

Society for Secular Humanists in Calgary



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“Living wills are not legal in Canada, but there are other means to outline your health care wishes “

LIVING WILLS - NOT IN CANADA

I am sure you are all too familiar with the story of Terri Schiavo from Florida. Her husband ended up having to fight with the President of the United States. The U.S. Supreme Court did make the final decision in that case, but it wouldn't have had to go that far if she had done up a living will.

During the flood of news items and journalists doing their bit on the Schiavo case, millions of people went flocking to their lawyers to get living wills. In Canada, it was the same scenario. Living wills are not legal in Canada, but there are other means to outline your health care wishes should you be unable to speak for yourself.

If there was one lesson to be learned by the events that unfolded in Florida, it was that you can protect yourself and family members against medical disputes, legal wrangling, emotional and religious dilemmas and family feuds with a Health Care Directive. In Alberta it is called a Personal Directive and needs to be done up by an attorney or agent in order for it to be a legal document.

There are very few of us that would want to be kept on life support if there was no hope of recovery, yet most Canadians don't have a legal "Health Care Directive" that spells it out. The typical reason they don't have one is because they think their family won't have any trouble deciding and agreeing on the right thing. Some feel nothing bad will happen to them, and most are just plain too busy to take the time to get one. What they don't realize are the problems that can arise. Provincial laws arbitrarily decide who is in control of your health care. If you don't make a decision on that, when it's too late a decision will be made for you. A family member could disagree with a decision and challenge that decision in court. Then a judge could appoint a guardian to make all your decisions. If you have a Health Care Directive, it would be followed. If you don't have one, someone else can make guesses on what you would want. That is not the best place to put someone and not much of a guarantee that the outcome will be what you would have wanted. Even if you have told people what you want and don't want, you have to rely on their memories of what you prefer. Maybe those people won't be available when decisions have to be made, or they won't remember clearly.

In order to do a proper Health Care Directive, you need to decide who is going to speak for you when you can't. You need to choose these people very carefully. You should consider their availability to respond in an emergency. How they would handle a crisis, their reliability to carry out your wishes and their religious views. Make sure you name a second or even a third person in

case the primary decision-maker is away or unable to act on your behalf. You can choose family members, friends, a neighbor, and even co-workers. Your lawyer can advise you on your selection and on organizing your helpers effectively.

You need to be clear on your preferences, include precise and clear instructions. Don't use any vague terms like "extraordinary measures", as what you may deem extraordinary may be a standard procedure to a specialist.

If you don't want to be kept on life support in a vegetative state, then say it clearly in those words. If you want all possible pain medication should you end up with a terminal illness, you need to also spell that out. If you don't want to be resuscitated to a diminished quality of life, then you need to be clear and give guidance as to your cut-off point. It is best for you to consult your family doctor about the appropriate wording and what the boundaries are.

If you have your Health Care Directive done by a lawyer you will be ensuring that your wishes are spelled out correctly with no room for ambiguity.

Once you have your Health Care Directive, make sure your health records contain a copy. Make sure you share the instructions with your family and friends to avoid any conflicts. It's also a good idea to carry an emergency contact card with your provincial health card. That way the right people can be contacted without delay.

Making sure that your wishes will be carried out will not only protect you, but will also protect those that you love from having to make heart-wrenching decisions on your behalf. It was a sad lesson to learn from Terri Schiavo and her family. Their lives were turned upside down and became the most distasteful "reality" TV show ever shown.

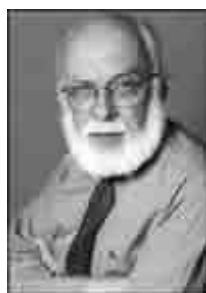
Pat Terrell - Editor





Our meetings have been moved back to the Brentwood Co-op!

To donate to the SHIC Library please contact: shic.news@gmail.com or call us at (403) 295-7532



**James
"The Amazing"
Randi**

THIS QUARTER'S MEETING DATES

All our meetings are held in the Meeting Room downstairs at the Brentwood Calgary Co-op located at Brentwood Mall in the NW.

