



Humanists News

Newsletter of the HUManists 2009 No. 1 P. O. Box 185202 Hamden, CT 06518-0202 203 281-6232

President's Corner: The Sources of Unitarian Universalism

In the first several pages of this issue we devote considerable space to a topic that has suddenly been thrust to the fore by a report of the UU Commission on Appraisal. The title of the report, "Proposed Revision of Article II," refers to Article II of the UUA's Bylaws, where the Association's Principles and Purposes are found. We anticipate that this report will share the spotlight at this year's General Assembly with the election of a new UUA president.

Many, possibly most, UUs have so far remained passive about this report, apparently because it has not been brought forcibly enough to their attention. I'm sure this isn't the fault of the Commission, which has spent two years and countless hours on a review of the existing Article II at the request of the UUA Board of Trustees. The proposed revisions were published in the Spring 2009 UU World, yet they have somehow stayed below the radar of most congregations right up to the final weeks before the 2009 General Assembly, where they will be put to a democratic vote of the delegates. If the proposal passes by a simple majority, it must receive a two-thirds majority at the 2010 GA to become final.

It's unlikely that most of the proposed changes will arouse much objection, even after detailed examination. This cannot be said, however, of Section C-2.2, the "Sources" statement, which in our experience to date has generated opposition from a strong majority of those who have taken the time to compare it with the existing version (see both versions on the following page). The "Sources," studied for over 20 years by children and by adults new to the UUA, has now assumed new prominence by being moved to a

leading position in the article, before the Principles. The statement likewise gives new emphasis to the Judeo-Christian origins of Unitarian Universalism by greatly expanding the reference to them, placing it first, and reducing other elements to a catalog of comparatively uninformative words and phrases.

As one UU wrote in a letter to me, "My snap reaction is that the new Sources section is mushier than the old one, and that the Jewish and Christian tradition has been elevated above the other sources. The passage:

Humanism, earth-centered spiritual traditions, and Eastern religions have served as vital sources. Unitarian Universalism has been influenced by mysticism, theism, skepticism, naturalism, and process thought as well as feminist and liberation theologies.

makes it sound like we've read a lot of books, but it's not clear what we learned from them. I also wonder how we're going to teach these sources." This writer states clearly and succinctly what the majority of others who've spoken to me have also said.

Just about everybody you ask can think of something they might ideally like to change in the original "Sources" statement. My essay in our two-page ad in the GA program (see p. 12 below) offers just one instance of that. But the practical issue before us now is twofold: whether the present "Sources" statement really needs to be replaced; and whether the proposed changes really represent any improvement over the existing version, or might actually make it worse.

Continued page 2, bottom

The UUA “Sources”: A Comparison of Two Versions

1. Here is the “Sources” statement as it has read since the mid-1980s:

The living tradition which we share draws from many sources:

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion and the transforming power of love;
- Wisdom from the world’s religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God’s love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;
- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit;
- Spiritual teachings of Earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennobles our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision. As free congregations we enter into this covenant, promising to one another our mutual trust and support.

2. Here is the proposed new “Sources” statement:

Section C 2.2. Sources.

Unitarian Universalism is rooted in two religious heritages. Both are grounded on thousands of years of Jewish and Christian teachings, traditions, and experiences. The Unitarian heritage has affirmed that we need not think alike to love alike and that God is one. The Universalist heritage has preached not hell but hope and courage, and the kindness and love of God. Contemporary Unitarian Universalists have reaped the benefits of a legacy of prophetic words and deeds.

Unitarian Universalism is not contained in any single book or creed. Its religious authority lies in the individual, nurtured and tested in the congregation and the wider world. As an evolving religion, it draws from the teachings, practices, and wisdom of the world’s religions. Humanism, earth-centered spiritual traditions, and Eastern religions have served as vital sources. Unitarian Universalism has been influenced by mysticism, theism, skepticism, naturalism, and process thought as well as feminist and liberation theologies. It is informed by direct experiences of mystery and wonder, beauty and joy. It is enriched by the creative power of the arts, the guidance of reason, and the lessons of the sciences.

Grateful for the traditions that have strengthened our own, we seek to engage cultural and religious practices in ways that call us into right relationship with all.

President’s Corner *continued from Page 1*

Whatever happens at the 2009 General Assembly, I see this COA report as an occasion for a lot of open, healthy discussion about what our true sources are, and a genuine opportunity for HUUmans to inform

our other UU friends about the real nature of Humanism and its potential significance for the future of the UUA. Read on, and see whether you agree with me.

A Response to the Proposed Revision of Article II, Section C.2.2 Sources

The Rev. Dr. William R. Murry

The Rev. Dr. Murry is the recently retired president of Meadville Lombard Theological School and author of the book *Reason and Reverence*.

The proposed revision of the Sources of our UUA Principles is excellent with respect to our Judeo-Christian origins, but it fails to do justice to another very important part of our more recent history. Since the late 19th century Unitarianism and Universalism and now Unitarian Universalism have been profoundly influenced by non-theistic religious humanism. In every survey of our theological beliefs in recent years about fifty percent or more of UUs identify as religious humanists. Without our many dedicated humanist members our Association and most of our congregations would be considerably weaker. This humanist tradition, arising out of the Enlightenment and the dominance of modern scientific thinking, was honored as a separate source in the current “Sources” adopted in 1981. (“Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.”)

