

OPEN TALK MAGAZINE

Dare to think

ISSUE No.10

MARCH
2019

CEREMONIES!

TIME FOR HUMANIST CEREMONIES IN AFRICA

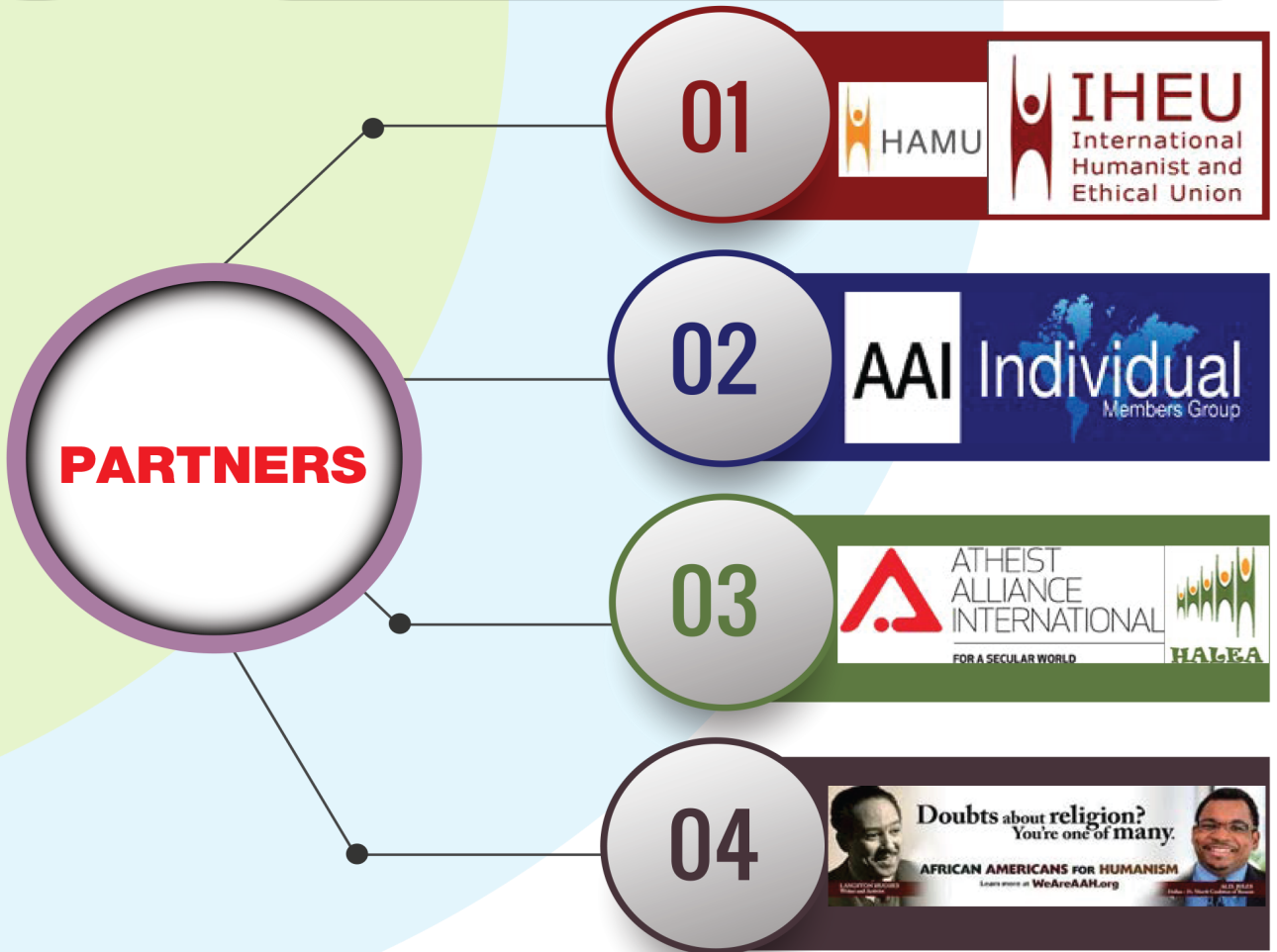


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WHAT THE HECK IS HUMANISM about?

Find out more by visiting HALEA offices at Plot 41, Makerere Hill Road, Enterprise House, Room L 3 OR send us an Email: haleauganda@gmail.com



EDITORIAL

The Open Talk Magazine (OTM) is back, fresh and rebranded and it continues to grow from strength to strength over the years. With a number of changes made, the OTM is now the only secular online publication that will not only feature the stories, campaigns and projects of non believers in Uganda but stories of non believers within Africa and beyond. The OTM continues to put on the front page the views of non believers, it stirs critical thought and ushers in a breath of fresh air in a continent and a world influenced by millions of dogmas and hundreds of religions that continue to keep people under bondage, poverty, suffering, ignorance and anxiety.

This publication is largely dedicated to the introduction of Humanist Ceremonies in Africa and as such to inspire the start of humanist ceremonies in Africa where they are urgently needed today than ever before. We draw inspiration from the United Kingdom and in particular, England and Scotland where humanist ceremonies are a huge success and there is no doubt when we say; humanist ceremonies are a force to reckon with.

In Scotland, for example, humanist ceremonies have strictly taken over religious ceremonies to the extent that there are more humanist weddings done in Scotland in a single year than all religious weddings ! Just imagine such happening in Uganda and in other countries in Africa.....This is not wishful thinking, this is possible especially because we have now trained Humanists Celebrants in several Countries in Africa including Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi, Ghana, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Malawi among others.

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In this publication, we are featuring different writers from Africa and beyond writing on different topical issues. The OTM will be offering space to several non believers to write on issues that concern them, to update the world on the progress of their activities and share their fears and challenges. The OTM will continue to provide that needed space for a Meet Up of Like Minds and will be strong on addressing all inhumane concerns afflicting the universe.

We continue to promote humanism and emphasize that Humanism is a rational philosophy informed by science, guided by reason and motivated by compassion. Humanism affirms the dignity of EACH HUMAN BEING and it supports the liberty and opportunity consonant with social and planetary responsibility, free from any dogma, theism, and all other supernatural claims and beliefs. We assert that humanism derives the goals of life from human need and interest rather than theological and ideological abstractions and Humanism asserts that as humans, we must take responsibility and be in charge of our own destiny. It is our life to live, it is one life we have to live and it should be purpose driven. This magazine is out to address the concerns that humanism promotes. The Open Talk Magazine is a publication of HALEA LTD since 2011. As a humanist organization we shall continue to promote science, reason and rationale as the best approach to handle the numerous challenges in our midst. To all writers, photographers and the editorial team that put this together, thank you. As always, you are an incredibly wonderful bunch of people to work with. Over the years, I have enjoyed working with you, the big team behind the OTM. To our dear esteemed readers, please continue sending us your views because it is the only way we can continue progressing forward. Enjoy this one life we have as you read the Open Talk Magazine.

CHIEF EDITOR: KATO MUKASA

Thanks to our team of editors who include: Dr. Majwala, Kisa Kaggwa and Ivan Pinto, Thanks to our designer Nathan for the job well done.

It's Time For Humanist Ceremonies In Africa. Writes Jose Lukyamuzi



Africa is an immensely endowed continent in a number of ways. The natural resources in their abundance, the rich culture, the various religions and their dogmatic practices, the dances, the music, the love, the food and all define us. We are a

very welcoming, warm warm people yet a very conservative and very religious continent. We are by large a people that still believe in deities, not a deity (by the way, but several deities, both locally manufactured and imported) and we have allowed the deities to manage us yet we would be in position to manage them. I still believe we humans created the deities and deities never created us anyway. We are a people who largely have failed to enjoy the one life we have because of the several religious practices we have allowed to determine how we live our lives.

We are a continent infested by a new plague called Pentecostalism, we have more pastors than medical doctors and nurses combined, we have more churches and mosques than schools and hospitals combined. We are said to be a very prayerful continent and we have allowed the gods be in charge of our own affairs, to determine how we go to school, what we study at school, how we relate to each other, how we marry, how we eat, how we dress, how we dance, how we talk, how we name our children, the names we carry and how we are buried. We are not in charge of our own destiny, instead The Priests, The Imams, The Sheiks, The Pastors, the Native Medicine men and women and all the charlatans (not to mention the highly corrupt politicians) define and determine our affairs on a daily basis.

When a practicing Catholic dies yet hasn't been paying tithe, or even going to church, it should be that such a person isn't entitled to be buried in the catholic way yet you will find that his family will sort of 'bribe' the priest and such a non-believer will have a burial presided over by a priest! In most cases, a catechist say some prayers at the burial. The irony is that someone who hasn't been attending mass or praying regularly but has been paying the tithe will be entitled to a priest praying for his corpse while one who has been attending prayers but hasn't been paying the tithe will not be entitled priest's prayers

at his/her burial. That is double standards at it best. I have observed that there are several non religious persons who for lack of a proper supporting system from our secular and non religious community are buried as if they were religious and I have observed how theists enjoy to take over the ceremony of an openly non religious person.

The recent example is the death of our comrade brother, Ayella Collins who despite his well know atheism, his religious family turned around and told the world that he was religious and took joy in branding our member as a religious person. This is the fear many of us have, whereas burial should be a family affair, I strictly think that if a non believer wanted to have a non religious funeral, that right should be respected but definitely, there should be people to do that work. This is why is it vital to have a team, a functional, well facilitate team of Humanist Celebrants ready to handle all these humanists ceremonies through out Africa.

Whereas a dead man is a dead man and can not feel the pain any more or cares how he is sent off, those comrades he has left behind, those people who knew his stand on all the religious madness are definitely not happy to see their friend, associate, colleague being celebrated in a religious function. Why should a non-religious person be buried as if he was religious. It's therefore necessary to have our people have another choice that can give them comfort in how they would like their life ceremonies to be.

When one of the leaders of HALEA went for the World Humanist Congress in Oxford in 2014, he (Kato Mukasa) got the chance to visit the Humanist Society of Scotland and the British Humanist

Association- who all have humanist celebrants arranging and managing humanist ceremonies and came back interested in starting humanist ceremonies back here at home.

It's not surprising to find hypocrite politicians here complaining about how the Whiteman wants to dictate matters here in Africa yet the same people see no problem in holding marriages the very same way the Whiteman's religion or the Mohamedans religion dictates them to be. The fact is that Africans have no serious attachment to naming of kids and the closest that comes is at baptism ceremonies where the clergy man can tell you whether the first name is acceptable or not. For the most, most tribes just require the grandparent to provide a surname to the child but there is no serious ceremony as such. It would therefore be interesting to

have a ceremony where a child plants a tree as reminder of the day the he or she was named or a house foundation to be laid, a house that will be built for that child so that when he or she grows up to be a man or woman, he/ she will have a house to call her own, a house started on the day a name for her or him was given and that will be memorable.