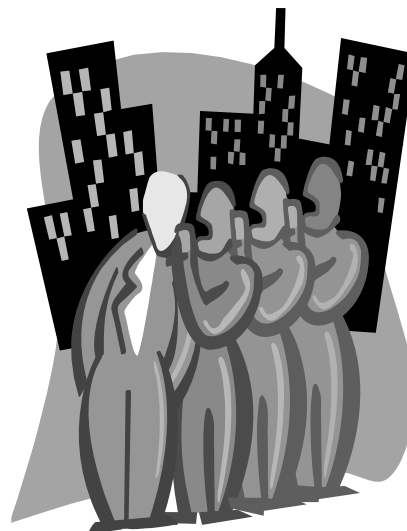
We also meet informally for Sunday brunches and discussion groups. A big thank you to our gracious hosts Dona and Ross for making our luncheons possible. Contact us for more details:

www.calgaryhumanist.ca or
calgary_humanists@yahoo.com

Our next meeting is October 19, 2005. This will be a general discussion meeting.

The meeting date for November is November 16, 2005 - The speaker and topic will be announced on our website.

Our December meeting date will be announced.



LIBRARY NEWS

The library will be available to all members at the monthly meetings. The books, videos, DVD's and cassettes may be taken out from the library free of charge for a one month period.

Many thanks to Dona and Eric for their kind donations to our library.

If anyone would like to donate items to our library, please contact one of the board-

members or email us shic.news@gmail.com.

Because of the large donations received for our library, we cannot list all items. We will have everything available for viewing at the meetings.

Pat Terrell
Temp. Librarian

THE AMAZING MEETING 4 - SCIENCE IN POLITICS AND POLITICS OF SCIENCE

Join **James "The Amazing" Randi, Murray Gell-Mann, Nadine Strossen, the Mythbusters, Penn & Teller, Mac King, Jamy Ian Swiss, Phil Plait, Julia Sweeney, Michael Shermer** and many others in exciting and decadent Las Vegas, January 26th to 29th, 2006, at the Stardust Resort and Casino.

The Amazing Meeting is a celebration of skepticism and critical thinking. Skeptics and thinkers from around the world come together once a year to be educated and entertained by distinguished scientists, outspoken journalists, and cutting-edge entertainers.

Visit www.tam4.com

This is one event worth going to!

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS

by Eric Suderman © 2005

"Political language . . . is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind." - George Orwell

Political correctness is a social movement that avoids terminology or ways of thinking that are offensive to minorities. It strives to be non-judgemental, inoffensive, and neutral. It also seeks to replace words, phrases, customs and ways of thinking that are offensive to identifiable minorities with those that are not.

Its purpose is to avoid the exclusion or the offending of people based on status differences of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, etc. Its critics have suggested that it also seeks to exert a form of mind control by influencing the words people use in order to influence the thoughts they think.

"Political Correctness" has limited benefits, which do not outweigh its disadvantages. It attempts to compromise our language with ambiguous terms that do not properly convey meaning. Its efficiency in achieving its goals is marginal at best. It threatens many freedoms of expression.

Language should reflect reality as much as possible. This keeps communication meaningful. Because we think in words, it will also enhance our thinking. When our language reflects reality poorly, the quality of our communication and our thoughts diminishes.

There are instances where the desire to be inoffensive results in our language changing into something more symbolically accurate. For example, in the interest of being inoffensive to women we have changed gender specific job titles of occupations that are not gender specific. Policeman becomes Police Officer; Fireman becomes Fire Fighter, etc. While I am in favour of these changes, my sense of approval is tempered by the knowledge that the intent was never really to be more accurate but to be inoffensive.