By relegating humanism briefly to a list of several other traditions the proposed statement greatly diminishes its importance to our Association. For many of us the humanist tradition is not only one of several “vital sources,” but the most important part of our history, one that embodies the principles and values that have made our movement unique and worthy of commitment. The religious humanist story is vital to all that we stand for and should be recognized and honored more than the proposed revision does.

That story is both profound and powerful, and it is universal and non-sectarian. As a religious movement exemplifying diversity, it is the story that can serve as the glue that holds us together. For it is the story of the long struggle of the human race for freedom – the story of the struggle for political as well as religious freedom. It is the story of the struggle to abolish slav-

ery in the ancient as well as in the modern world. It is the story of the Hebrew prophets who sought to transform Judaism from a religion of laws and rituals to an ethical faith. It is the story of Jesus who sought to free Judaism from being a religion of laws and rituals and to make it a religion of the heart. It is the story of the Protestant Reformation which sought to free religion from priestly and ecclesiastical authority. It is the story of the Buddha’s reform of Hinduism and of liberalizing movements in Islam. It is the story the early Unitarians in Europe and America who insisted on freedom of belief and the use of reason in interpreting religious meaning and of the Universalists who freed people from a God of wrath and punishment to a God of love. It is the story of all those who have sought to purge religion from authoritarianism and who have fought for greater political freedom over the ages. It is the story of the liberation of the mind from superstition and from religious dogmas that foster bigotry and hate. It is the story of the men and women who have worked for equal rights for people of color and for women and for people of all sexual orientations. The humanist story is the story of all those who have worked to make human life more truly free and therefore more fully human. And it is a story without an ending as long as there are people who are not free either because of political tyranny or because of poverty and ignorance and superstition and every other form of oppression. It is a story you and I can not only tell but a story we can continue to make.

I hope the General Assembly will amend the proposed revision by adding something like the following statement possibly just after the third sentence in the second paragraph:

In particular religious humanism, with its emphasis on the methods and discoveries of modern science, on the importance of reason in religion, and on the centrality of social justice, has been and continues to be a vital source of Unitarian Universalist beliefs and practices.

On a Proposal to Revise the UUA Principles and Sources

Kendyl Gibbons

Rev. Dr. Gibbons recently served three years as president of the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association. She is senior minister at the First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis.

It is a new challenge for each generation of Unitarian Universalists to try to articulate what it is that we believe in common in some meaningful way, without letting that statement harden into a creed over time. Twenty-five years ago, when I was rather new in ministry, the UUA went through a lengthy process that resulted in the adoption of the now-familiar seven principles and six sources statement in its organizational bylaws. Over the intervening decades, this formulation has proven useful and memorable. It was printed in *Singing the Living Tradition*, the new hymnbook published in the early 1990s. Many congregations display posters of it, and many UU members carry wallet cards to help them remember and share its ideas. Most of us have our particular favorite lines, as well as phrases we might personally quibble with, but on the whole the Purposes and Principles, as they are often called, have served us well.

To help prevent the creeping creedalism that can accompany such a statement when people grow fond of it, the UUA bylaws also specify that these sections are to be reviewed every fifteen years for possible amendment or revision. During the past year (we are a little behind schedule, but we're moving forward!) the UUA's Commission on Appraisal has been holding discussions, soliciting input, and working on drafting a new statement which will be considered by the General Assembly at its meeting in June 2009 in Salt Lake City. If it is approved, this statement will be sent out to congregations for study throughout the coming year, and a final vote on it will be taken at the 2010 General Assembly here in Minneapolis.

As one who has participated in the conversation, and submitted responses as the process has unfolded, I am disappointed in the resulting proposal. It is a

weaker and less engaging statement of our shared identity as a religious community than the existing version. Stylistically, I find it wordy and sentimental, where the current Purposes and Principles are spare, dynamic, and direct. The proposed draft begins with the historical roots of Unitarianism and Universalism, rather than our present commitments, which has the effect of starting with denials instead of affirmations. It also makes our heritage of theism and the Biblical traditions more prominent than our long connection to the struggle for freedom, reason, tolerance and integrity in matters of belief. It relegates humanism to a "vital source", equivalent in influence to Eastern religions and earth-centered traditions, which seems to me a grave misrepresentation of this movement's history as well as its current character.

While I applaud the wisdom of building this kind of required reconsideration into the UUA bylaws, I do not believe that change is therefore inevitably demanded. In fact, I would suggest that the existing Purposes and Principles statement has not yet outlived its usefulness, and could continue to serve us well for some time. In the 1980s, when the previous revision took place, as well as when it was amended in 1995, there was considerable energy around changes that were widely felt to be needed. The current redaction arises from no such general sense that the document is outdated. I am confident that the moment will arrive when the Purposes and Principles as we have known them no longer represent a living consensus about our faith, and a new statement will be formulated that rings with new truth. Until then, I prefer the positive, evocative language of the current document. I hope that we can appreciate the work of the Commission on Appraisal, and the many useful conversations they have initiated, without adopting the proposed revision.