Then there are the weddings. Weddings here involve two aspects usually. The traditional part and the religious part. First is what Ugandans term the introduction ceremony or Okwanjula and this is the part where the groom is introduced to the girl's parents and family. Then comes the wedding proper and this is when the religious vows are taken and a reception follows at which various guests invited or uninvited are hosted. Any one conversant with the way these observances are done must be knowing how irritating some of the rituals or practices involved are. You start off with the introduction ceremonies which are more of a showbiz affair than the real tradition from which they stem. It's about how many times the bride's entourage has changed attire, the amount of sodas or beers delivered, kilogrammes of rice and sugar brought. Actually, it's more about how the ceremony fairs when compared to the last ceremony that took place in that village in other words, it is about which ceremony was more expensively organised than the other it is about extravagance and not the individual. It's therefore necessary to have humanist weddings where the involved can decide how to customise the ceremony. What they want to be said at ceremony, what can act as the union symbol (it doesn't have to be a ring), it is fair for people to speak what is practically possible and not what has been parroted over the years. Why declare the until death do us apart vow when you very well know it might be not possible to fulfil? Why not provide a

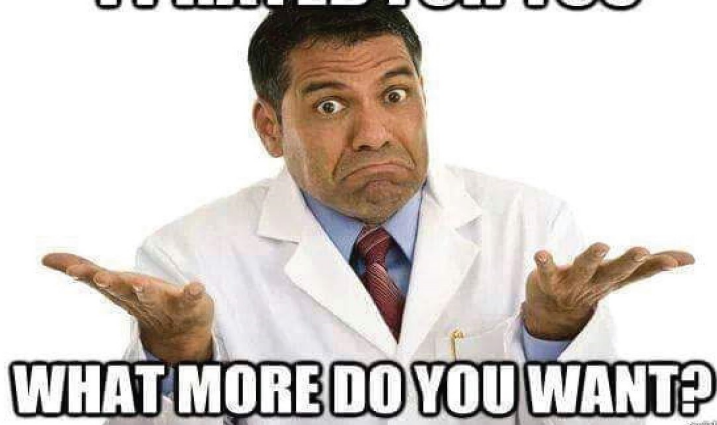
a provision for a civil mutual agreement which gives those in the relationship the freedom to be in a bond that is no prison as provision for a most have come to term marriage?

It is time for Humanist ceremonies to celebrate human dignity without the scarecrow mentioning of the name God (and related religious practices) which is used to frighten the involved into being virtuous when a simple call for being ethical could do, to terrify the bereaved on how they have to pray so much so that the deceased doesn't end up in hell while entirely forgetting the good things achieved while that person lived. It's most likely that humanist ceremonies will go a long way in streamlining humanist lives already being lived in Uganda.

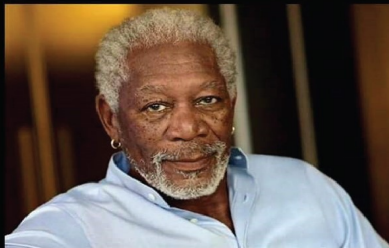
So HALEA, here we go, we are promoting the introduction of humanist ceremonies in Uganda and support the introduction of the same in several other countries in Africa. We definitely need you to be on our side in this noble cause. It is true but hurting to say that us, non believers are the minority in a largely religious continent, Africa and in the world by extension. We do not have enough funds to do the projects we wish to do yet funds are crucial in our campaigns. At the moment, we want to have a website on which this magazine will be featured on its own, we need funds to advertise humanist ceremonies in our local media, we own no media so we need funds to buy space to be heard, we need to empower our trained celebrants to carry on with their passion, in the new carrier chosen. Any contribution is welcome, any advice that can move us forward is highly appreciated. Kindly support us, join us, be part of the winning team, NOW

Lukyamuzi Joseph is a founder member of **HALEA**, a trained journalist working with **Central Broadcasting Services (CBS)** and a writer whose opinion articles have regularly featured in **Uganda's Observer**. He is the **Executive Director** of **HALEA** and Director in Charge of **Media and Communication**. Jose can be reached on Whatsapp + 256 756 58 24 60 and on email at lukyamuzi@yahoo.com or osephlukyamuzi@gmail.com

I PRAYED FOR YOU

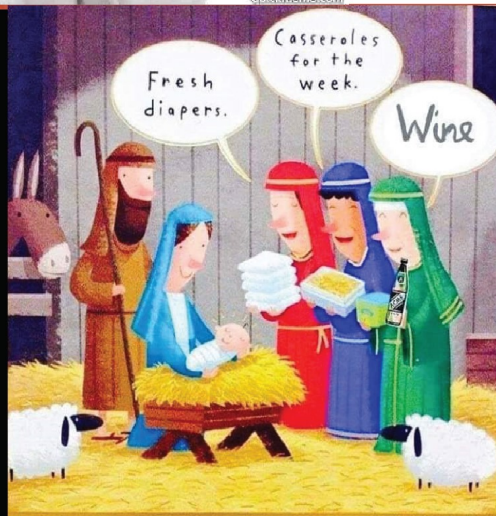


"You don't need religion to have morals. If you can't determine right from wrong, then you lack empathy, not religion."



Truth Inside Of You

When you're 20 you care what everyone thinks.
When you're 40 you stop caring what everyone thinks.
When you're 60 you realize no one was ever thinking about you in the first place.

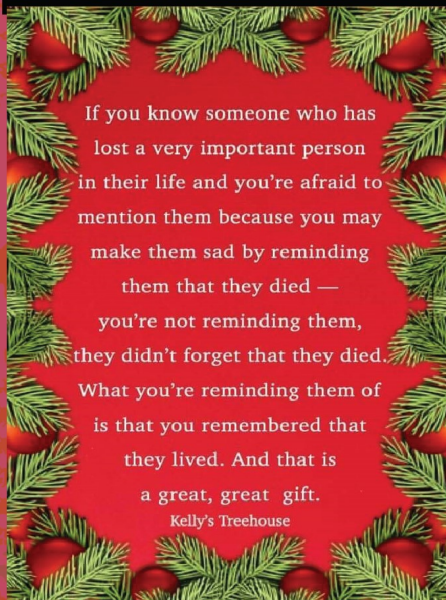


After the Three Wise Men left, the Three Wisest Women arrived.

**JESUS PROMISED THE END OF ALL WICKED PEOPLE
 ODIN PROMISED THE END OF ALL ICE GIANTS**



I DON'T SEE MANY ICE GIANTS AROUND



If you know someone who has lost a very important person in their life and you're afraid to mention them because you may make them sad by reminding them that they died — you're not reminding them, they didn't forget that they died. What you're reminding them of is that you remembered that they lived. And that is a great, great gift.
 Kelly's Treehouse

I believe that we are who we choose to be. Nobody is going to come and save you. You've got to save yourself. Nobody is going to give you anything. You've got to go out and fight for it. Nobody knows what you want except you, and nobody will be as sorry as you if you don't get it. So don't give up on your dreams.

Hospitals



We use science to fix your god's mistakes.

HUMANISTS CELEBRANTS TRAINED AND GRADUATED IN AFRICA FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME.



KATO MUKASA

It is one of those dreams that finally come true in one's life time. When I first read about the highly respected professionals we call Humanists Celebrants, about twelve years ago, I thought it was something good to think about but that which could not be achieved in Africa at least in my life time.

When I finally had the opportunity to interact with Celebrants, first in Europe and later in the US, I got encouraged that we could actually have professionally trained humanists celebrants. I was given a hands on training by the very practical humanists celebrants first in England, then Scotland and then the US.

I am happy that with their inspiration and support, five years after them training me, we have now graduated the first ever well trained humanists celebrants in Africa trained by the most experienced professionals in this field, team Humanists Society Scotland.

Thanks to you, HSS and Gordon MacRae It is vital to mention that the following individuals have been very pivotal in the success of this training: Josh Kutchinsky (the late), Rodger McAdam, Ivan Middleton, Douglas McLellan, Neil Anderson Dr Bob Scott, Senga Ishaq, Belinda Braithwaite, John Bishop, Janice Crean, and Maureen Kettle among many others. We are finally here. After two years of intensive training, we have been able to train humanists celebrants in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi, Ghana, Nigeria,

Malawi, Zimbabwe and many others are yet to complete the course and are in

South Africa, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone. I feel so happy to report that the trained humanist celebrants in Africa have been trained with skills that make them very competent to handle humanists ceremonies. In addition to being equipped with skills in handling Secular Ceremonies such as Naming, Funerals, Weddings, etc, our celebrants have been equipped with additional Critical Thinking Skills, Human Rights Advocacy, Communication Skills, Quality Control Skills, Team Building and as well as Humanism Advocacy in general. It is the best trained team to have for your function.

The Humanists Celebrants were officially graduated at a mega graduation ceremony that happened at Pearl Vocational Training College, a humanist founded, skills training college located in Uganda, Lwengo district, on Tagga Village, Kiingo Subcounty, Bukoto South Constituency. At the moment, this is the only vocational training college in Africa which among its courses is the training of Humanists celebrants.

A Thank You Note:

Thanks to Team HSS, HALEA, UHASSO, and Pearl Vocational Training College, the training was completely free as no participant was made to pay for it. We were all motivated to be part of history, to be part of a team that introduced humanist ceremonies in Africa and to be the team that has produced a well trained cream of Humanists Celebrants Professionals that will make secularism, humanism more practical, and more visible in Africa. To us, this is a huge success and a mile stone in our life time. The celebration is on, let's secularism,

humanism more practical, and more visible in Africa. To us, this is a huge success and a mile stone in our life time. The celebration is on, let's all celebrate this registered success so far.

Moving Forward, A Call For Support

Now that we have the first well trained professionals in Humanists Celebrants, we must be thinking of the way forward. We definitely must move forward. There are key issues that we must address. We have to let the world know who Humanists Celebrants are and that humanists celebrants are at their service and can indeed do a great job. This calls for marketing and it means paying for such services on all media outlets that matter.

We need to support our celebrants in networking and moving together as a team in their respective countries. We need to support our celebrants in lobbying, contacting people, reaching out to their local authorities to seek legal consent that will enable them have legalized humanists weddings. We need a clear website that strictly markets Humanists Ceremonies in Africa and can ably enable the people to know who these celebrants are, where they are located and how they can

be contacted to offer their needed services. There is no doubt that our services are needed in Africa and therefore we must find ways to take our services to the people that highly need them and we must be visible.

We need your support, financial support to put in place all the needed infrastructure and general advice on how to do our work especially in terms of effective and efficient marketing strategies in a dynamic environment that Africa is. We need professional advise in a number of areas especially from the well experienced celebrants all over the world.

It is for this reason that I am reaching out to you for your support, we need it more especially at this stage. Moving forward, we are putting together a Go Fund Me page so that you can support us but as we prepare that, please do not hesitate to contact us through our

Kato Mukasa is a Trained Entrepreneurial Economist and Lawyer specialised in Commercial Law but he is a Human Rights Practitioner, Legal Director of HALEA, Chairperson UHASSO and International Humanist Leader.

email: haleauganda@gmail.com or through my personal email: katomukasa@yahoo.co.uk or directly whatsapp me on +256 704 60 95 34. Please check our website to see our activities over the years at www.haleauganda.org.



FIRST HUMANIST WEDDING IN EAST AFRICA.

Writes; **KATO MUKASA**

We had never witnessed a true humanist wedding in East Africa until when this important couple in our history decides to have a humanist wedding in Mombasa Kenya.

It was making history on Saturday the 5th of January when my friend Daniel and Elina got married in the first ever humanist marriage conducted by a celebrant trained through the pairing of Humanist Celebrants in Scotland and Humanists in Africa. It was such a historical moment that has started our journey into conducting humanist ceremonies in Africa with well trained celebrants. The wedding happened on the lovely and lively beach, Badi Badu, Diane, Mombasa, Kenya, and it was a celebration of love personalized. Many thanks to celebrant *Cyrus Wanjohi* for doing a fantastic job as the day's celebrant and all the mentors especially *Gary Smith*, *Dr. Bob Scott*, *Senga Ishaq*, *Belinda Braithwaite*, and *Janice Crean* among others at **HSS** and the dedicated team at **HALEA**, **Pearl** and **UHASSO** for ensuring that the two year celebrants' training is a success. Thanks to all of you for the Noble Contribution. Thanks for supporting HSS to offer the mentoring role.

It was such a beautiful wedding flagging off many more humanists weddings to happen in Africa, weddings that are part

of the customized lively ceremonies that reflect our values and beliefs as humanists. The waiting is over, you can book your well trained celebrant today. Thanks again to the loving couple and all the team that mentored the celebrants. And my role was the simplest, I read the poem of the day and kept the vital documents.