Here is an example that illustrates an opposite effect, that is, an effect that hampers our communication and thinking. The term "sex-trade worker" has replaced "prostitute", "hooker", and "whore". This is a very vague term. It is a term devoid of nuance, or "flavour". It is a sterile term. It is not nearly as meaningful as "whore". "Whore" gets an emotional response from most people whether it is revulsion, disgust or pity. "Sex-trade worker" gets barely any emotional response at all. When I use the phrase "crack whore", there is no doubt about my meaning. When I say "sex-trade worker" there is much doubt. I could be referring to a porn star, or a Chippendale dancer, or a clerk in an adult video store, or any of a myriad of professions that exist in what is loosely termed "the sex trade".

There can be no doubt that many of the terms I've mentioned are indeed offensive to many people. They describe a profession that is usually only pursued out of extreme desperation and despair. Mortality and disease are markedly higher in this profession than in the national average. The stories of the people in this profession are depressingly similar regarding things like emotional and chemical dependencies, muggings, beatings, etc. These words are offensive for the very reason that they describe such a bleak existence. These words are symbols of something frightening. When our symbols evoke similar emotional responses to that which is symbolized, at the very least we can recognize that the symbol is meaningful.

These are terms that should offend us on some level. While I appreciate that my Auntie May would be scandalized to hear these terms, I also believe that it is better that she acknowledges the horror in the term "prostitute" than to be left indifferent with the term "sex-trade worker" in reference to the same person.

This is only one example out of many of instances. Compare "terrorist" to "mass offender" or the many politically correct military phrases such as "terminate" or "pacify" instead of "kill". Are these vague terms not an abomination to our language?

The efficiency of political correctness leaves much to be desired. Rather than affect the meanings of our words, political correctness changes the words themselves.

What political correctness appears to be trying to accomplish is to create an atmosphere of tolerance or even acceptance where the widest range of people can co-exist. Unfortunately it can't do this efficiently. Our language is a cultural phenomenon that is as dynamic as any living thing. We can attempt to change words and meanings but once we become accustomed to a term it's meaning changes until it is the same as the original.

The "mentally retarded" became the "mentally handicapped" which became "special" which became "mentally challenged". Each time the words or phrases changed, the stigmas they were trying to escape followed the new term. The Calgary Health Authority changed it's name to the Calgary Health Region at a cost of 10's of thousands of dollars because they thought the word "authority" was intimidating to some people. Apparently the Calgary Health Region did not lose any actual authority due to the name change.

These attempts of trying to avoid stigma are merely treating the symptom and not the cause. Instead of changing the words, we should be striving to change meanings through education. The term "Protestant" was initially a derogatory term with a stigma of rebellion attached to it. The Protestants have since defiantly adopted the term, made it their own, and changed it's meaning. Those close to them regularly affectionately refer to homosexual men as "fag" or "faggot". The term has transformed meanings from a term of insult to one of affection.

Could we not do the same thing with the mentally challenged? If we channelled the energy and resources used to change these words into a campaign of education to change the meanings of these words, would we not be better off? What if the Calgary Health Region had spent 10's of thousands of dollars nurturing a reputation of benevolent authority instead of merely changing its name?

Political correctness also challenges our freedoms of expression.

Consider "Season's Greetings". Here is a phrase that has been put to much use lately in the month of December. Almost every culture from the northern hemisphere has some sort of cultural observance when the days are their shortest. But because these observances are not universal throughout our population, in the spirit of political correctness, we are not to refer to them directly.

I acknowledge that there are organizations that must maintain their neutrality in some of these cases. For instance, it is not appropriate for our government to appear to endorse one religion over another. However, every person in this country has the freedom of religion. As well, everyone here has the freedom of speech. These freedoms lose their value when we are discouraged from using them.

In this particular case, it boggles my mind that any tolerant person would be offended by a Christian wishing them "Merry Xmas" or a Jew wishing them "Happy Hanukkah". As an atheist and secular humanist, I appreciate the thought behind the sentiment regardless of what religion or culture inspired it. To be honest, I'd feel slighted if I did not receive these greetings as it hints that I'm being excluded from the festivities due to my beliefs.

If we can accept that the tolerant are not offended by the festive greetings of other cultures, that leaves only the intolerant. Why are we, in this case, pandering to a behaviour that is obviously not consistent with co-existing in a multicultural nation? I have no doubt that some people are offended by being wished a "Merry Xmas". But why should any of us curtail our hard earned freedoms in order to avoid offending someone who has no good reason to be offended?