Ethical Reasons for Objecting to the Commission on Appraisal Revisions

Robert B. Tapp

Robert Tapp is Professor Emeritus of Humanities, Religious Studies, and South Asian Studies, University of Minnesota. This essay has been slightly edited to meet space limitations.

Even before their merger, Unitarians and Universalists were describing themselves as “liberal religion” or as “free religions.” While both denominations had so-called liberty clauses, avoiding any creeds or statements of belief, they nevertheless, in their democratic formats, had evolved from earlier versions of their traditions into a post-Christian, or for that matter, even a post-traditional format. Frederick May Eliot headed a Commission of Appraisal that in 1936 produced *Unitarians Face a New Age*.

Building on this heritage and anticipating the merger, Dana McLean Greeley, president of the American Unitarian Association (AUA) and initial president of the new Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) said, “Liberal religion is not an institution; it is a movement in history, a set of values, and a way of life. More important than the merger of two denominations is the quickening of the principles for which they exist.” Greeley charged six study commissions to produce a report in 1963, entitled *The Free Church in a Changing World*, which both described the current situation and made suggestions for the coming years [Editor’s note: Prof. Tapp chaired one of these six, the commission on Theology and the Frontiers of Learning (science and religion)].

Following these leads, the new denomination’s *Committee on Goals* in 1967 issued a long-range planning report that stressed how far Unitarian Universalists had moved from their Christian and Protestant origins [Editor’s note: Prof. Tapp chaired this committee in 1966-7].

My point is that a democratic denomination can indeed change, but it changes in relationship to its own past traditions and to the new context in which it stimulates and serves its membership. The risk always is some kind of lapse into an anything-ism, becoming

open to any and all forms of belief. Vital organizations avoid this risk by active democracy, resolving any discussion by reformatting, yet always respecting the non-credal rules of a liberty clause that rejects specific verbal formulations. Nonetheless, members are continually asking themselves if this is where they want to remain. Never forget that both denominations were emerging after a civil war shifted the values and memberships of the major US political parties. One of the most successful advertising campaigns of the AUA and later of the new denomination, asked “Are you a UU without knowing it? and then went on to describe certain characteristics of the denomination.

William Murry [in his essay in this newsletter—Ed.] has well described the theological side of this shared religious development. One of the characteristics from the very beginning was an insistence that beliefs had consequences, and that the shared commitment to consequences was what held a group together. As James Russell Lowell, poet and hymn-writer said

New occasions teach new duties,
Time makes ancient good uncouth.

It was indeed this kind of moral-ethical pioneering that characterized these two denominations in the 19th century and set a pattern for their futures. Living on the growing edge of new values is an exciting and yet lonely stance. This value-pioneering typically flourished as humans learned to look critically at their own traditions and to realize the limiting and negative roles of older beliefs and values. Horace Mann cautioned his fellow religionists not to die before making some needed changes in their world. (For him it was public education (in Massachusetts) and a co-educational college (Antioch).

A major Unitarian historian characterized this movement under three headings: freedom, reason, tolerance [Editor’s note: In his two-volume

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Ethical Reasons for Objecting to the Commission on Appraisal Revisions

Continued from previous page

history of Unitarianism (1945) Earl Morse Wilbur described these three as “the conditions under which the true ends (of religion) may best be attained.”] The freedom involved was a freedom of conscience. This was given a great impetus by the Euro-American Enlightenment, and by Locke and Jefferson’s formulations. Early in the 19th century, both of these denominations were stressing a reasoned approach to discover the past as well as the documents of Christian history. As Lincoln noted regarding the American Civil War, both sides read the same scriptures and prayed to the same God. Clearly there was no single “Christian” position on issues such as slavery.

The Unitarians and Universalists shared a commitment to universal human rights and that undergirded their opposition to slavery and their exploration of such post-Christian religious thinking as Transcendentalism. Their more advanced leaders created a Free Religious Association to explore the kinds of religion that would give precedence to reason and its flowering in science.

The 1890 World Parliament of Religions was heavily supported by these two denominations as a way of both fostering interreligious dialogue and of discerning and supporting the ethically acceptable elements in religious traditions. These denominations pioneered in the creation of coeducational colleges, and in the ordination of women ministers. Harvard University and its Divinity School came to be dominated by Unitarians—and Universalists, not sharing some of the liberal elements in Unitarianism in those days, created Tufts as their own university and seminary.

Arguably, the most important 19th century impact on both denominations was Charles Darwin’s description of evolution. For one thing, the focus area shifted to a yet to-be-realized earthly future instead of biblical past. Even more importantly, natural selection undercut the major remaining theological argument for the biblical God, the argument from design. Attention now moved beyond the negative aspects of a religion-dominated past into a this-worldly development of life, liberty, and happiness. Instead of dom-

inating nature, humans were now seen as a growing part of nature with evolving human purposes. As Julian Huxley would say when the International Humanist and Ethical Union was founded in 1952, “Once we know the nature of evolution, we become responsible for it.”

Liberal Jews and Christians in the 19th century assumed more responsibility for changing society as they began to articulate a “social gospel.” Concerns now came to include working people, women, children, the poor, immigrants, and animal rights.