This wedding made history and equally motivated many African Humanist Celebrants to see themselves as a people with potential to handle such a ceremony. Our Celebrant in Cyrus Wanjohi did a great job that put a smile on the faces of many and revived our dream of celebrating humanist marriages not only in Kenya but all over Africa. I am happy that I braved the two day long journey in a bus and I witnessed the making of history. This is just the beginning of millions of humanists weddings to be done in Africa in the coming years. These ceremonies are going to change the narrative about Africa, they are going to enable Africans see the practical aspect of humanism even more. If you read us and wish to have a humanist ceremony, be it Naming, Funerals or Weddings, do not hesitate to write to us on

haleauganda@gmail.com or Whatsapp us at +256 704 60 95 34 for

reliable, professional and well trained Humanist Celebrants in Africa.



SUPPORT HALEA TODAY:

Support HALEA's Activities & Programs:

Are you that individual who loves our work? Are you that individual who would love to associate with HALEA and all our good activities, we have consistently provided over the years, with proven excellent record of success in service delivery? Are YOU that person Saying YES?

YES, I want to join HALEA as a member, Yes, I want to support HALEA as a Contributor and YES I want to support HALEA as a donor to help in furthering the good programs being done. I want to be part of those individuals contributing some funds to support the hard working and very committed volunteers and full time workers at HALEA office, I want to support the Young Mothers and Women Empowerment Project at Pearl Vocational Training College, I want to support HALEA's activities especially the Open Talk Debates, the Open Talk Magazine's expanding operations and other HALEA activities including Slum Teens Empowerment, Community Out Reach, Humanists Celebrants Empowerment, Influencing public policy, promoting Human Rights and Civil Rights and Liberties, Research, and Ethical Living. If you are that person, kindly donate your contribution on the following Account:

Account Name: Humanists Association for Leadership, Equity and Accountability (HALEA LTD) P.O.BOX 8664 Kampala, Organisation's registered charity Number:96101, PO BOX , 8664 Kampala, Uganda, Plot 41, Makerere Hill Road, Kampala City.
Our BANK: STANBIC BANK UGANDA, BANK IDENTIFIER CODE (BIC) SBICUKXXXX
Our ACCOUNT NUMBER (IBAN) 9030005642565
Office: 031-2-291-427, mobile: +256 772-576-635 / +256 704 60 95 34.
Our Email: haleauganda@gmail.com.

HALEA BANK DETAILS, SUMMARY

HUMANIST ASSOCIATION FOR LEADERSHIP, EQUITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY (HALEA)

Plot 41, Makerere Hill Road, Kampala	Organisational Address
+256 704609534	Telephone
haleauganda@gmail.com	Organisation E-mail Address
PO Box 8664, Kampala, Uganda	Organisation Postal Address
96101	Organisational Number
Stanbic Bank Uganda Ltd Wandegeya branch	Name of Bank
SBICUGKXXXX	BIC – Bank Identifier Code
9030005642565	IBAN - Account Number

HALEA is a Charity Organisation Offering free services and relying on volunteers. It is sometimes hard to operate without basic facilitation to do the work we do. We therefore call upon you to consider donating to HALEA to enable us continue do what we love to do.

THE BUSTARDISATION OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN UGANDA, THE PERFECT SCAPEGOAT?



WASSWA MUKASA

I joined the humanist movement a little late in 2007, my brother Kato Mukasa had been at it for several years and I had not realized how important it was to join this cause. Even when I joined, and helped in the founding of that important organization, The Humanist Association for Leadership, Equity and Accountability (HALEA LTD), I still kept a low profile, doing HALEA's work as a volunteer all the years and doing my other work as a lawyer and legal assistant at the Uganda Law Society. It has been a ten years experience working with gay people, working on all sorts of Human Rights Concern in this country defending the rights of the helpless.

The two Humanists Rights organizations in my life that I will always be grateful to have associated with, remain HALEA and Uganda Law Society. It is in these establishment that for much of the time I felt the need to defend rights of all people regardless of who they are, who they love, their gender, race, income status etc.

Today, I am interested in sharing with you my deep observation

about the plight of gay people in Uganda. First, it is even hard for any person to have the courage to say, look, I am GAY because that one statement will open a can of worms and will bring out all the devils in the world to come and finish you off. I have seen this at work places, read about this in news papers and also witnessed how the writings of one reckless newspaper, the Rolling Stone contributed to the murder of a one strong gay activist in David Kato. Of course it is not only the Rolling Stone, there are several other Newspapers doing all the smear campaign, fanning all the hate campaign and escalating homophobia in Uganda and across the globe.

I have grown, interacted and deeply associated with gay people and I have no shame to say, gay people are normal and loving human beings that the homophobic gurus must learn to live with peacefully. There is nothing wrong about being gay, in my view and there is every thing wrong with a person stepping out of their line to beat up, imprison, arrest or at worst, kill a gay person. Unfortunately, majority of Ugandans I find today have little respect for gay people, many treat them like second class citizens, just like animals. The homophobic people have made the world view Uganda as a not loving country yet that is very erroneous and misleading. Uganda is a peaceful and loving country but the question should be, why the escalating levels of homophobia today?

In early 90s, we were visited by several American preachers who made it fashionable to become "Born Again". These Born Again

Churches mushroomed, first from being in make shift establishment of wood and timber to building cathedrals and mega churches and temples worth millions of dollars. These preachers attracted so many people in their thousands that they today threaten the so called traditional churches. But that is not the main problem. These churches spread the prosperity-gospel as well as the gospel of HATE. They taught the masses how to be lazy, that you simply need to pray to a certain God and your problems are gone. So thousands of unemployed and unemployable people filled these churches to capacity, women with problems arising the arrogant patriarchy became their customers and these churches have since been known to organize prayer sessions from morning to morning.

But there was something more. These churches taught people the need to hate gay people. They told the ignorant worshippers that being gay is a curse from god, that being gay is abnormal, that gay people simply learn the bad habit, that gay people are recruiting young people into their practice, that gay people are too rich and are in it for money, that the white man is in fact sponsoring gay people so that Africans do not produce children and that the agenda of the white man is to ensure that Africans do not have more children and that the agenda of the white man is to promote this foreign sexual orientation in order to re colonise

Africa, in order to come occupy our land, in order to take over our resources. I personally heard this stupidity being passed on

through sermons, plus also being promoted on some radios and the so called pan Africanists platforms. This kind of information was hateful, racist and divisionary and it indeed created more harm, probably than what was intended.

Not so long after the born again pastors had started spreading hate, they were joined by the Islamic extremists who not only preached homophobia but also called for the execution of gay people. They said their one whole and holy book, the KORAN supports the execution of homosexuals. This hate was later fanned by the politicians who wanted votes from the poor and gullible voters. They told them that the problems of Uganda were mainly caused by foreigners who wanted to spread homosexuality in Uganda.

.They said that foreign governments were not supporting the regime because the regime had dedicated the government to god and would not accept homosexuality agenda promoted by gay people in gay governments abroad. Thus, all the failing of the regime where tired on the bad homosexuals and the homosexuals became the national blame of the country. To the gullible Ugandans and voters, the corrupt government officials and politicians are not the problem, no, it's the homosexuals who are responsible for the trouble, the poverty, the suffering in the country because god is punishing the country in tolerating homosexuality.

Recently I was surprised watching Wedeko Program on Kingdom TV and Pastor Bishop Kiganda saying government is now pressuring them to get

organized as Born Again churches and ensure that they get registered because finally the foreigners want to have a one world religion and that homosexuals are supporting the idea of having all churches registered with qualified pastors because if that happens, then the homosexuals will be able to control the church, plant in homosexual pastors and ruin the hitherto good mannered Born Again Churches in Uganda. Now, imagine such views being uttered by a Bishop of the Born Again Faith and how the gullible viewers received it.

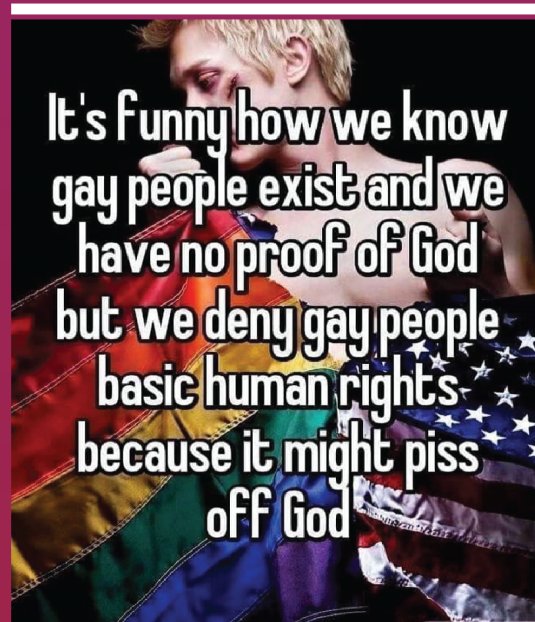
So in 2014 the Kill the GAY Law was drafted (first as a bill) and quickly passed into Law as a Christmas gift by a Parliament of Uganda that claims to fear god yet in practice is of less or no value to the common person in Uganda. The Speaker of Parliament, Hon Kadaga announced how happy she was to go for Xmas when matters affecting the country have been solved and there was a better law to handle all 'these errant homosexuals'. The gullible public jubilated as if all the challenges of the country were done.

We raised our feeble voices in objection but no one could hear us. So, we went to court and through very competent lawyers, all human rights defenders resisted the draconian law and we challenged the agents of hate. The good news is that we won the court battle and the Kill the Gay Law was quashed. However, it is not yet Uhuru, the homophobic legislators are bringing back another kill the gay law and I predict it will be passed just before the next general elections, because they must have something to tell the gullible voters, otherwise they will not be returned to

Parliament because many of them have practically done nothing worth a member of parliament.

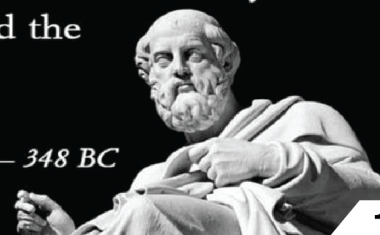
Gay rights issues remain thorny one in the fresh of the victims, it is even risky to sympathize or identify with homosexuals and as HALEA, we have shared the hate as a result of our stand against homophobia. But, the struggle continues and the scape-goating continues, unchallenged. Someone must find someone to blame for all the wrongs that are happening in Uganda and the homosexuals become the perfect punching bag. This situation must change.

Wasswa Mukasa is a lawyer, founder member of HALEA and a Human Rights Advocate and Activist based in Kampala, Uganda.



Good people do not need laws to tell them to act responsibly, while bad people will find a way around the laws.

*~Plato
423 BC – 348 BC*



CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCIES OF THE RISING TREND OF HOMOPHOBIA IN NIGERIA AND THE WAYFORWARD



ZACHAM BAYEI

Homophobia can be defined as a strong and unreasonable dislike for homosexual people, especially homosexual men. This kind of behaviour can be traced to many factors such as religion, political ideologies, harmful cultural, traditional practices, intellectual dishonesty among others. Africa, as a continent, is a conservative one and is plagued with homophobia.

She is glued to a lot of belief systems which has greatly shaped and determined the way she interacts with her citizens and outsiders. Homosexuality is natural in all animals. Both wild and domestic animals have been seen to display this act of affection. Other animals have been seen in the wild and even domesticated ones displaying this affection for their own same sex.

Although some cultural engineers are of the views that man must have corrupted these animals practicing homosexuality, but research has proven

proven them wrong. Sexual affection for same sex is natural. It is worthy to note that some males have feminine physiques which attract other males who are masculine. Similar situation applies to the female gender. It is apparent to all humankind to understand that we all are not the same. There is the need for homophobes to gather deeper understanding that homosexuals need to be free to express themselves. Nigeria is not different from any other homophobic societies in the world.