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BOOK REVIEW BY LIZ WILSON

"We, too, need to keep the world going – although we don't know where it is going – but we can help shape the direction with our actions. Frankl emphasizes that behavior is what counts rather than belief. I think most Humanists would agree."



Author Victor E. Frankl

When I finished reading Buckman it seemed to me that he did not go into *why* we should keep on living or what motivates us to keep going or feeling responsible; but, Viktor Frankl's book is centered on these questions. Responsibility is the very essence of the human condition according to Frankl. In a nutshell it is not what we expect of life but what life expects of us. He implies that it is in the fulfilling of this obligation that we exemplify our "human"ness – we are doing what we were meant to do. In Search for Meaning, a phrase leapt out at me which seemed to go on from where Buckman left off: "He who has a *why* to live can bear with almost any *how*" – which is actually a quote from Nietzsche (Pg. 40). This statement seems to give a framework for our thoughts and actions and helps to focus effort. Frankl states that the meaning of life is closely tied to the purpose of life. I am needed. I have a job to do. I have a responsibility to keep the human race going. I have a personal/individual responsibility. In my yard this spring I have seen robins building a nest (how do they get all that mud up there?) and then sitting on the nest day after day. Two years in a row some marauder has destroyed the fledglings but the next year the robins are back. They must feel that this is their purpose! We, too, need to keep the world going – although we don't know where it is going – but we can help shape the direction with our actions. Frankl emphasizes that behavior is what counts rather than belief. I think most Humanists would agree.

Much of our behavior, of course, is governed by trying to fulfill our daily creature needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs makes good sense to me, each level coming to the fore as the previous one is fulfilled: 1) physiological needs - food, shelter, etc; 2) safety needs – free of danger; 3) social needs – to belong and be accepted; 4) esteem needs – when not met social dysfunction can arise; 5) self-actualization needs – maximize one's potential.

A point made by both authors is that one is free to choose one's own attitude in any given set of circumstances. I would think that this applies to attitude not actions or behavior as many different outside powers curtail or help to mold the overt expression of attitude.

This last point becomes a jumping-off point for Frankl who takes this further to the concept of self-transcendence and the fact that it happens only when, instead of striving for a particular goal, we give of ourselves and it is in the giving that we transcend. This thought seems closely related to that element of Buddhist philosophy that states that there is no self to be served: it is rather that we are here to be of service to others – as Dr. Barber mentioned on the 15th of June when he addressed us at our meeting. I hope I am not misconstruing what Dr. Barber said as a couple of sentences cannot express much concept or meaning. We can accept or reject this as a belief system.

Still I wonder how free we are. The attitude that we take is so dependent upon what perception, or interpretation, we have of the incoming stimuli – and that depends upon the makeup of our brain (about which we know so little). The same stimulus, or action, can evoke a variety of responses depending upon the perception of the person receiving it – the color of the glasses through which they are viewing the world. How positive or negative is it? Is it a threat? What is the motivation behind it? Perception is so important. I am reminded of some of the very independent little ones entering the school system who do not want anyone telling them what to do – let alone how to read!

On the topic of trying to interpret actions of others I think one of the main factors is that we tend to project ourselves into others and think they are acting as we would in the same circumstances. This process of identification with others is needed for group and individual survival but it can cause problems in interpersonal relationships – particularly in the areas of trust and care. I think how much you trust others is a reflection of how trustworthy you are, yourself – plus, of course, your life experiences of trust. Lots of room for discussion here! There are some people who will not take an altruistic offer of help as they see it as an attempt to control them.

I would recommend this two book to you to read, if you haven't already. You will certainly find yourself talking to the author.

I feel as if I have been writing in highlights – a lot of points are undeveloped. I would really welcome input as I enjoy discussing, and everyone has a different "take" on things.