By the beginning of the 20th century, members of these denominations were over-represented in college graduates and in Congress. In the several colleges that they had founded, their stress on producing educated men and women was also hospitable to the burgeoning sciences. As family planning became more reality-based around 1900, there was ready support for this in the two denominations.

Through participation in the International Association for Liberal Christianity and Religious Freedom, many leaders from the denominations both supported their European counterparts and in many ways influenced them to move in the same post-Christian direction as the U.S. Unitarians and Universalists. In fact that organization eventually dropped “Liberal Christianity” from its name and opened the door to Buddhists and others as the IARF.

In the economic devastation following World War I, many religious liberals became critical of capitalism. In 1933 the Humanist Manifesto was produced and signed by many Unitarian Universalist leaders. This not only moved beyond the theistic religions, but also moved beyond any uncritical endorsement of market capitalism.

Totalitarian regimes that were emerging in Russia and in Germany had little use for intellectual or religious freedom, and this sharpened the focus of US religious liberals. Those totalitarian states emerging in Italy and in Spain were in societies that had never experienced any sustained amount of religious freedom. These various forms of totalitarianism were, of course, direct challenges to the democratic commitments of Unitarians and Universalists as evident by

Continued page 14

The Humanist Institute

Do you wish to learn more about the depth and breadth of Humanism? The Humanist Institute, a program that prepares students to spread the message of Humanism, is accepting applications for its Sixteenth Class.

Join fellow Humanists to learn about the history, philosophy, and organizational structuring of Humanism; what it means to be an ethical human; the variety of humanist ideas in world religions; what constitutes humanist leadership; critical thinking and the methods and uses of science; issues in contemporary culture; aesthetics and humanist celebrations.

The Institute's faculty includes some of today's leading Humanist thinkers. Students come from the American Humanist Association, American Rationalist Federation, Council for Secular Humanism, the Ethical Cultural movement, Society for Humanistic Judaism and Unitarian Universalist congregations—as well as from fields such as teaching, social work, business, medicine, and law.

**Apply now for the Seventeenth Class
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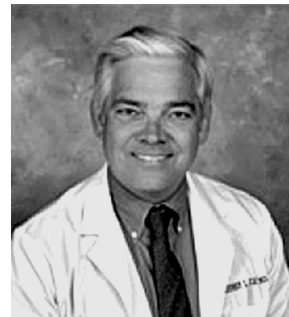


You will attend three sessions a year
for three years
and
earn a certificate at the end.
Significant readings are involved.

Mentors of the 17th Class



Marilyn Westfall, Ph.D. (English) is a current member of the Board of Directors of the American Humanist Association. She has been an active Humanist since discovering Humanism in college through art history, literature, and theater, was a founding member of the UU Infidels, and served for three years as program director in the First UU Church of Lubbock, Texas.



Jeffrey L. Tate, MD, is a psychiatrist in private practice in Rogers, Arkansas, and has taught in three medical schools—Baylor, University of Texas at Houston, and University of Arkansas. A lifelong student of philosophy he is a graduate of Class 13 of the Humanist Institute, an ordained Humanist minister, and lay leader of the UU Fellowship of Benton County, Arkansas.

The Humanist Institute admits students of any race, color, gender, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, or school-administered programs.

Do you like what you see? The preceding three ads refer to our activities at GA 2009. They illustrate the scope of our program and the ways we are cooperating with other Humanist organizations and other UU organizations to create the best possible programs at General Assembly. If you support continued activities such as these, please consider renewing your membership or subscription, using the form in this newsletter or going online to www.huumanists.org.

Yes, There Is Life at GA After Affiliation!

Most of you will recall that by the year 2007-2008 the UUA Board of Trustees had withdrawn “independent affiliate” status from all but four of what had once been more than 60 organizations. We were among the majority. This development caused many of our members and friends to be concerned that the HUHumanists Association would no longer have any significant role to play and was likely to fold. We, on the other hand, while not too thrilled about the loss of some of our former perks, such as low-cost space and unchallenged program time at the General Assembly, could still see some potential real gains in the form of greater independence. For instance, the ban against election of UUA staff as board members of our organization no longer applied, and we quickly invited Stefan Jonasson, our immediate past president, to return to our board.

We decided to assert our presence at GA 2008 unequivocally, and submitted four applications for events on the GA program. All four were deemed acceptable, but we were asked to limit the number. We left the choice to the GA Planning Committee, and they selected two events—talks by Greg Epstein, the Humanist rabbit of Harvard, and by Lynn Margulis, biologist and member of the National Academy of Sciences. Then we decided to underscore our newly independent status by adding something new—offering another one of the original four events we had submitted, but completely on our own, at a Embassy Suites Hotel, on the shuttle bus route, down the main thoroughfare about half a mile from the Convention Center.

The event we chose was a celebration of Dr. Bill Jones’s 1973 publication, *Is God a White Racist?* (For details see Roger Brewin’s report below.) We packaged it together with three other events: our annual meeting, a luncheon, and a ceremony of recognition of the late Grace and Carl Zingale, who lived in Ft. Lauderdale, and whose generous bequest made possible these and many future activities. By sheer coincidence, two years earlier the GA had been held in St. Louis, the home of the late Edgar L. and Charlotte Ann Metzger, who had recently left the HUHumanists Association a very substantial bequest. At that time

we had considered the desirability of recognizing the Metzgers at that GA, but conditions turned out not to be favorable to that idea.