But according to popular narrative homosexuality is a western concept brought to Africa to corrupt our youths and stagnate our population. This falsehood has been spreading for long by men and women in reputable positions in our society. This is wrong! They have influenced political actors in Nigeria to the extent that the Senate has enacted a law in 2014 prohibiting same sex marriage in the country—that those found guilty of this act can be sentenced to 14 years in jail without the option of fine.

To my surprise, the President signed this bill into law without rethinking. The argument put forward is that it is alien to us, that this is against our cultures, traditions and religions. This is another falsehood couched in official ignorance. They failed to note that homosexuality is as old as mankind itself.

It is on record that ancient Egyptians (Kemet) as seen on the paintings on their walls had homosexual activities. Homosexuals have long existed in indigenous African societies before the advent of Arab and European colonialism. Today, in traditional Hausa society in northern Nigeria, they are known as Dan dau'du. These men dress like women; they run local food eateries around despite the presence of Islam in such societies. They have existed for long

with other members of their societies without conflict, until some parochial minded people started fanning the embers of hate and violence against them. It is common knowledge that Abrahamic religions (Christianity & Islam) are foreign to Africa.

However, to some extent, Africa has domesticated them to suit her interests; nevertheless, these religions have greatly fueled division, hatred, violence and exploitation among her people. Nigeria, as an example, has polarized its citizens and distorted the natural way homosexuals are treated. We are first humans before becoming anything else, but homophobes do not think so.

Christian and Muslim converts in the country have been the ones spearheading this homophobic attitude, because they constitute majority. Any attempt to make them see reason why homosexuals should be allowed to be themselves always draws ire. My take is that, religion poisons anything it does not understand.

This has found its way into the character of its adherents. They are so irrational to a fault, it will be of capital importance if these

religious adherents are taught fundamental human rights in their places of worship. Churches and mosques hardly reflect these teachings to their members aside their holy books and politics. Secular schools do not teach these principles also.

It boils down to the government who lack secular vision in its policies. The government prefers to keep their citizens in perpetual ignorance about things that made them humans.

Politics has become another reason why homophobia is spreading in Nigerian. Politicians often use it to win support. They use it to divide the people to win elections. It is of recent that some young politicians are beginning to come to terms with the truth that homosexuals are normal people like others.

They have boldly come out to support rights of homosexuals. It is a shocker to the homophobes, but the truth is still the truth even if nobody likes it. Politics has been one of the main reasons why these people are hurt, because most politicians hate them.

Nigerian politics has been dominated by parochial minded politicians for long. They are badly educated about fundamental human rights of the people. Anything

they do not understand is evil to them and the people they govern.

This has snowballed into the national psyche of the nation which homophobic are pushed into the fringes. The Nigerian media has not helped in promoting the rights of same sex people in the country. They are poor in research; they go with the flow as the people agree.

The main stream media has painted gays and lesbians in a bad light. They have been the voice these homophobic often use to echo their hate.

They hardly hold debate about the subject, rather blind criticisms are their interests. This is as a result of poor orientation they got about homosexuals. They failed to unlearn these bad perceptions; rather they preferred to go with the flow.

The media would have been a veritable tool in sensitizing and enlightening the populace about the rights of same sex people, but it is never the case in Nigeria.

Secularists in Nigeria need to pull their resources together with their counterparts abroad to float their own media outfits that will promote secularist values which homosexual right are included.

The media is one of the most powerful entities on earth; it is capable of distorting facts if not countered. If the mainstream media in Nigeria fails to promote the rights of homosexuals, then secular media should.

Stigmatization is another bane destroying same sex people cohesion in Nigeria. Since the public perception about their freedom of expression has been violated, some of these homosexuals often go into hiding for fear of stigmatization.

They are denied employment and other rights in public organization; this has shrunk them. The air of freedom for homosexuals in Nigeria is toxic. The public image of gays is highly polluted through the lens of religions, cultures, and politics. Education about the fundamental human rights is the only way to reduce this stigmatization.

Public schools in Nigeria are yet to adopt this as part of their educational curriculum. Most adults come to know about these natural rights from the Constitution and other avenues.

The government needs to adopt this into public schools so that the country can raise enlightened citizens that can respect the rights of others who do not share in their own version of the truth. It is these students that will become future leaders of their societies, so if they miss this crucial education while growing up, they will fall into the pit hole of leaders who lack tolerance for homosexuals living in their midst.

Moreso, there is the need for fundamental human rights to be taught in all public schools in order to have a healthy, civil and educated populace in the country who will stigmatize against homosexuals in their society.

The Nigeria government needs to undo the legislation banning same sex marriage in Nigeria. Criminalizing homosexuality is a crime against humanity in itself. People need to be free as long as they are adults. People need to be judged based on the content of their characters not for choosing to happy with themselves.

The Nigerian political class is getting it wrong. There are topical issues that enhance poverty, violence, hatred, divisions in the society that need to be addressed, not attacks on homosexuals. Homosexuals are peaceful and law abiding citizens who ought to be commended for such good gestures. Same sex people have the right to be happy just like any other citizen in Nigeria.

Religious and cultural engineers should not be the only ones to define what happiness is to all. To be in a majority does not mean to choose and determine what constitutes happiness for all. People need to be free to decide their own destinies as long as they do not violate the natural rights of others.

This is what Nigerian lawmakers ought to have used as the basis before enacting a law banning same sex marriage in the country. They were ignorant and in a haste in criminalizing same sex marriage.

Another vexing issue that violates the natural rights of homosexuals in Nigeria is the beatings and excommunication from the society. Same sex people are often beaten and banished by the public on the slightest suspicion.

The security operatives often give blind eye when such cases are reported. Moreover, reporting such jungle justices to the security agents should be handled professionally.

We've heard of lynching of suspected homosexuals in Nigeria in the past with no arrest and prosecution of suspects. This sets wrong signal to the international community and human right advocates that the government is incapable of protecting lives of her own citizens.

It is the lukewarm attitude security agents often exhibit when the molestation of homosexuals are reported that further spurs lawbreakers into carrying out more assaults. This shouldn't be encouraged by all rational minded people. Most cultures and traditions in Nigeria also contribute in violating the right of homosexuals in the country.

Cultural and traditional engineers often argue that this act is alien to their people. The question to be asked is that, who created these cultural and traditional norms?

Simply put, it is people with closed knitted interests that created them. They created these customs to serve and feather their own class interests of failing to note that these minorities exist among them.

In the face of globalization in Nigeria, these cultural and traditional champions fail to adapt to changes. They are so rigid and myopic towards homosexuals and women. Women's rights are also excluded in these arrangements.

These lawgivers pride themselves as elders of their societies. This, in the African context means 'wise men'. Indeed, 'wise men' who have failed to stop imperialist incursion into their communities only to direct their anger toward minorities.

Therefore, to stem this blind rage of ignorance towards homosexual in Nigeria lies in education-education rooted in human values. Our political masters need to be humane and rational on how they create laws and policies for all.

They need to know that fundamental human rights are non-negotiable matter. In conclusion, all these negative forces that have conspired to deny homosexuals their natural rights in Nigeria, Africa as a whole is rooted in organize-ignorance, created, nurtured and nourished by religious and cultural engineers.

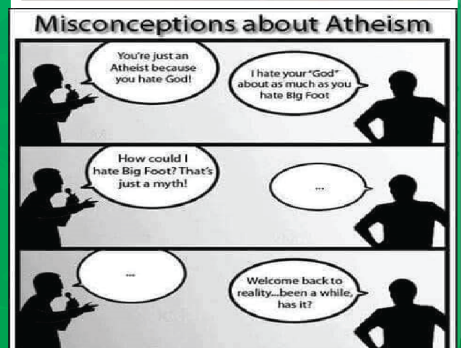
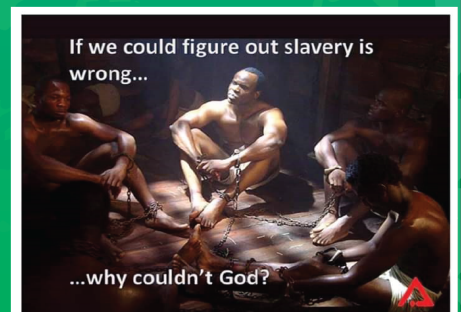
In our 21st century, where information about every subject is available, ignorance is taking its toll on human resources in the country as resourceful gays and lesbians are leaving the country and continent in droves, people who could have been used to serve as catalyst for economic growth and development.

If Nigeria, Africa cannot create safe haven for them, European and other continents will. This will be a loss of human resources to

the continent of Africa. It is apparent that the Nigerian government need to abrogate the anti-homosexual law she created and to establish a new one that will not only legalize homosexuality, but also protect them to from eminent dangers from religious and cultural engineers.

This will be one of the ways to show to the world that we have civilized leaders in power. Leaders that understand the human dynamics, and from eminent dangers from religious and cultural engineers.

This will be one of the ways to show to the world that we have civilized leaders in power. Leaders that understand the human dynamics, and **ZACHAM BAYEI is a human rights Activist, Humanist Leader and writer best in Nigeria.**



WHY I LEFT RELIGION



ABRAH HASEEN

Why did I leave religion? That is a wrong question. A better question is how I left religion. What process led my mind, which was conditioned to think in a certain way, adopt a different world view? I do not think my philosophy of life changed too much. It is just that I have more information available to me.

I remember even during my days as a fanatic in my early teenage, I was only trying to make sense of what was around me. I loved math and science. But my knowledge of science was far too limited to be put in practical use to explain the physical world I was observing. So naturally, I found purpose and comfort in pseudoscience and fairy tale based world views. I will make the long story short. I realized as I grew up that my religious world view was too rigid and unrealistic to stand up to scrutiny.

So I adopted a different kind of religious world view when I was in twelfth grade. It was a slow transition, catalyzed by my late physics teacher, Yamin Chowdhury. He taught me the importance of placing reason and logic above religious doctrines. He taught me that the only way a religious world view can hold practical value is if the doctrines were interpreted in a metaphorical way. The only way written words can be applicable all the times is if those words were completely metaphorical. And the road to salvation, the purpose of life, is the study of the universe.

So scientists were moving towards heaven even without realizing. That world view provided me with great comfort and it made more sense. Because in my previous world view great scientists and thinkers were all doomed to hell despite their contributions to humanity. All because they were born in the wrong culture. I did not have to defend the literal meaning of certain verses because they were all metaphorical and my passion was the greatest virtue. That is science. My passion for science doubled. Not only was I learning about how the universe works but I was also pleasing my creator. In my days as a fanatic I was never able to reconcile the claim that the study of science and contributing to humanity could be orthogonal to the road to salvation.

This flexible world view made me more open minded. I was more open to scientific ideas such as evolution, which I had rejected earlier. I began to see the merits of the theory of evolution, its elegance and explanatory power. Although, in twelfth grade, I still had not accepted the theory fully. I was trying to find holes in it. But I acknowledged that it was a beautiful theory. My inability to accept the theory at that time was because I had not read a full book on evolution yet plus there was some residual fanaticism still left in me.

But there was one question I had not grappled with yet. What in fact, was the evidence for the supernatural? A student had asked Yamin sir, this question. And it put me in a deep vortex of thought. I mean, you could not use life and the universe to point at a creator. It felt that we were clutching at straws using those argument. If scientists did end up creating a cell in the lab or explaining what was before the big bang, then there would be no straw to clutch. I knew the former was possible. I had a basic understanding of what a cell was made up of and how it functioned. It was proteins, lipids, phospholipids etc. Nothing magical about the building blocks. So what was in fact evidence for a deity?

Yamin sir had an answer for the question though. The evidence according to him, was consciousness. He explained to me the hard problem of consciousness and how atoms could not explain why we have an experience. Why is it like to be anything. And I was impressed. I did further research and came across the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics and how consciousness apparently reduced the wave function of electrons and subatomic particles.

But my flexible world view would soon evolve. Fast forward to a couple of years later. I had unlimited fast internet. And as a result had more information available to me. I was in medical college. Had read *Selfish Gene* by Richard Dawkins. Knew about abiogenesis. Knew how evolution could lead to drug resistance by bacteria. I had fully accepted the theory of evolution and also abiogenesis.

