken owners, many of whom were arrested for attempting to block the action. An aerial view of dozens of flattened EVs in a desert storage area bears mute condemnation of the corporations that purposely kept an innovative and environmentally conscientious technology from reaching the public.

"Who Killed the Electric Car" ends on a hopeful note of grassroots activism and ingenuity, and portends that green technology will eventually win out. But this feel-good finale does little for the melancholy the viewer feels after watching this eloquent and sad eulogy to the little car that could have.

Ed Spivey Jr. is art director of Sojourners.

"Who Killed the Electric Car? Is currently showing at Varsity Theater in Honolulu.

Do you think that humans should search relentlessly for truth, that they feel compassion for all humankind and determine and promote what is right?

Do you think people can live meaningful, responsible and ethical lives without the need for believing in supernatural beings or places?

Would you like to join a group that shares your thoughts. Humanists – generally – believe these things.

If you'd like to join Humanists Hawaii, please complete and mail this form with a check for your annual membership fee of \$25 if you're single, \$40 if you're a couple, to: Marcia Lambeth at 825 Coolidge St. #310 Honolulu HI 96826.

Dr/Mr/Ms _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phones: Home: _____ Work: _____ email: _____

Prosecutor Drops Criminal Charges Against Homeless Advocates

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii Foundation

Honolulu – In a victory for protest rights and the homeless, the American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii Foundation ([ACLU of Hawaii](#)) announced August 14 that the [Department of the Prosecuting Attorney](#) (DPA) has dropped all criminal charges against Utu Langi and Julia Matsui Estrella, advocates and supporters of the homeless. Langi and Matsui Estrella were arrested on March 28, 2006 for trespassing while peacefully protesting on the grounds of Honolulu Hale. The ACLU of Hawaii and Rick Sing, a cooperating attorney from the criminal defense firm of Hawk Sing & Ignacio, requested the DPA to dismiss the charges because the advocates were lawfully exercising their constitutional rights to protest in response to the [City and County of Honolulu's](#) (C&C) decision to begin nighttime closure of Ala Moana Beach Park.

“The dismissals are a victory for the houseless community and for free speech rights. Hopefully, City officials and the HPD will now understand that houseless persons have the right to get their messages out to City officials via peaceful protests on the steps and on the lawn of City Hall without being shoved to the sidewalk or harassed by police,” said Julia Matsui Estrella.

Utu Langi added, “I am deeply thankful that these

charges have been dismissed because it means that my attempt to speak for those with no voice was successful and that perhaps the voices of the homeless may finally be heard.”

“We are thrilled that these charges have been dropped and that Julia and Utu’s right to voice their criticism of C&C policies has been vindicated. Our hope is that the City and HPD will begin to question policies and procedures that include arresting peaceful protesters,” noted cooperating attorney Rick Sing.

The ACLU of Hawaii has filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of Langi and Matsui Estrella against the C&C, C&C officials and a number of individual HPD officers, which seeks an undetermined amount in damages and attorney fees for the violation of their constitutional rights.

The ACLU of Hawaii also filed a second federal lawsuit last week on behalf of two clergymen, Bob Nakata and Sam Cox, and a religious group, The Interfaith Alliance Hawaii, charging that the City and County of Honolulu violated their constitutional rights by prohibiting them from demonstrating on the grounds of City Hall on the sole basis of the content of the message or the identity of the messenger.



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