In Ft. Lauderdale we were determined not to let another such opportunity pass us by, and we plunged ahead. The minister of the Unitarian Church of Ft. Lauderdale sent us a letter with lots of information about the Zingales. Ron and Kristina Sweet, a couple from Boca Raton who had been good friends of the Zingales, came down for the occasion and brought a photograph of them. Ron told about how, after Grace died, when Carl was not feeling very happy with life, he spoke to Ron about his estate, which was substantial, and asked for his suggestions on what he might do with his money. Ron had suggested to Carl that he could leave some money to the Unitarian Humanists, the American Humanist Association, and the Unitarian Church of Ft. Lauderdale, and that is exactly what he did.

Our series of successful experiences at the 2008 GA left us all buoyed and enthusiastic about the future. But rather than attempt to duplicate those successes three times in a row we decided to take a more modest approach to the GA in 2009, and instead get prepared for a real UU Humanist love-fest the following year in Minneapolis. Besides, this year’s GA will be heavily preoccupied with the election of a new UUA president and debate over the Commission on Appraisal proposal to revise the Principles and Purposes. So this year in Salt Lake City we resubmitted a single application from the previous year for a terrific program about Kenneth Patton, organized by Rev. Dr. Kendyl Gibbons, Senior Minister of the First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis. When the application for this event, was successful it was sponsored by the GA Planning Committee and placed on the regular GA schedule. As most of you know, the pulpit Kendyl now holds at FUS was once filled by John Dietrich, “the father of Religious Humanism,” and FUS, where our movement has always been and continues to be especially strong, is known as “the flagship of UU Humanism.” So make a note on your calendars now to meet for a joyous gathering with other UU Humanists at next year’s GA in Minneapolis, June 23-27, 2010!

Report from the Editor of the Journal of Religious Humanism

Roger Brewin

The latest issue of the Journal of Religious Humanism is in the hands of most members and subscribers, and will be distributed to potential supporters of the HUUmanists Association at this year's General Assembly in Salt Lake City. The main feature is an edited transcript of our symposium on Dr. Bill Jones, on the 35th anniversary of the original publication of his book *Is God A White Racist?*

This GA 2008 panel was keynoted by Bill Sinkford, and featured commentary by Mel Hoover, Anthony Pinn, Norma Poinsett, Archene Turner and Sharon Welch. Carol Hepokoski was the hardworking organizer and moderator - credit she did not receive in the mailed version of the Journal, due to an error by this editor (apologies to Carol, and to Wendy Jerome, who was inadvertently listed as the moderator). David Schafer, HUUmanists President, hosted the panel and the preceding lunch and annual membership meeting, which drew upwards of a hundred and honored the family of Grace and Carl Zingale, late of Ft. Lauderdale, whose generous bequest made much of this programming possible.

The crowd swelled to roughly 165 for the panel—a wonderful, diverse, lively presentation, highlighted by Bill Jones' elaboration on the book that wasn't published to follow "Is God A White Racist?" but was, instead, in the words of Anthony Pinn, "a matter of ... performance, a modeling of humanism." This exciting ninety minutes, threatening to spill over into the next workshop time, was well remarked upon by those

who attended, and by those who wished they had. It generated renewed interest in Bill's book, of which we promptly sold out, and for which we placed additional orders.

Down in the GA Exhibit Hall, the HUUmanists booth—largest among all the groups "on display," attracted hundreds of visitors for three organizations (the Humanist Institute and the American Humanist Association, as well as the HUUmanists Association), recruiting over 100 new or renewing members for HUUmanists, and providing an artistic oasis through the songs of Jim Scott performing half a dozen mini concerts within its spacious confines! This was the first GA for us following the decision by the UUA Board to terminate the Independent Affiliate status of more than forty membership and special interest groups. As the largest and one of the oldest of these groups, the HUUmanists Association determined to be a presence at the 2008 GA, and the range of our programming and the enthusiastic response to it showed the wisdom of this path.

If you're reading this walking around the 2009 GA, stop by our 40-by-40-foot booth (#1024), complete with Humanist bookstore, petition drive calling into question the advisability of rushing towards a change in our UU Purposes and Principles, and NASA art gallery—a series of breath taking photos from the deep-field satellite telescope, that will also be featured in the program we're sponsoring on Kenneth Patton.

Want to Help Support UU Humanism?

Now more than ever we want to get the message of Humanism out to all UUs and all UU congregations! Next year the General Assembly will be held in Minneapolis, a city that has always been hospitable to the ideas of Humanism. Help us to get the word out and make the 2010 GA a big success for UU Humanism and for the UUA! This is a great time to send in your renewal and/

or a generous tax-deductible donation to help support this work! You have a choice: you can either go online at www.huumanists.org or use the form at the end of this newsletter. If you can't remember whether you've paid recently, there's a good chance you haven't. You can email president@huumanists.org using the subject "Dues" to find out. We always like to hear from you!