And I would regularly listen to lectures by Lawrence Krauss, Richard Dawkins and my flexible world view was shaped to something that closely resembled atheism. I stopped getting offended when people mocked my religion, I was becoming more drawn to videos by members of the new atheist movement. However I still did not identify as an atheist. I was still not convinced that consciousness could be explained by neuroscience. I could not imagine how neuroscience could reconcile with the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum physics.

However, I began to dive into quantum physics. Being from a biology background it was not too easy. But anyways, I found that you do not need to drag consciousness to explain wave function collapse.

It could be due to the interaction between the particle and the device. The equations do not care if the observer is a conscious person or an unconscious detector. Plus, there may not be a collapse at all. The most popular interpretation is the many worlds interpretation, where the universe splits when a measurement is made.

I thought the interpretation was incredible but by then I was mature enough to realize that the universe does not care about what I think. I not liking a theory or my personal incredulity won't make an idea false. The many worlds interpretation is actually the most straightforward and simple interpretation of the equations although it may seem incredible.

That shook my world view. I had to grapple with the fact that consciousness was not a non-physical transcendental phenomenon that made wave functions collapse. Could it be that it was an emergent physical phenomenon explained by neuroscience and information theory?

I looked deeper into some modern theories of consciousness namely, Integrated Information Theory (IIT) by Giulio Tononi, Global workspace model by Bernard Baars and Neural Darwinism by Gerald Edelman. These models are not mutually exclusive. IIT is of particular interest to me. The basic philosophy of IIT is that a system can be said to have a rudimentary form of awareness about a physical phenomenon if that phenomenon causes a change in the system. A photodiode which can change its charge distribution in the presence of light is more aware of the light than a transparent glass. But the level of awareness of a photodiode is zero for all practical purposes.

It is not as conscious as a person. It can only tell the difference between light and dark. However, a person can tell the difference between light, dark, different colors of light, sound and a much much greater number of physical phenomena. Now imagine you have a network of photodiodes. The individual photodiodes have a rudimentary form of consciousness.

But what about the system as a whole? The system as a whole is conscious if the total amount of information integrated by the system is more than if you calculate the sum of the information integrated by diodes individually. If there is only a small amount of inter-connections between the diodes, then the system as a whole is not conscious. Looking at each individual diodes will tell you about the system as a whole, you do not need to look at the system as a whole.

The diodes do not influence each other much. But if the units are well integrated you would need to look at the system as a whole. Ignoring a unit of the system would increase the uncertainty or the entropy of the system. The system is irreducible. But if the system is too much integrated.

Then the system is no longer irreducible. The individual units are too much linked. You can look at a few units and predict accurately what the rest of the system is doing. You do not need to look at the system as a whole. So too much integration is not good either. IIT attempts to calculate the perfect balance between the differentiation and integration.

Now you could grapple with the metaphysical question. Why is there consciousness at all? A system could be unconscious. Why does consciousness have to exist in the universe? But I am a science person and my first instinct is not to grapple with the metaphysics. It is to ask what predictions the theory makes and can those predictions be tested? The cerebellum contains a greater number of neurons than cerebrum yet it does not generate consciousness. The reason behind that as IIT would predict, is that while there are greater number of neuronal groups, the individual groups are not interconnected.

There are not enough feedback loops between the individual neuronal groups. That prediction turned out to be right. A complete calculation of the information integration in a brain hasn't yet been formulated. But there are approximations of information integration. One such approximation, is the perturbation complexity index. It is already in use in scientific settings and can help judge consciousness levels in people. I am not implying that the theory is true. IIT has its weaknesses. It could turn out to be wrong. But it shows us that something as mysterious as consciousness can be approached scientifically.

There is a good amount of metaphysics left to be grappled with when it comes to consciousness. But the modern day models, while still in hypothetical stage, have a respectable amount of explanatory power. And it makes the idea that consciousness can be explained in terms of neuroscience and information theory, at least plausible. I was a bit disappointed initially that the initial aura and mystery of consciousness has been reduced and perhaps also the probability of there being a supernatural. But that feeling was short lived. I realized one day when I was just beginning to read about the modern day models of consciousness that there is hope that one day we will understand the nature of consciousness. Because while I am not a scientist, I am only a student of medicine, the scientist inside me wants to solve mysteries not dwell in them. Somewhere between learning about consciousness, physics and moral philosophy my supernatural understanding of the universe evolved into something totally different. It evolved into my current world view.

I had plans to share my evolved world view with Mr Yamin Chowdhury. But he died from pancreatic cancer before I had the chance to meet him. Perhaps one day I will meet him in a dream. I did dream of him once but woke up before I could talk to him. Knowing it is not real does not make the experience less enjoyable. What is a person? A person is information represented by a network of neurons. If there is a network of neurons in my memory center dedicated to representing another person, a part of that person is alive in my brain. I could meet that person when I am dreaming. So in a way, a person can live on through the people who remember him. Even in a world view so deterministic, there is still room for mystery and wonder.

I do not call myself an atheist, even though in effect I have evolved into one. I am an advocate of intellectual honesty and reason. I believe in scientific investigation and honest conversations. If tomorrow we find evidence for the supernatural, I would happily embrace it. But what we cannot allow ourselves to do is misrepresent what we know about the universe and make claims with false certainty. With that I end my essay.

ABRAH HANSEEN is a Student of Medicine from Bangladesh a Secular Humanist and Science Lover.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HUMANISM IN AFRICA

Written by Moses Alusala

Today Africa is struggling with many problems. The uncontrolled growth of its population which has already touched 1.216 billion alongwith some social and health problems are major challenges for its progress. With these problems remaining unresolved, it is unlikely that Africa will be able to provide its people a respectable life.

Unplanned population growth with total negligence towards proper human resource development puts a huge pressure on the existing resources which leads to poverty, poor quality of life of people. According to the World Bank, in 2013, 42.3% of the population of sub-Saharan Africa lived on \$1.90 or less per day, a principal factor of widespread hunger.

Africa has the highest prevalence of undernourishment, estimated in 2016 to be 20% of the population. Poverty is often a cycle. It is further augmented by uneven distribution of wealth. This inequity and unequal development leads to people in urban areas enjoying better comforts than rural areas. Illiteracy makes people weaker and susceptible to not only exploitation but also to more prone to die of diseases.

Other problems like malnutrition among pregnant women, children, and adolescent girls make them at risk of diseases throughout their lives. More than fifty percent of our mothers are anemic. About 20% of all pregnancies are among teenage group. Lack of adequate sanitation in more than 60% of the total household on the continent also leads to significant economic losses for the country apart from frequent diseases outbreaks.

Gender discrimination remains the most distressing social evils in Africa. Issues like female feticide, female genital mutilation, witchcraft violence, infanticide, exploitation, illiteracy, maternal mortality grossly affect women of Africa. Unemployment remains a problem since with increasing price of necessary resources of life, unemployed people are unable to fetch themselves and their families. Other major problems like child labour, discrimination towards lower caste, religious conflict and civil war, widespread corruption, terrorism, and weak political-legislative implementation and social system- all these lead to a society with wide socio-economic disparities and poor growth.

All these problems are affecting human society and violating human rights.

To protect the African society from these problems, humanism needs to be protected and promoted and realized in true sense. According to American Humanist Association, Humanism is defined as a progressive lifstance that, without supernaturalism, affirms our ability and responsibility to lead meaningful, ethical lives capable of adding to the greater good of humanity. Humanism is a rational philosophy informed by science, inspired by art, and motivated by compassion.

Affirming the dignity of each human being, it supports the maximization of individual liberty and opportunity consonant with social and planetary responsibility. It advocates the extension of participatory democracy and the expansion of the open society, standing for human rights and social justice. It recognizes human beings as a part of nature and holds that values-be they religious, ethical, social, or political-have their source in human experience and culture. With humanism, all social barriers like discrimination, violence against women, gender bias, religion wars, casteism etc can be eliminated.

It calls upon a participatory political system with equal distribution of resources thereby reducing wealth gap, promoting rational thinking and promoting human rights. For this reason humanism need to be inculcated in every character of people of Africa on urgent basis.

There is need for humanism in the health care sector too. Health care workers should not treat patients as diseased bodies but treat them with human touch and values. They should not discriminate patients with HIV, tuberculosis and leprosy in care. All the doctors and paramedical staff should be trained in humanist values to interact with the people. Hospital environment should be such that to provide services to the patients in a human friendly manner and planning the services for patient welfare.

At the same time, patients should also be taught about their role and support in providing such kind of services. They should take their responsibility in following the treatment and instructions of the doctor, keep faith in the doctor, be aware and spread awareness among fellow community members.

With both doctor and patient working together with human values, health care services can be improved in future. Without the health of its people no nation can be great. We are aware of many problems striking the nations which make us weak and poor. Because the problems are multifactorial in nature, our efforts should be multi-layered at home, society, and country and within country in various sectors. Humanism should be practiced in following levels: Importance of Humanism in Home.

Family needs to deal with following problems in emotional, logical and effective manner: Low value of girl child and women, female infanticide and feticide, women equal rights and respect, etc.

Importance of Humanism in Society.

Society needs to deal with following problems in participatory, consultative, supportive and rational manner: Inequalities, poor attitude towards rape and molestation, Child labor, mentally and physically challenges people, elderly population and dangerous superstitions.

Importance of Humanism in the country

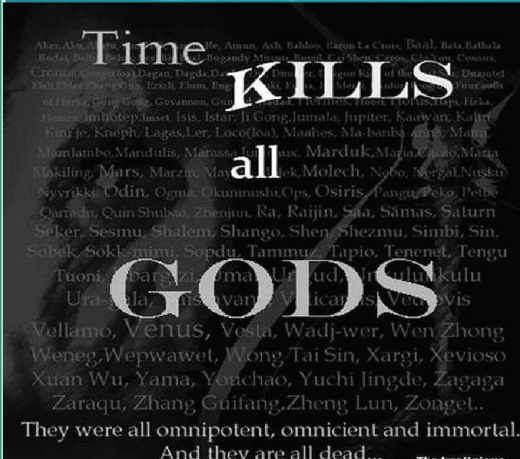
Country through its parliament and political structure needs to deal with following problems in scientific, rational, parliamentary, and authoritative manner: Defective policies and program, poor implementation of laws, corruption, divisive politics, etc.

Importance of humanism in Medicine and public healthHealth sector needs to deal with following problems in ethical, rational, scientific, and responsible manners: Exploitation of patients, maltreatment, discrimination with HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, poor, destitute, poor doctor-patients relationship, quackery, unscientific system of medicine, etc.

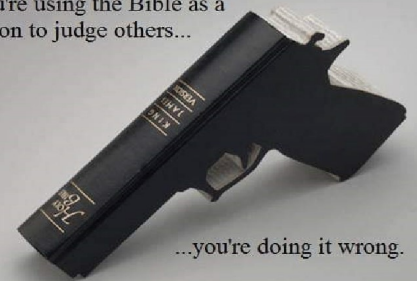
No human being can remain happy and progress if he/she is not in harmony and peace. When humanism prevails people are happy and progressive. When you care for human beings you start looking in all those factors

which are responsible for human health and happiness such as environmental health protection and preservation of animals and birds. It can only happen when you have platonic and universal humanism.

Moses Alusala is The Founding Chairperson of Kenya Humanist Association, a scientist by training and a Human Rights Activist.



If you're using the Bible as a weapon to judge others...



facebook.com/jesuslovesgays



Even though the Bible doesn't mention Christmas? Even though Jesus' birthday wasn't guessed 'til the 3rd or 4th century? Even though the early Church didn't celebrate birthdays, considering them a Pagan custom? Even though December 25th is actually Mithra's birthday? Even though Christmas is actually a mix of multiple Pagan holidays and celebrations, like Saturnalia and Yule?