Liz Wilson

CALGARY HUMANIST SOCIALS

One of our members had a wonderful idea of creating social get-togethers. A few of the ideas were for playing bridge, bowling and the theatre.

Bridge - This is a card game played with partners. It takes cunning and skill! Just kidding. It's a fun game to play and a great way to meet others. One of our members is interested in hosting the games should anyone be interested. Based on interest, a schedule would then be decided upon.

Bowling - This is a great way for the whole family to have a fun night out. Seems to me it's the kids that have the

natural skill required for this game! Again, if anyone is interested in a bowling night out for one night a month, please get in touch with the Editor of the Newsletter and based upon interest, a schedule and place will be decided upon.

Theatre - There are many exciting shows coming to the theatres in Calgary. They can be live theatre, movies, and concerts. If there is a lot of interest in this, we will have a coordinator appointed to ensure tickets, venues, etc. are in order.

These could be fun ways in getting to know other members and those that are like-

minded. Everyone is invited to participate and events, schedules, etc., will be posted when they become available.

If anyone wishes to participate in any of these events or want to host another type of social gathering, please contact the Editor of the Newsletter at :
shic.news@gmail.com



SHIC BOARD MEMBERS

Eric Suderman—President/Webmaster
Jeffrey Perkins—Past-President
Alexandra Vermunt—Secretary
Pat Terrell—Treasurer
Dennis Green
P. Robinson

You can contact any Board Member through our website www.calgaryhumanist.ca

When you are courting a nice girl an hour seems like a second. When you sit on a red-hot cinder a second seems like an hour. That's relativity.
-- Einstein, Albert (1879-1955)

SHIC AGM AND ELECTIONS

In January 2006 we will be holding our Annual General Meeting and the election for Board Members.

Now is the time to think about becoming a Board Member for SHIC. If you can devote a little time (an hour or two a month) and want to take a more active role in the direction of SHIC please enter your name for election.

The Board tries hard to provide services, meetings and topics that would interest all members. We can't do it without your input.

SHIC's Board has tried to give the members more information by starting the Newsletter and Library.

This year has been a difficult one in that we lost our regular meeting space at the Brentwood Co-op and had to move to the Co-op Midtown. The transition didn't go as smooth as we would have hoped and it was also harder for members to commute to the downtown location. We have finally been able to secure an acceptable contract with Brentwood Co-op and we are happy to have our old meeting space back.

If you want to help on the Board in any capacity, please contact any Board Member.



Now is the time to think about becoming a Board Member!



*"Ontario is going
to ban ALL
religious
arbitrations in the
Province"*

ONTARIO VOTES NO TO SHARIAH LAW

I'll be the first to admit that I am critical of the Government, especially the Liberals and what I deem they get away with and the crazy laws they want to impose on us. In this case though, I have to congratulate them on recognizing what Shariah Law and what all religious law or arbitration really is. It is a means for religion to instigate it's own beliefs and laws because they don't agree with the law or rights given to everyone. They want to have special veto on the rights of their members based on their beliefs.

The Premier of Ontario the Honorable Dalton McGuinty said Ontario is going to ban ALL religious arbitrations in the Province. Now that is more than I think any of us were hoping for. McGuinty truly recognizes that religion has no place in the laws of the State. They are going to move quickly to outlaw existing religious tribunals already used for years by Christians and Jews. Of course, these groups are now outraged and in shock that they have been swept by the same broom. They don't see why they have been included and are now losing those special rights under Ontario's Arbitration Act. This now closes that door of opportunity for other groups to apply for Arbitration rights based on the argument that others enjoy these special rights. Now there is one law for all Ontarians.

If you've never been through arbitration, let me tell you it is a grueling process. In the case of divorce, it slows down the divorce process to less than a crawl. In what used to take a year to get through, ends up taking 3 years and sometimes longer. It is a process where you negotiate on the terms of your divorce or separation and if you have any children involved, the custodial rights. Even in non-religious arbitration I was being denied some rights and questioned immensely because I am an atheist. My ability to live a moral life was in question constantly and the other party who constantly professed their devotion to religion gained the arbitrator's respect and never had to provide the most basic documents that are usually required.