HUUmanists Officers, Board, Others 2008-2009

Officers

President Term Expires 2010 David E. Schafer	Secretary Term Expires 2010 Walter W. Wells
Vice President Term Expires 2011 Wendy Jerome	Treasurer Term Expires 2011 William Miller

Board

Term Expires 2009 Mary Louise DeWolf (one vacancy)
Term Expires 2010 Gayle C. Walter Lance Haworth
Term Expires 2011 Kathleen D. Korb Stefan M. Jonasson

Others

Journal Editor Roger Brewin
HUUmanists News Editor David E. Schafer

HUUmanists Treasurer's Report

January 1, 2008 - December 31, 2008
and January 1, 2009 - May 31, 2009

As we promised last year, we have engaged a professional accounting firm, T.M. Byxbee Co. PC, of Hamden, Connecticut, to prepare the statements on the next page, based upon the financial records of the HUUmanists Association and the Wachovia Bank. Note that our last previous report was for the period from January 1, 2007 to June 16, 2008.

Both Profit and Loss statements, as in other recent years, show net losses. These losses have been covered by withdrawals from capital funds included in our money market account and our fixed CD account (current APY 4.77%, with semi-annual withdrawals permitted on 12/06 and 6/06, maturing 12/05/09), primarily representing the balance of two bequests, from the Metzger estate and the Zingale trust. We also expect a net profit from income and expenditures during the remaining months of 2009.

Nevertheless, it continues to be our goal to break even in all future years. Since we will always have appropriate and unavoidable costs from our publications, conferences, advertising, and other services to our members, we expect to increase annual income from growth of memberships and subscriptions and from more effective collection of membership dues and subscription income, as well as from charitable donations, including bequests.

In these efforts we continue to solicit the advice and support of our members and friends. We earnestly hope that by continuing to strengthen Unitarian Universalist Humanism, and with it, we believe, the Unitarian Universalist Association, we will continue to earn your confidence and support.

Respectfully submitted,

<i>Bill Miller</i>	<i>David Schafer</i>
Treasurer	President

Board Changes for 2008-2009

At our annual meeting in Ft. Lauderdale in June 2008 the following slate of officers and directors was proposed by the Nominating Committee for election to the HUUmanists Board of Directors: David E. Schafer, President, and Walter W. Wells, Secretary, were nominated for additional two-year terms. Kathleen D. Korb, Member at Large, was nominated for another three-year term, and Stefan M. Jonasson, former Past President, was nominated Member at Large for a three-year term. There were no nominations from the floor. The slate proposed by the Nominating Committee was re-elected by a unanimous vote.

Profit and Loss

January through December 2008

Income	
Counter deposit	17,834.92
Credit Card	3,550.00
Interest Income	4,466.77
Total Income	25,851.69
Expense	
Books	1,261.80
Credit Card Fees	300.32
Credit Card Initiation Fee	532.94
Data Management	700.00
General Assembly	
Advertisements	950.00
Exhibits	2,340.00
Satellite Meetings	4,357.87
Speakers	5,437.21
Total General Assembly	13,085.08
IHEU Dues	432.24
Journal	
Editing & Management	7,040.34
Layout	1,446.00
Mailing Prep	258.00
Printing	5,236.36
Total Journal	13,980.70
Miscellaneous	29.61
Newsletter	
Mailing Prep	283.47
Printing	937.57
Total Newsletter	1,221.04
Postage & Shipping	3,715.70
Storage	432.00
Website Development	500.00
Total Expense	36,191.43
Net Income	-10,339.74

Profit and Loss

January through May 2009

Income	
Counter deposit	2,538.48
Credit Card	232.00
Interest Income	1,886.11
Total Income	4,656.59
Expense	
Books	25.97
Credit Card Fees	275.00
Data Management	300.00
General Assembly	
Advertisements	950.00
Registration	2,920.00
Total General Assembly	3,870.00
Journal	
Printing	3,313.10
Journal - Other	1,271.00
Total Journal	4,584.10
Miscellaneous	47.60
Postage & Shipping	804.87
Storage	180.00
Total Expense	10,087.54
Net Income	-5,430.95

Balance Sheet

as of December 31, 2009

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Wachovia-CD	100,012.68
Wachovia-Checking	6,784.39
Wachovia-MM	22,114.26
Total Checking/Savings	128,911.33
Total Current Assets	128,911.33
TOTAL ASSETS	128,911.33
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Equity	
Unrestricted Net Assets	139,251.07
Net Income	-10,339.74
Total Equity	128,911.33
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	128,911.33

Balance Sheet

as of May 31, 2009

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Wachovia-CD	101,894.80
Wachovia-Checking	6,583.92
Wachovia-MM	15,001.66
Total Checking/Savings	123,480.38
Total Current Assets	123,480.38
TOTAL ASSETS	123,480.38
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Equity	
Unrestricted Net Assets	128,911.33
Net Income	-5,430.95
Total Equity	123,480.38
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	123,480.38

The advertisement below appeared in the GA 2009 Program Book.

