



Humanists Hawaii

NEWSLETTER

January 2007

January 15

Dr. Martin Luther King Day

***Parade 9 to 11:30 am
Magic Island to Kapiolani Park.***

The [Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Coalition-Hawaii](#) has prepared a number of events for the 18th annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday celebration, Monday, January 15, 2006. The ideals of civil and human rights will again be in the forefront of the celebration. Humanists are invited to join them to celebrate these ideals.

In past years, Humanists have had difficulty organizing a group of participants because most of our members also belong to other groups that will be marching. Last year, Humanists marched with NION, PFLAG, Unitarians, and other community groups. We have no current plans to march as an HH group.

A memorial program, "Lift Every Voice" will be held Sunday January 14 at 3 pm at the Mission Memorial

Auditorium (Diamondhead of Honolulu Hale).

The MLK parade will begin assembling at Magic Island at 7:30 am January 15 and, beginning at 9:00 am, will march to Kapiolani Park where there will be a Unity Rally starting at about 11 am.

There will be a Bell Ringing Ceremony at the Nagasaki Peace Bell on the Honolulu Hale civic center ground at 5:30pm the evening before the parade. It will be followed by a torch light march to Iolani Palace.

From January 5 to 26th 2007 there will also be a Nonviolent Art Exhibit, "Keep Your Eyes on the Prize," in honor of Dr. King and Queen Liliuokalani at the Pacific Traditions Gallery at 19 N Pauahi St. in Chinatown. This exhibit will contain original artworks in a wide variety of media and styles.

January meeting at Krauss Hall

A discussion of Participatory Economics led by Jim Lomont

***January 28, 2007
10:30 a.m.***

Although not a professional economist, HH member Jim Lomont has long been a student of economic policy. Of particular interest to him is the incorporation of humanistic democracy into a successful and sustainable economy. At the December meeting, Jim gave the members present copies of two papers to read in preparation for the January discussion.

"[Participatory Economics](#)" by Michael Albert

***Krauss Hall 112
University of Hawaii***

outlines the principles and answers objections to the economy Albert is promoting. In "[Participatory Economics Interview](#)," Kate Redmond of radio station KFAI in Minneapolis interviews Michael Albert and clarifies some issues presented by the theory. These papers are available on the net or from Jim Lomont. If you'd like a set, click on the hyperlinks above or call Jim at 262-5108w or 234-1835.

Richard Dawkins to speak at UH-Manoa

Talk titled "Queerer Than We Can Suppose?: The Strangeness of Science"

To repeat the time from last HH Newsletter, Becky Goodman of [Osher Lifelong Learning Institute](#) tells us that Richard Dawkins is coming to UH next month. She says:

"YES! Richard Dawkins is visiting the [University of Hawaii, Manoa](#), and will present a public lecture titled: **Queerer Than We Can Suppose? The Strangeness of Science**, on Tuesday **February 20 at 7 pm** in the **Campus Center Ballroom**. The presentation is free and open to the public and is part of the [Distinguished Lecture Series](#). I suggest that people arrive at least 30 minutes early to get a good seat. It's sure to be a packed house."

Humanists are great fans of Dawkins, most recently because of his recent book, [The God Delusion](#).

The first holder of the newly endowed [Charles Simonyi Chair](#) in the Public Understanding of Science, and a Fellow of [New College, at the University of Oxford](#), Richard Dawkins first came to prominence with his 1976 book [The Selfish Gene](#), which popularized the [gene-centric view of evolution](#) and introduced the term [meme](#) into the lexicon, thereby helping to found the field of [memetics](#). In 1982, he

made a major contribution to the science of evolution with the theory, presented in his widely cited book [The Extended Phenotype](#), that [phenotypic effects](#) are not limited to an organism's body but can stretch far into the environment, including into the bodies of other organisms. He has since written [The Blind Watchmaker](#) (1986), [River Out of Eden](#) (1995), [Climbing Mount Improbable](#) (1996), [Unweaving the Rainbow](#) (1998), [A Devil's Chaplain](#) (2003), [The Ancestor's Tale](#) (2004), and [The God Delusion](#) (2006), and has appeared in numerous radio and television about [evolutionary biology](#), [creationism](#), and [religion](#).

Dawkins is an outspoken [atheist](#), [humanist](#), and [sceptic](#), and a prominent member of the [Brights movement](#). In a play on [Thomas Huxley's](#) epithet "Darwin's bulldog", Dawkins' impassioned defense of evolution has earned him the appellation "Darwin's rottweiler".

Dawkins will also conduct a seminar "Is Evolution Predictable?" (still no details available). His visit is Cosponsored by the [Department of Zoology](#) and the [Program in Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation Biology](#), University of Hawaii, Manoa.

Abercrombie says forget about Iraq surge funds

The Army falls under his impending House panel chairmanship by Richard Borreca, [Honolulu Star-Bulletin](#), January 9, 2007

WASHINGTON - US Rep. Neil Abercrombie is warning the Bush administration that the new Democratic-controlled Congress will not appropriate more money for a "surge" of new troops into Iraq.

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In an interview in his Washington office, Abercrombie said Bush should not expect help from the Democrats, who now control the House and Senate.

"We are not going to fund any surges. We are not going to support expanding this war," Abercrombie said.

The Hawaii Democrat's words have added importance because . . . Abercrombie is expected to be named chairman of the Armed Forces subcommittee dealing with the Army and Air Force.