The whole argument from the people supporting Shariah Law was that they are still bound by the law, that the woman still has a right to a lawyer, etc. The problem with that statement is that if you are in any type of abusive relationship, it is extremely difficult to get a lawyer or proper information even without any type of religious arbitration involved. It took me 10 years to leave an abusive partner as I was not allowed to work for most of the time and with no money you cannot get a lawyer. If there are assets above a certain amount, you don't qualify for legal aid either. When I was allowed to work, I had to give my partner more than half of what I made. What was left was used to save for a lawyer and pay for two children. It took me 10 years to save up \$8,000 to start the divorce proceedings. Now imagine if I was never allowed to work. I would still be in an abusive relationship and unable to leave and remember I speak English and I was born in Canada. What about those that are from another Country and can't speak the language, and don't know the laws of their Province or Canada.

Living in an abusive relationship for any amount of time (in my case 19 years), does not leave you with the ability to think clearly. You don't feel you deserve anything and you constantly cave in to the whims and demands of your abuser. In arbitration, you don't have anyone on your side. You don't have any support or advice. What you do have is that same abuser making demands and the arbitrator asking you to cave in and agree. Now imagine a religious arbitrator in the equation. Not only are you asked to cave in, but you are now told that it's God's law, that God will punish you if you don't agree to the terms. So now you have guilt added to your feeling of unworthiness. You end up giving up rights that others enjoy. Some will even give up trying to get out of the relationship as they are made to feel that if they tried harder, if they prayed more, everything would be fine. Most of these women that come from other Countries don't know anyone and can't speak the language. Their religion will usually favor the male in the household. In Islamic countries the most destitute of beggars on the street are women who have been divorced. They have no rights to the assets or their children. They are cut off and usually shunned by those that knew them.

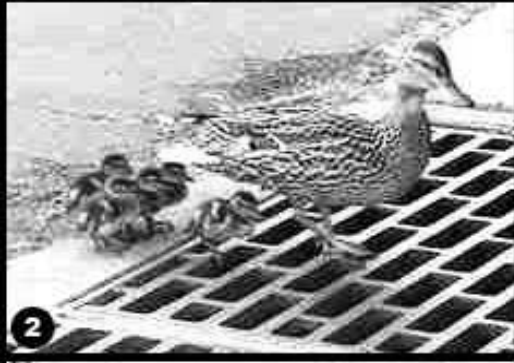
I by no means came away with nothing like a lot of Muslim women, but because of arbitration, I didn't get 1/4 of the assets and lost one child. If it was a religious arbitration, I'm sure that I would not have ended up with what I have now. I will always have a bitter taste in my mouth on what the legal system in Alberta will allow. The whole problem I had at the time was that I didn't have any type of support system. There was no one to advise me or help build my self-esteem. I barely made it through the process without having a nervous breakdown. When Shariah Law Arbitration was first introduced for debate, I could only be fearful of how it would affect Muslim women and their children. We already have a high poverty rate of single divorced mothers with children. We don't need religious arbitrators to create more.

This rejection of religious law is a huge step forward. It doesn't in any way fix what is wrong with arbitration as a whole, but no longer are rights denied based on religious beliefs.

Pat Terrell
Editor



Bad Parenting



Do bibles spread the superbug MRSA? - author unknown

Hospitals in Leicester, UK, are concerned that bibles may be exacerbating the spread of MRSA among hospital patients. Rather than having a bible in a locker next to every bed, health officials are considering storing them.

Gideons International supplies UK hospitals with bibles (as well as the military, shipping companies, hotels and cruise liners worldwide). A Gideon International spokesperson said that idea that bibles pose a health risk is nonsense.

Some people have complained saying it is a 'politically correct' move as non-Christian's could be offended by the bible next to their beds. Hospital officials said this is not true. Religious leaders in the UK say they have never heard of any non-Christian feeling offended in such a way.