HUUmanists

“Together, We Can Do Better”

A COMMENTARY ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE
UUA “PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSES” BYLAW



David Schafer
President, HUUmanists

At the 2009 General Assembly, a preliminary vote will be taken on changes to the UUA Sources proposed by the Commission on Appraisal. Equipped by its history and contemporary position to become a leading 21st-Century religion, Unitarian Universalism deserves a strong, confident, robust image of its place in contemporary thought. Sadly, the proposed changes do not come close to meeting that requirement, particularly in their failure even to mention, let alone emphasize, the amazing growth during the modern period in our understanding of our world and ourselves.

These developments have already transformed our ideas of practically everything pertaining to religion, right down to the scriptures themselves. The transformations of religion began in the Renaissance, continued through the Enlightenment, and accelerated, notably within Unitarianism and Universalism in the 19th and 20th centuries.

In 1837 the prophet Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his essay “The American Scholar,” highlighted the revolution in thought: “The ancient precept, ‘Know thyself,’ and the modern precept, ‘Study nature,’ become at last one maxim.” Emerson could not have known just how right he was! A mere 22 years later, the appearance of Darwin’s *Origin of Species* began to make it unmistakably clear that *we are an integral part of nature*.

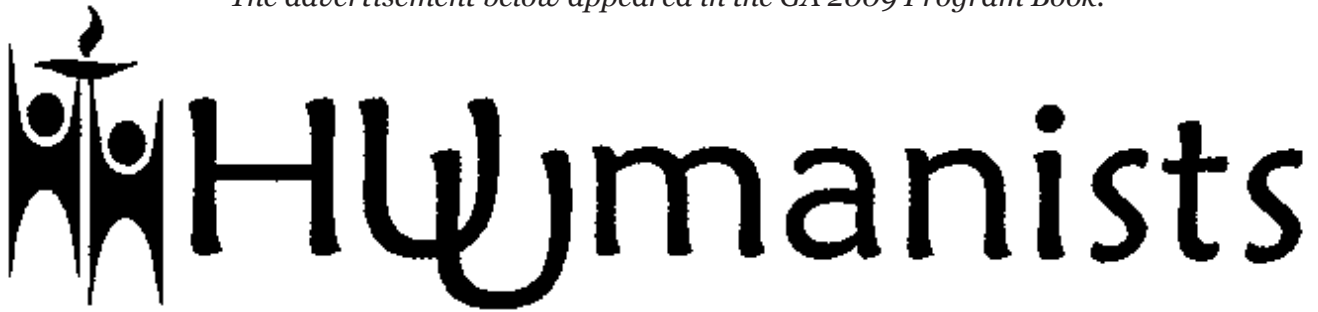
In the explosion of all branches of knowledge in the past 150 years, we have learned far more about all aspects of nature, including ourselves as a part of nature, than all the thousands of human generations before Emerson. Much more is already known than was ever imagined by any generation before us – for instance, what we now know about the origins of the Judeo-Christian Bible. In fact, most American children probably can learn more about the origins of the Bible from an episode of NOVA than from their entire formal religious education.

Today we stand on the shoulders of hundreds of giants, from Copernicus to Galileo to Newton, to Darwin, Einstein, and Watson and Crick. Flat-earth ignorance gradually gives way to reliable explanations of events at every magnitude from subatomic to intergalactic, and at every level of organization from genome to brain. We once were blind, but now we have begun to see. If we are to succeed together in building a religion for the 21st century, and the centuries to come – if we are to fulfill the dreams of Emerson and the other visionaries of the Unitarian and Universalist traditions – we cannot afford to ignore all this new factual knowledge: we must find ways to celebrate it, include it among our Sources, work it into our system of values, and put it to the fullest and best uses.

If you agree with us that the methodology and worldview of modern science are essential sources of the religion of the 21st Century, visit us at our GA exhibit booth or our website – www.huumanists.org.

HUUmanists Association ♦ PO BOX 185202, Hamden CT 06518-0202 ♦ humanists@huumanists.org

The advertisement below appeared in the GA 2009 Program Book.



HUUmanists Happenings at General Assembly

Visit our display in the exhibit hall—booth 1024—HUUmanists invite you to visit our display in the exhibit hall, where you can join HUUmanists, subscribe to *religious humanism*, or purchase back issues and books. This is the gathering place for all Humanists throughout General Assembly! Watch the booth for announcements, including the time and place of our annual general meeting, during which we will reflect upon the state of Humanism in the UUA and transact necessary business.

Our Essential Fervor: Kenneth Patton's Mystical Humanism

Saturday, 3:30-4:45 p.m. - Salt Palace 254

A celebration—in reading, music and reflection—of the life and writings of Kenneth Leo Patton (1911-1994), self-styled mystical humanist and widely-acclaimed poet and prophet of contemporary liberal religion. Patton was a voice for a poetic, naturalistic humanism at a time when most humanists were defining a religion of reason. Singing Patton's praises, minister and scholar David Bumbaugh asserts, "It was he who taught a monotone rationalism how to sing; it was he who taught a stumble-footed humanism how to dance; it was he who cried 'Look!' and taught our eyes to see the glory in the ordinary."



Our speakers will be Rev. Dr. Kendyl Gibbons, senior minister of the First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis, and Rev. Paul R. Beedle, minister of the Henry David Thoreau UU Congregation in Stafford, Texas.