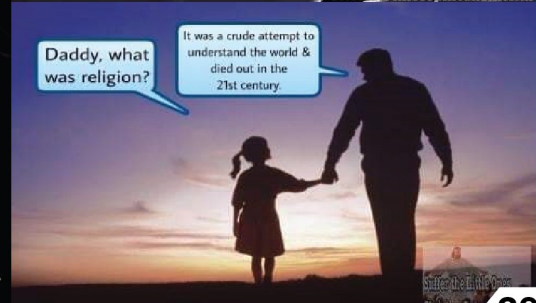
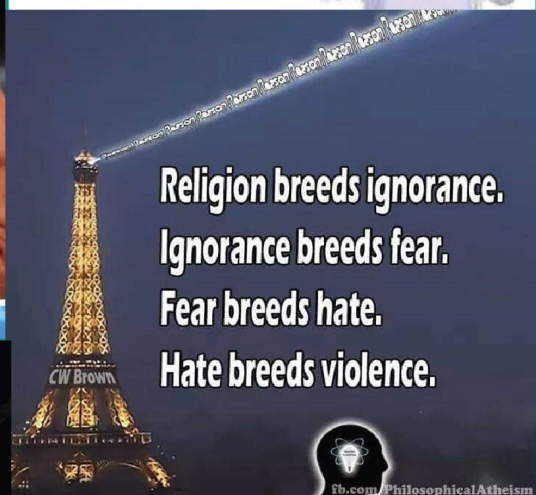
LOL... assryan winged bull; myths..... where's their brain? thanks allah for islam



LOL... greek winged horse; myths..... where's their brain? thanks allah for islam



Buraq ,winged horse that Mahomet rode to 7th sky, praise allah



KABUMBA KARUSOKE

It was a day just like any other. The Sun was up early, the birds sang their Wakanda songs and Mama Ben's pigs were running across the village after breaking through their Sty. Mama Ben; a frail old lady, couldn't catch up with the pigs so she hired the village Chief's shamba boy, Karyampisi to help her.

He caught them one after the other but for the last one. As Karyampisi leaped forward to grab it, suddenly the Sky got dark, the moon appeared but blood red, the sun was as a black and red fiery ball. In shock, Karyampisi looked around him, barely noticing anyone but for figurines disappearing one after the other and ear piercing cries of people calling out the people they were with. Florence; a prominent prostitute, could be seen running out of her lodge room with a torch, half naked, shouting, "Where did you run to, you cheap coward? Come back and pay me." Steven, a well known customer of Florence had disappeared into thin air from the room.

As it got darker, lights everywhere, news got around of missing people that suddenly disappeared. The Parish Priest and roadside Preacher were missing too. It became clear in the minds of everyone that this was the rapture promised in the Bible and that the End of the World had come.



Luke 21:31-32 "Likewise when you see these things come to pass, know ye therefore that the end of the world is nigh. Verily I say unto you, this generation will not pass away until these things come to pass. Heaven and earth shall pass away but my word shall not pass away.

Mat 24:29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: **Mat 24:30** And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Mat 24:31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.



Actually, that's not what really happened. The Sun didn't go black neither the moon red. We still have light and there are no ghost riders on a red horse terrorizing humanity with plagues. Humanity has come to the realisation that we're all we have in this life. Most people naturally get to accept that fact especially during the hard times; when no manna falls from heaven, no quails bring them meat to eat and their friends have to help pay their hospital bills. They realise the promised miracles never come and that people of different faiths and beliefs can all work together for the common good of Humanity.

Little by little people are starting to realise that we can all be good without any god or holy books, that morality is our responsibility not God's. Africa is generally a heavily religious continent; society isolates and exterminates the faithless while still fighting over which god is the right one. My experience was no less. I grew up in a strictly religious family where God was considered as more important than our well being; after all he was presumed the provider. My father neglected his responsibility besides being ruthlessly violent towards everyone at home apart from his cats and chicken that he loved with a passion. I remember one time sleeping out in the cold because he had decreed that unless we found his hen, we shouldn't come back to the house.

Many times we were battered to a pulp for doing nothing more than just being infants. We grew up to fear him as a beast, a monster of untold fury but worse, we were denied a childhood with loving parents and a normal life. Our dear mother suffered likewise from wounds inflicted upon her by his hand but yet had to care for us after each battering. She nursed us, fed us, educated us and made us who we are today. She was our everything. In all that frustration, whenever she sought counsel, God always was brought up as the final solution; Jesus is the Answer.

But no, Jesus never answered anything as he kept to the dark silent corners of oblivion, neglect and mystery while we; his children, suffered. Religion got a high ended hold on me as I grew into teenage life. Once I called a friend of mine (a girl) a slut for wearing a fairly short/mini dress. I was beginning to become the judgmental apocalyptic Christian like Paul and the other Bible writers. I became a church leader, filled with the Holy Spirit, full of fire, casting out demons but somehow I couldn't deal with those evil thoughts ; 'Eve Temptation'. I married a beautiful church girl, got healthy won

derful babies and slowly got a little more mature and responsible.

I also noticed how God never answered any of my prayers; however much I left it at his feet on Calvary. Depression set in, I wondered what I did wrong, ever. Why was God so distant, so oblivious of my struggles? Did he really care? As a way to cope with the depression, I took matters in my own hands. I started to work to solve my troubles without prayer. I literally stopped to pray, I was sick of talking to a God who didn't care. One day at a time, I skipped church.

Weeks became months and months became years; during this time I made a lot of research on Religion. My months and months became years; during this time I made a lot of research on Religion. My research opened my eyes to the sickening, immoral, malevolent character of my God, Yahweh. As a Father, my conscience could not come to terms with an Infanticidal, murderous character who never answers any prayers but yet is ready to punish both in this life and the next. I decided to cut ties with this god.

My Church personality succumbed to a slow death; not without condemnation from believers and friends. I literally lost 90% of all my friends; a price I have paid heavily. One day I stumbled onto a religious debate between my once best friend/Pastor and a stranger that I later recognized as an Atheist. I soon joined the family of the 'unbelievers' though continually identified as Agnostic; that I simply don't know if God exists and for now it doesn't matter. It was at this time that I met through an online platform, a number of Humanists and Atheists.

Without a classroom definition; I knew that being humanist meant being **pro-human**. **Being 'Good Without God' became my philosophy.**

Our society can learn from such experiences. All we have is each other! Instead of being divided along religious lines, Africans can accomplish much given our rich heritage and natural resources. The ideologies of Humanism will transform

our rich heritage and natural resources. The ideologies of Humanism will transform the minds of individuals to think broadly and critically. This can lead to locally well thought out solutions for the society we each yearn for; one that treats all as with equal human rights.

Humanism has the potential to do away with the traditional and religious forms of mental and physical abuse that women suffer at the hands of men. As we appreciate diversity in humanity, we will become more tolerant of each other regardless of gender, religious, political or cultural sentiments. I look forward to a time when Africa will be freed from the Claws of superstition and Religious acrimony.

A time when Africans will identify as a nation united by human code not God; a day of Freedom not only of but also from Religion. Perhaps then we will live in a better and more civilised society than it is today. *Psalm 14 "The Fool has said in his heart, there is no God...". If the Fool gets it, why not you?*

Today, as a Humanist, I appreciate the broad diversity of all cultures, peoples and genders. We may have differences in the way we operate or think, but yet we're all united by one major cause, Human needs and rights. Human rights cut across a large fabric of identities and everyone has a right to enjoy their rights as a human being. Every Government should ensure that these rights are protected and not abused.

As a non-believer, I have lost many friends, job opportunities and networking connections. First, they will doubt your sanity, "...how can a sane person doubt God's existence?" Then they will doubt your ability to be good and finally will shun you as they would a 'devil worshiper'. Quickly your friends stop associating with you and will prefer to pray for you as a solution to 'heal' your lunacy. In my experience, I have even lost jobs and business contacts because somebody thinks God shall not deal with the devil. The association of thinking freely with the devil is what has continually crippled our society. However, because I believe in the Freedom of my mind, I refused to give in to all threats both psychological and physical, with a few more battles left to fight; the biggest being family acceptance. Nonetheless, we press on.

KARUMBA KARUSOKE is a Humanist and Writer based in Uganda

CAN SOME ONE BE GOOD WITHOUT A GOD?



BWAMBELE ROBERT

To answer this question depends on who a god is, what is being meant by god and the answer to this question would vary from one person to another depending on the level of understanding, exposure to theological and secular thinking.

Basing on my way of thinking and perception of things as i was growing up, I thought that it was very impossible to live a life without belief in a god and in the late 1990's I started being curious of god and what it entails. In my attempts of wanting to know, I asked several questions about god, gods often told to us by religious men and women of god, I realized too for the African religions in the shrines too had a mention of the gods. My exposure to free thought and humanism plus my deeper background of science education helped

me to research and learn more

Researching in dictionaries explains a god as: (in Christianity and other monotheistic religions) the creator and ruler of the universe and source of all moral authority; the Supreme Being. (in Christianity and other monotheistic religions) the creator and ruler of the universe and source of all moral authority; the Supreme Being.

These explanations to me raised eyebrows as per the definition puts people as the sole creators of god or gods, the fact that they are imaginations increased my doubts to believing them. I realized that a god is an invention by humanity. The moment people fail to explain the natural world, they create a supernatural which is another name of a god.

The presence of several gods and hundreds of religions justifies that these things are created by the people themselves.

In my opinion, I think someone can be good without a god due to the following reasons:

The rituals and sacrifices associated with the gods or gods has caused more harm than good on this planet. Several people have lost their lives through superstitious practices like child sacrifices, environment cleansing,

The belief in a god has divided humanity and has caused confusion and propelled divisionism rather than uniting the people.

The presence of god in the minds of people has weakened the human intellect as it has deprived them from thinking and tackling the challenges facing humanity and this has created an impression that god is the giver or taker of anything we have. On several occasions i have witnessed this at burials where ignorant statements have been

made that god is the one who gives or takes away which proves to be false.

There is too much wastage of precious time where people pray to a god for blessings and fortunes in life, I think this is uncalled for since of all the requests people make to god, they can as well achieve what they need minus this imaginary monster.

The existence of the god virus in the world comes along with dogma and indoctrination where people's minds are brainwashed which is a bad thing, people are made to follow certain tenets, do's and don'ts for example people are made to avoid eating certain foods.

In choosing a partner to stay and live with for a family, most religions advocates for one wife and for life while others agitate for marrying many wives, when one is living a life from the god virus you can choose a partner of your choice and the issue of religion would not surface.

There is homophobia which is a bad practice that targets at condemning two people in love of similar sexes. People who believe in a god are great enemies of people whose sex orientation is homosexual in nature.

This is made worse due to ignorance of human rights freedoms and according respect to people who are naturally born homosexuals. Living a life free from god allows one to think freely, distinguish fact from fiction, something good from bad and the mind does not dance to the tunes of religious instructions and commands..

The belief in a god is a great obstacle to modern contraceptive applications like birth control techniques , use of condoms, family planning , birth spacing. Living a life free from a god saves one from being a victim of mass fraud through paying a tithe which is broad day light robbery justified by holy writings, in non conformist churches like African traditional religions, the architects there often ask for money or material items in exchange of their services, these institutions operate like pyramid schemes which extort lots of money from

its victims under the promise of fortunes, blessings, after life's which are unjustified and living a life free from such allows one to live a better life. For the students or pupils in a school, their success in school depends on their determination towards their studies, their ability to be attentive and respecting their teachers, grasping what is taught and asking questions where they don't understand, avoid missing lessons, feed well and network with other students in other school. People's excellence in school is a genetic factor, environment where one comes from and what one feeds on. Intelligence in its case does not need an influence of a god whatsoever.