Congress, Abercrombie said, "will continue to support the troops, which our budget already does."

But Abercrombie warned that "we have no intention of trying to support political policies in the guise of support for the troops."

Congress has approved about \$500 billion for Iraq, Afghanistan and other terrorism-fighting efforts. The White House is working on its largest-ever appeal for more war funds – a record \$100 billion, at least. It will be submitted along with Bush's Feb. 5 budget.

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Abercrombie says the Army is already stretched and cannot just call up more soldiers. He suggested that Bush could either extend the time in Iraq for soldiers already there and perhaps speed up the training of soldiers here.

"But to say that we are going to take a brand-new or a yet-to-be-selected and trained and equipped force into Iraq, I can't conceive it would be funded," Abercrombie said.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Defense Secretary Robert Gates are to testify before Congress this week.

Yesterday, Abercrombie was particularly critical of Rice, the former national security adviser, whom Abercrombie described as "the most overrated, underperforming individual in executive authority that I have ever seen."

"She constantly gets a pass. Who knows if the whole question of race and gender come into it, but . . . I can't account for it, except to say she isn't up to the mark," Abercrombie said. Rice is scheduled to testify before the Senate.

Gates, who succeeded Donald Rumsfeld as secretary of defense, is to testify before the House Armed Services Committee tomorrow. . . .

Humanist letter

Letter to the Advertiser, not published as of 1/12/7

Where are the free classrooms?

In 1/9/07 Letters to the Editor, the letter: "Giving more money to DOE not the answer" is a common misconception.

If the DOE is to cut it's budget, where will the money come to pay for additional classrooms to address the overflowing classrooms; or the additional teachers to correct the teacher to student ratio (37 K-students to one teacher is not teaching) or the textbooks for the students.

If Hawaii wants the students to learn, they need adequate classroom space with teachers to help educate the students and equipment in this fast pace technical world. I have personally tried to help students in a computer class to find a computer that works. How can students learn when they don't have textbooks or working computers?

It's usually those who have never attended a public school or had children in public schools or worked in a public school who shout: Cut DOE's Budget. This is one puzzling letter to promote cutting the DOE budget from a teacher. It's one for the books.

Carolyn Golojuch

Humanists Honor Religious Freedom Anniversary

American Humanist Association

This year marks the 230th anniversary of Thomas Jefferson's Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom. Drafted in 1777 it was passed nine years later on January 16, 1786. It went on to serve as a model for the religious liberty clauses in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Since 1993 each president of the United States has commemorated January 16 as Religious Freedom Day, calling on Americans to "observe this day through appropriate events and activities in homes, schools, and places of worship."

"Humanists in particular have cause to honor this day," said Mel Lipman, a constitutional lawyer and president of the American Humanist Association. "One of our central humanist principles is the separation of church and state as expressed in the Virginia statute and the First Amendment. And this necessarily includes both the freedom to believe as well as the freedom to disbelieve."

"The principle of governmental neutrality on matters of faith is one of the most unique contributions and identifying characteristics of the American experiment," added AHA Executive Director Roy Speckhardt. "We call on all Humanists, indeed all Americans, to honor Religious Freedom Day by celebrating our rights, our liberties, and our diversity."

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See scheduled events, pictures of officers and current and archived newsletters at our website: <http://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.

HH meets the last (not the fourth) Sunday of each month at 10:30 am. We'll have an HH sign by the door. Hope to see you all.



Congressman Virgil Goode needs civics lesson, say Humanists

Anti-Muslim Position Contrary to the Law of the Land
American Humanist Association

"By his recent letter, House member Virgil Goode has displayed a shocking lack of respect for those of his constituents who don't share his Christian faith: not only Muslims but Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, Wiccans, atheists, humanists and others," said Mel Lipman, constitutional lawyer and president of the American Humanist Association. "If Virgil Goode is to continue serving in Congress, he needs a refresher course in basic American civics."

Lipman's comment was part of the indignation expressed today by AHA leaders when they saw for the first time the text of a [letter sent by Rep. Virgil Goode](#) (R-VA) to his constituents on December 7.

In that letter Goode writes that "if American citizens don't wake up and adopt the Virgil Goode position on immigration there will likely be many more Muslims elected to office." He added that we need to "end the diversity visas policy pushed hard by President Clinton and allowing many persons from the Middle East to come to this country" so as to "preserve the values and beliefs traditional to the United States of America."

In response, Lipman added, "Goode should have learned that 'the values and beliefs traditional to the United States of America' are that of secular government in a pluralistic society."

Lipman cited the [First Amendment to the US Constitution](#) which opens with the words, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

And the 1796 [US treaty with the Muslim nation of Tripoli](#) which says, "the government of the United States of America is not in any sense founded on the Christian Religion." This [treaty was approved](#) by Congress in the administration of John Adams. And these documents constitute part of the "supreme Law of the Land" as defined in [Article VI of the Constitution](#).

The AHA has long held that the American principle of government neutrality on religion requires that no official favoritism or hostility be shown to those of any religion or no religion. In his letter, however, Goode takes the opposite position, writing, "When I raise my hand to take the oath on Swearing In Day, I will have the Bible in my other hand. I do not subscribe to using the Koran [sic] in any way."

"Properly speaking," Lipman concluded, "neither the Bible nor the Quran, nor any other holy book, should be used at any swearing-in ceremony for any public office. Those we elect must represent and serve all of their constituents, not just those who are adherents of their favored faith."



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