Health officials say they are consulting with experts on the best way to store religious materials on the wards. It may make more health sense, they say, if the bibles are stored somewhere else. They would still be available for anyone who asked for them.

Gideons International has called this move 'outrageous'. However, health care professionals have commented that the bibles may be a potential MRSA health risk - they are not disposable and do not have a wipeable cover. If they are stained or contaminated they cannot be cleaned effectively.

Surely the solution is to make wipeable ones, isn't it?

"People seldom do what they believe in. They do what is convenient, then repent."
-- Bob Dylan

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Secular humanists do not rely upon gods or other supernatural forces to solve their problems or provide guidance for their conduct. They rely instead upon the application of reason, the lessons of history, and personal experience to form an ethical/moral foundation and to create meaning in life. Secular humanists look to the methodology of science as the most reliable source of information about what is factual or true about the universe we all share, acknowledging that new discoveries will always alter and expand our understanding of it and perhaps change our approach to ethical issues as well.

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS by Eric Suderman © 2005

Continued from Page 3.....

Regardless of the intentions, any "adjustment" of our freedoms must be carefully considered. In reality, I am free to attempt any action I can conceive of. As a society, we collectively agree to voluntarily not exercise some of these freedoms in order to gain rights. For instance, we all agree not to kill each other. In return, we gain the right not to be killed by our neighbours.

What do we all gain by curtailing up our various freedoms of expression? Presumably, we would all gain the right to not be offended by others. When seen from this perspective, political correctness seems ludicrous. It is simply not possible nor desirable to not offend others or not be offended by others. Even if it were possible, would we value the resulting hypocritical courtesies it affords us? I enjoy polite company in my human interactions, but only so far as I believe they are genuine.

In many cases, we are talking about ideas that may be offensive to others. Would we have been better off if Copernicus had not revealed his

theories of the Earth travelling around the Sun for fear of being offensive? Are we truly better off suppressing the opinions of racists rather than destroying their arguments through open debate? Should we go so far as to suppress the teaching of evolution because it offends some Christians?

It is because we enjoy the freedom of speech that we can even discuss these things. If ideas cannot stand up to open debate should they not be discarded? Conversely, if an idea does stand the test of debate, should it be suppressed on the off chance that someone might be offended by it?

I hope that my ramblings have been able to shed a little light on this subject. I truly believe that the cost of political correctness can never justify the benefits. The corruption of our language, the inefficiency of its methods and the erosion of our freedoms will never be justified by the results of political correctness.

Eric Suderman - President

2006 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Please renew your membership in SHIC today. Membership forms can be downloaded at www.calgaryhumanist.ca, and they can also be picked up at the monthly meetings.

For 2006, we are continuing our affiliation with the Humanist Association of Canada (HAC) to offer reduced fees for joining both organizations at the same time. We encourage you to become a member of both SHIC and HAC. Lifetime memberships are also available.

Membership fees are for the calendar year.

SHIC is a small, volunteer based organization that is totally dependant on membership fees and donations to function. You will receive a charitable tax receipt for your fees and donations as soon as possible after we receive them.

Thanks for your support!

Secular Humanism

Secular Humanism is a term which has come into use in the last thirty years to describe a world view with the following elements and principles:

- A conviction that dogmas, ideologies and traditions, whether religious, political or social, must be weighed and tested by each individual and not simply accepted on faith.
- Commitment to the use of critical reason, factual evidence, and scientific methods of inquiry, rather than faith and mysticism, in seeking solutions to human problems and answers to important human questions.
- A primary concern with fulfillment, growth, and creativity for both the individual and humankind in general.
- A constant search for objective truth, with the understanding that new knowledge and experience constantly alter our imperfect perception of it.
- A concern for this life and a commitment to making it meaningful through better understanding of ourselves, our history, our intellectual and artistic achievements, and the outlooks of those who differ from us.
- A search for viable individual, social and political principles of ethical conduct, judging them on their ability to enhance human well-being and individual responsibility.
- A conviction that with reason, an open marketplace of ideas, good will, and tolerance, progress can be made in building a better world for ourselves and our children.