In circumstances where people need healing after getting sick, there is no need of a god in this, we should learn and appreciate the invention of science by humanity and we should appreciate the role played by scientists in creating medicines, vaccines that help protect us. Its very unfortunate that people have been conned over the years by men and women of god who proclaim to heal diseases in the mighty name of god, these very people have disappointed humanity and made some die prematurely by convincing some to denounce using medicines.

All in all, proper usage of our brains as the human race free from the notion of spirits, gods, god or any other imaginary stuff can

make us more productive, healthy, wise and can live better lives till our last breath and we live better legacies. To combat all this superstitious practices going on, people have to be enlightened about the goodness of science, reason and the need for an evidence based form of learning backed by evidence. We as humanity should shine our eyes and agree to learn more and deeper about god such that we don't feel prey to those who proclaim his name under the guise of eternity and blessings when actually it's out of our hard work.

With Science, we can progress

Written by: Bwambale Robert Musubaho, Founder Kasese United Humanist Association & School Director Kasese Humanist School – Uganda

A school principal in Singapore sent this letter to the parents before the exams

Dear Parents

The exams of your children are to start soon. I know you are all really anxious for your child to do well.

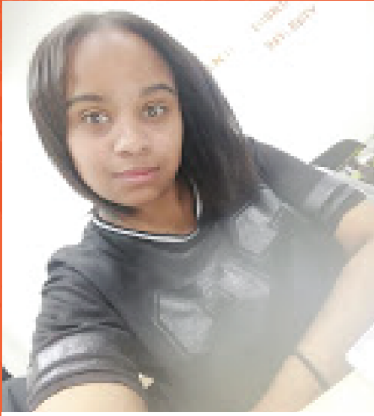
But, please do remember, amongst the students who will be sitting for the exams there is an artist, who doesn't need to understand Math... There is an entrepreneur, who doesn't care about History or English literature... There is a musician, whose Chemistry marks won't matter... There's an athlete... whose physical fitness is more important than Physics... If your child does get top marks, that's great! But if he or she doesn't... please don't take away their self-confidence and dignity from them. Tell them it's OK, it's just an exam! They are cut out for much bigger things in life. Tell them, no matter what they score... you love them and will not judge them.

Please do this, and when you do...watch your children conquer the world. One exam or a low mark won't take away...their dreams and talent. And please, do not think that doctors and engineers... are the only happy people in the world.

**I DON'T HAVE EMPIRICAL FACTS
THAT PROVE CONCLUSIVELY
GOD'S EXISTENCE. NOBODY HAS.
ALL WE CAN DO, IS DEBATE
WHICH WORLD VIEW EXPLAINS
BEST OUR EXISTENCE**



THE RAINBOW NATION



GAYLEEN CORNELIUS

Same sex marriage has been legal in South Africa longer than most western countries. While the country has a lengthy history of oppression, the advent of democracy from 1994 onwards paved way for Africa's most progressive society.

People from various cultural backgrounds enjoy the fruits of liberty as numerous events and festivals are organised every year to celebrate diversity in all its forms.

Gay pride month has become one of the most celebrated festivities every year with thousands of South Africans joining the parades to show support for the LGBTQ Community. The Pink Loerie festival in Knysna, Western Cape is the most popular one; it attracts hoards of tourists from all over the world, every year. The LGBTQ community is one of the main contributors to South African popular culture and festivities.

The community is well represented in the media and LGBTQ people are less likely to face discrimination in South Africa than any other country in Africa. "The power of drag" has become the motto that embodies the elevation of LGBTQ culture in South Africa. The last decade has seen an increase in a great number of services that cater for the LGBTQ community in fashion, leisure, entertainment and health. The first drag queen shop in Africa was opened in Pretoria and the first gay bar in Cape Town. One can imagine how many more sprung up after that.

The South African community is very diverse and people's differences are easily accepted better than in any other African country. The LGBTQ community hasn't been an exception and their acceptance grows with every generation. The country however is also popular amongst African LGBTQ refugees who flee persecution from their countries. The asylum seeking process in South Africa is not easy and so a great number of them end up as illegal immigrants. A great number of gay refugees end up

as male escorts; a very dangerous industry that is not regulated. Most male escorts can face assault yet as illegal immigrants who work as illegal sex workers, they cannot report this. A recent ENCA report also revealed that there is a drug problem amongst male escorts in Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town.

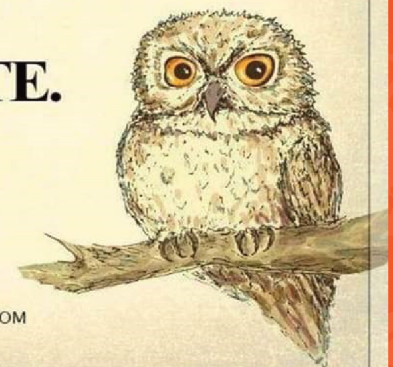
The tolerance from society is not guaranteed either, there are always going to be some bad apples in every basket. There has been some cases of "correctional rape" in Zulu and Xhosa traditional societies aimed at lesbians. They believe that by raping a lesbian, they would convince them that men are better mates than women. This barbaric practice has faced a lot of backlash from the government and the civil society, with the rapists getting the harsh sentences they deserve. The Dutch Reformed Church: unsurprisingly apartheid's centre for religion, is also facing a lot of legal pressure from the government. As an institution that is licensed to officiate marriages, their refusal to facilitate for same-sex marriages has landed them into a lot of legal trouble.

The good outweighs the bad when it comes to sexual diversity in South Africa. A lot more should be covered on the progress and transformation this triumph of human rights has contributed to the country. It stands as a beacon of hope to the future of civil liberties in South Africa and stands as an example of how happy a nation can be without hate.

Gayleen Cornelius is a Humanist Leader, Member of Humanist International Africa based in South Africa

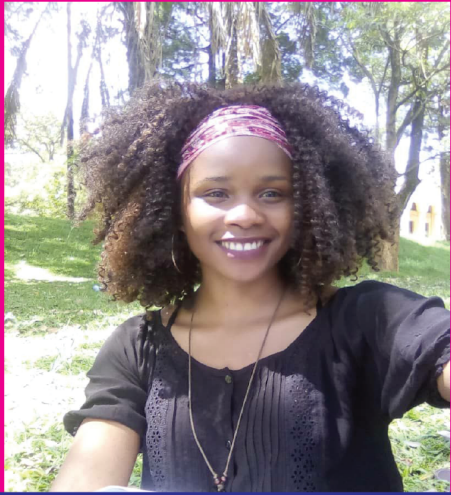
Life's tragedy
is that we get old
TOO SOON
and wise
TOO LATE.

—Benjamin Franklin



LESSONSLEARNEDINLIFE.COM

THE MEANING OF HUMANISM AND ITS RELEVANCE TODAY



KHATONDI SOITA WEPUKHULU

For many that have borne the (mis)fortune of being raised and belonging to a predominantly religious society, it is with a touch of humility that I assume the aspect of 'skepticism' a great exception. I will not dive into how skepticism bears legs and allows one's mind the liberty of its exercise. No, I will not. I however will tell a story that stands out whenever the question of my religious skepticism comes up.

By 10, I was a dedicated child minister that read the Bible with utmost enthusiasm (much to my mum's pride) and participated in 'hospital ministry' by praying for the sick and leaving them with a Gideon's Bible and a guilt of not having enough faith to warrant a miracle. One time, I came across a small booklet whose authorship I unfortunately can not remember.

The booklet was of theological stance- but only challenging the term 'begotten' in respect to Jesus The Christ. The booklet argued that if Jesus was 'begotten', it then puts a question mark on his presumed eternal existence. At 10 years old, I was eager to hear what my pastor had to say about the booklet.

The Pastor scolded me for allowing myself to be in possession of satan's stool, that my ministry at such a young age was only a glimpse of what the Lord had in stock for me. He took the booklet away from me. Taking the booklet away from me was only a temporary glitch in my skepticism. I had never fallen down during prayer because of

possession by the holy spirit. I wondered if it was because of my sinful ways.. I made it a point to always seek repentance every after 5 minutes or so. Even then, god didn't think me worthy of a visit by the holy spirit. I reluctantly made peace with that.

Taking the booklet away was easy, shielding me from reading other material that wasn't Christian was the harder part. I have always interested myself in world politics for as long as can remember. I therefore had a fair sense of wars, political changes, political economy and geopolitics. Unfortunately for me, I was much disappointed that whole regions of the continent of Africa had little play in all these important matters. By High School, I was deeply troubled about the state of affairs in my country, as well as abroad. I chose to be on my knees for the answers I craved- who better than the Alpha and Omega?

I owe much of my growth in skepticism to my reading culture and thirst for knowledge. Three years ago, my journey from the shackles of religion began. The seeds of skepticism had been sown, wild and random and yet

somehow, it led me to a final kneeling before my god then asking for a sign, any sign of his existence, a sign that he isn't indifferent to all the suffering I thought unnecessary. That there would be another world in another life with none of the hurting was not a viable promise for me. I was impatient, my mind pacing up and down the corridor of world events on a daily. . I was

questioning why my mother's devotion was not enough to bring forth the comfort my family desperately needed. existence, a sign that he isn't indifferent to all the suffering I thought unnecessary. That there would be another world in another life with none of the hurting was not a viable promise for me.

I was impatient, my mind pacing up and down the corridor of world events on a daily. . I was questioning why my mother's devotion was not enough to bring forth the comfort my family desperately needed.

That that random Afaghani woman I saw in the newspaper last week- her crying face held ever so delicately in a black scarf was never seeing a better life upon death because she worshipped a different god from mine- the one true god. I was hurt that I valued knowledge and my god didn't, especially if it doesn't end with his name being sung in praise.

I was disillusioned and felt cheated. I fasted and prayed for over three months, crying and begging him to say something to my raging heart. I only found one answer- a deafening silence.

That silence made way to my final act of surbodinace to that god. I prayed like I was talking. I remember saying, 'God, I know you are all mighty and powerful, I also know that one of your mysterious ways of working is doing nothing at all about the many wrongs I think need immediate intervention. But here is why we part ways. I don't know enough to question you, but in my humility, I know that I could do better in your position. I am not bending my knee or putting up my hands to worship you.'

I defy you, even though the odds are against a mere mortal like I. We are done, because I love and care too much for the people I know you could help but you're choosing not to.' Before I was a skeptic, I was a rebel. I look back and admire my courage. My first act of getting chains of religion off of my feet was an act of rebellion! It answers one of the most common questions for atheists- Whether god's proven existence would warrant worship from the atheist.

It is interesting that after giving up the Christian god, I still yearned for spiritual belonging. I went through a 6 months journey of considering other options- spirituality, ancestral worship and deism. I did my part of finding myself. I have seen a number of people 'get stuck' at the spirituality phase after giving up 'organized religion.' I am glad that I had the courage to interrogate that phase too.

Many atheists that carry an intellectual grounding in their non-belief give credit to out spoken and celebrated atheists like Hitchens, Dawkins, Harris, etc. I need to confess that my primary source of questioning my (then) newly found spiritual beliefs was through Facebook interaction with some atheists. Here, I found skepticism from people who live a life very similar to mine, a group of heathens having a camp fire just outside of the town they've been kicked out of. I could relate when they brought out the ridiculousness of religion and known charlatans of the same. We had debates and conversations day in, day out. Again, I was lucky to be the kind of person that values reason, the one thing that helped me arrive at my non-belief. At the pain of sounding arrogant, I say I arrived. Arrived, not because I have seen it all, but because I have grown to appreciate even more, the need for advancement of only superior

ideas. I have arrived because in my mind, there is always space for the logically sound ideas- only, as a measure and standard to which I hold my thoughts and actions.

Does this make my life any different- perhaps easier or more difficult considering how heavily religious my society is? It is many things- many things especially because of the duty I have taken upon myself to speak against the ills of religion in my society. It makes it dangerous sometimes, as people take their beliefs so seriously and as they would guard it with their life, they would do something of a similar gravity to anything and anyone that threatens the idea they hold dearest.