"Our Day is Just Beginning"

— Rev. Kenneth L. Patton

Ethical Reasons for Objecting to the Commission on Appraisal Revisions

Continued from page 6

the responses at that time. The Second World War left only in the Stalinist form of totalitarianism in a strong place. Most of the writings of Unitarians and Universalists in those years showed an awareness of the intellectual and cultural dangers of that ideology (despite its welcome rejection of past religious traditions). Most of the writing from that time indicated a preference for international organization and a preference for diplomacy over militarism.

Domestically, both denominations were joining, through a Council of Liberal Churches, in the importance of a religious education for their young people based on valid historical accounts, on a recognition of the importance of the sciences, and on an even-handed treatment of past religions. In addition, it was important for these denominations to develop a sex education that welcomed responsible human sexuality. Two major issues came to dominate the adult focus of these denominations as they move toward merger. One was the issue of racism in U.S. society and the other was the widespread homophobia, past and present, that failed to take seriously the actual broad spectrum of human sexual orientations. This meant ordaining and hiring in staff positions openly gay persons along with the development of welcoming congregations. The seriousness of the commitment to eliminate racism is indicated by the participation of almost half of the Unitarian Universalist ministry in the 1965 Selma march.

In almost all of the ethical pioneering that has been noted here, the great majority of U.S. Christians had been opposed to change. Unitarians and Universalists, having moved beyond some of these problematic theologies, were prepared to analyze their world and to pose better solutions for its problems. This has been especially true in areas of sexuality and ecology. The more traditional belief that the world was well-designed, and that humans were given dominion over this world, have made it difficult for more traditional religions to either face problems fully or consider alternative solutions to many problems. However we describe the theological stance of the UUA—free, liberal, post-traditional, humanist—the historical

Signs of Progress

We've been working to get farther along toward where we'd like to be. We're in the process of sorting our members into geographical subdivisions in our database, to help define functional metropolitan, district, and regional groupings. We believe that decentralization is a key to the formation of more effective local networks. One hopeful sign has been an increase in the number of UU Humanist discussion and action groups.

In the Greater Concord, Massachusetts, area, the home of Transcendentalism, Pat Everett and Maria Cox are organizing successful potluck suppers; and Dick Hoke has assembled a group to study UU Humanism at the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. They've been efficiently collecting signatures on a petition, organized by Roger Brewin around the end of April, to slow down the seemingly headlong movement toward passage of the Commission on Appraisal's report discussed earlier in this newsletter. A recent signature count came to around 1100 and rising. They came from "114 congregations in 31 states and the military chaplaincy," all the more remarkable considering the late start.

We accepted credit cards in payment for the first time at last year's GA. We were setting up a similar facility on our website at www.huumanists.org when the credit card industry, responding to a huge wave of online fraud and theft, inaugurated a new system designed to heighten security, requiring us to take a series of cumbersome measures to meet their much more stringent requirements. The good news is that as we approach this year's GA we're about ready to flip a switch and open up this facility on our website, and steadily putting other changes in place. We invite you to visit us often to keep up with what's going on there, and to let us know how we can better serve you and UU Humanism!

record of this group in pioneering new ethical stances is a major part of the historical record.

Any expansions or revisions of the Principles & Purposes need to make this record explicit. New members need to know the heritage and forebears that they are adopting. Absent such prideful honesty, the future will be uncertain.



BECOME A MEMBER/SUBSCRIBE
RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION

CHECK ONE of the following options. Indicate the desired term of your option by circling the number of years.

OPTION 1. Membership.
\$50.00 / 1 year OR \$90.00 / 2 years

Membership includes subscription to the *Religious Humanism* journal, newsletter, interactive website and e-mail, special offers, and full voting privileges.

OPTION 2. Subscription
to *Religious Humanism* journal.
\$22.00 / 1 year OR \$40.00 / 2 years

OPTION 3. Student Membership.
\$25.00 / 1 year

Student Membership includes the same benefits as the Membership above, but for a reduced fee.

I am a student at (institution and location):

PLEASE PRINT your information below.

Name:

E-mail address:

Mailing address (street/P.O. box, etc.):

My congregation is:

For my membership/subscription of \$ _____

and a tax-deductible contribution of \$ _____

I attach a check for \$ _____

Complete this form by adding your signature:

MAIL THIS FORM with check or money order to:

HUUMANISTS

P.O. Box 185202

Hamden, CT 06518-0202

HUmanists News

2009 No. 1

In this issue:

President's Corner:	
The Sources of Unitarian Universalism	1
The UUA "Sources":	
A Comparison of Two Versions	2
A Response to the Proposed Revision	3
On a Proposal to Revise the UUA Principles and Sources	4
Ethical Reasons for Objecting to the Commission on Appraisal Revisions	5
Humanist Institute Advertisement	7
Yes, There Is Life at GA After Affiliation!	8
Report from the Editor of the Journal of Religious Humanism	9
Want to Help Support UU Humanism?	9
HUUmanists Officers, Board, Others	10
Board Changes for 2007-2008	10
HUUmanists Treasurer's Report	10
Advertisements in GA 2008 Program	12
Signs of Progress	14



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