Social circles have grown with more interaction with people of non-belief, creating a beautiful connection between and amongst us- fellow heathens that meet often to do the most ordinary of things and yet find truly fulfilling. Dating has also had its challenges (smiles), with my view of a suitable partner not including the number one factor that many girls in our society consider- God fearing!

Socioeconomically, there is always the dreaded work places that attach religiosity to being a good employee. It gets tricky, but in the end, I choose to speak my truth and keep hoping (and stressing) that attractive and marketable aspects of myself are the grounds by which I should be judged.

Family has been more tricky, with my Mother showing dismay over what she calls 'back sliding' from the ways of the lord. She always told me, 'I haven't much to give you, but raising you in the lord's ways is the best gift I could ever hand you.'

It is an unfortunate thought to hold, and I hope that if I ever have any children to raise, I will tell them, 'I may not give you the world, but I hope the thirst for knowledge, the respect of ideas that respect people, is the best gift I could ever hand you.'

Khatondi Soita Wepukhulu is a Makerere University Law student, A feminist, Writer, committe member of Humanist International and Secretary- Free Inquiry Uganda.

CRITICAL THINKING CHECK LIST



Don't wait for things to get better. Life will always be complicated. Learn to be happy right now, otherwise you'll run out of time.

Theinfo

sweet_atheist

"Prayers never bring anything... They may bring solace to the sap, the bigot, the ignorant, the aboriginal, and the lazy - but to the enlightened it is the same as asking Santa Claus to bring you something for Christmas."

The Enlightened Atheist

Is your god real?

Everyone knows all gods cannot be real. **Therefore, some or all gods must be fake.**

Some believers are convinced through faith. Faith works for all gods. **Therefore, faith works for fake gods.**

Some believers are convinced by their love of god. Many different gods are loved by believers. **Therefore, you can love a fake god.**

Some believers are inspired by their holy book. All religions are inspired by their holy books. **Therefore, fake holy books can be inspiring.**

Reason and evidence are the only proven ways to distinguish truth from untruth. No gods can be shown to exist using reason and evidence.

Therefore, ...what should you believe?

Everyone makes mistakes in life, but it doesn't mean they have to pay for them for the rest of their life. Sometimes good people make bad choices. It doesn't mean they are bad. It means they are human.

"No matter how busy you may think you are, you must find time for reading, or surrender yourself to self-chosen ignorance."

- Confucius

quotes-that-speak.tumblr.com

The world is changed by your example not by your opinion.

-PAUL COELHO

© Science & Metaphysics

IT TAKES A SPECIAL KIND OF CON ARTIST TO GET RICH WITHOUT PAYING TAXES BY SELLING PEOPLE AN INVISIBLE PRODUCT FOR 10% OF THEIR INCOME THAT THEY CAN'T SEE UNTIL AFTER THEY DIE.

anonew

"WE NEED LEADERS NOT IN LOVE WITH MONEY BUT IN LOVE WITH JUSTICE. NOT IN LOVE WITH PUBLICITY BUT IN LOVE WITH HUMANITY."

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Feeling Sad and Depressed?

Are you anxious?
Worried about the future?
Feeling isolated and alone?

You might be suffering from CAPITALISM

Symptoms may include: homelessness, unemployment, poverty, hunger, feelings of powerlessness, fear, apathy, boredom, cultural decay, loss of identity, extreme self-consciousness, loss of free speech, incarceration, suicidal or revolutionary thoughts, death.

Without dreams there is nothing to love
And
Without love there is nothing worth dreaming about

healthythought

Black people fight each other over European beliefs and religions - But do Europeans fight each other over Black people beliefs and religions?

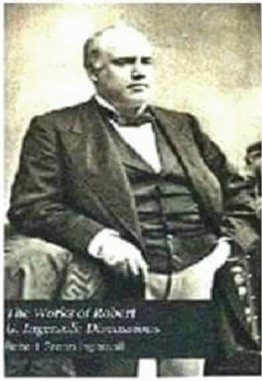
The greatest men have been those who have cut their way to success through difficulties.

F. W. Robertson

I AM A HUMANIST because...
I believe in YOU,
I believe in ME,
and WE are our only solution!

28

CRITICAL THINKING CHECK LIST



"Religion can never reform mankind because religion is slavery."

The Works of Robert A. Ingersoll: Discourses Here: 1 (Green) Ingersoll

Since it is obviously inconceivable that all religions can be right, the most reasonable conclusion is that they are all wrong.



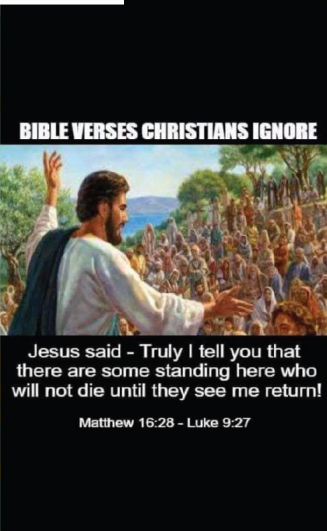
- Christopher Hitchens

Christianity did not become a major religion by the quality of its truth, but by the quantity of its violence.

- Michael Sherlock



- 7. You will kill non-Muslims to receive 72 virgins in heaven; Qur'an 9:111
- 8. You will kill anyone who leaves Islam; Qur'an 2:217, 4:89
- 9. You will behead non-Muslims; Qur'an 8:12, 47:4
- 10. You will kill and be killed for Al'lah; (verse of the sword) Qur'an 9:5
- 11. You will terrorize non-Muslims; Qur'an 8:12, 8:60
- 12. Steal from non-Muslims; Qur'an chapter 8 (booty/spoils of war)
- 13. Lie to strengthen Islam; (Tajjyya deception) Qur'an 3:26, 3:54, 9:3, 16:106, 40:28



BIBLE VERSES CHRISTIANS IGNORE

Jesus said - Truly I tell you that there are some standing here who will not die until they see me return!

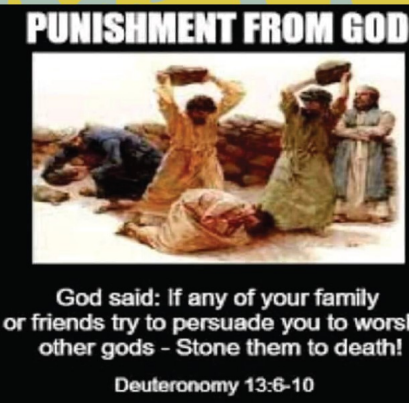
Matthew 16:28 - Luke 9:27

IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE PASSIONATE ABOUT SOMETHING, BE PASSIONATE ABOUT LEARNING. IF YOU'RE GOING TO FIGHT SOMETHING, FIGHT FOR THOSE IN NEED. IF YOU'RE GOING TO QUESTION SOMETHING, QUESTION AUTHORITY. IF YOU'RE GOING TO LOSE SOMETHING, LOSE YOUR INHIBITIONS. IF YOU'RE GOING TO GAIN SOMETHING, GAIN RESPECT AND CONFIDENCE. IF YOU'RE GOING TO HATE SOMETHING, HATE THE FALSE IDEA THAT YOU ARE NOT CAPABLE OF YOUR DREAMS

Nobody's perfect. We make mistakes. We say wrong things. We do wrong things. We fall. We get up. We learn. We grow. We move on. We live.

Warren Buffett
@WarrenBuffettHQ

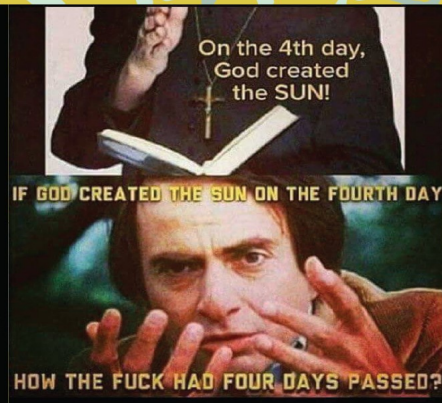
You will continue to suffer if you have an emotional reaction to everything that is said to you. True power is sitting back and observing things with logic. True power is restraint. If words control you that means everyone else can control you. Breathe and allow things to pass.



PUNISHMENT FROM GOD

God said: If any of your family or friends try to persuade you to worship other gods - Stone them to death!

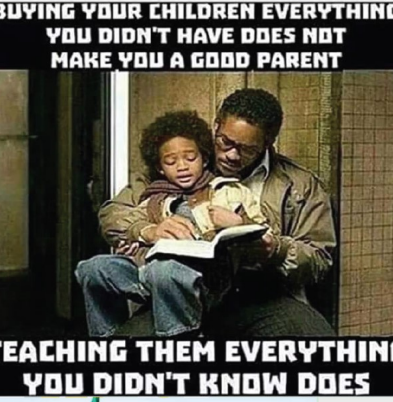
Deuteronomy 13:6-10



On the 4th day, God created the SUN!

IF GOD CREATED THE SUN ON THE FOURTH DAY

HOW THE FUCK HAD FOUR DAYS PASSED?



BUYING YOUR CHILDREN EVERYTHING YOU DIDN'T HAVE DOES NOT MAKE YOU A GOOD PARENT

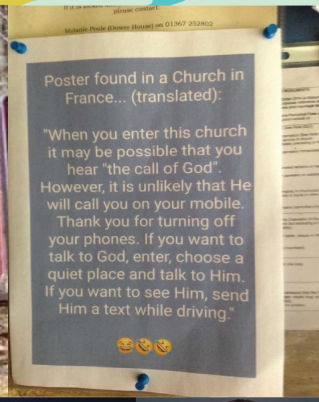
TEACHING THEM EVERYTHING YOU DIDN'T KNOW DOES



Atheists will accept the Lord or burn in Hell.

NO WE WON'T

Concerned Christian Council



Poster found in a Church in France... (translated):

"When you enter this church it may be possible that you hear 'the call of God'. However, it is unlikely that He will call you on your mobile. Thank you for turning off your phones. If you want to talk to God, enter, choose a quiet place and talk to Him. If you want to see Him, send Him a text while driving."

SATAN DOESN'T EXIST. YOU DO.

Take responsibility for your own actions.

by com/WFLAtheism

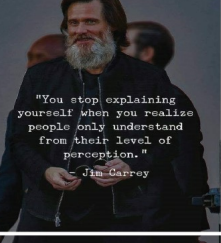


"THERE IS NO CULTURE, TRIBE, RELIGION, RACE OR CREED THAT IS OLDER THAN BEING HUMAN"

As a white male, I have a difficult time grasping the devotion of either African Americans or Native Americans to Christianity. To me, it seems like Christianity is a slap in the face (to say it mildly) of both races; as Christianity was introduced into the African culture at the expense of human trafficking, torture, murder, and slavery; and was introduced into the Native American culture by way of conquest, torture, murder, and slavery. The Native American Christian is practicing the faith of those who tried to wipe his ancestors off the map, and the African American Christian is practicing the faith of those who captured, bought, cruelly transported, sold, and enslaved their ancestors. I just don't understand

Go into the arts. I'm not kidding. The arts are not a way to make a living. They are a very human way of making life more bearable. Practicing an art, no matter how well or badly, is a way to make your soul grow, for heaven's sake. Sing in the shower. Dance to the radio. Tell stories. Write a poem to a friend, even a lousy poem. Do it as well as you possibly can. You will get an enormous reward. You will have created something.

Kurt Vonnegut



"You stop explaining yourself when you realize people only understand from their level of perception."

Jim Carrey

ATHEIST SLOGAN COMPETITION RESULTS

FIRST PRIZE - \$250
Jason Gregory, USA: "WARNING I ask questions"

RUNNERS-UP - \$25 each
Dominic Omenai, Nigeria: "TESTED 100% ATHEIST"
William Murdick, USA: "No Magic, No Magician"

TESTED 100% ATHEIST

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