

Meetings

Roundtable

March 4, 2007
Pellissippi State
10:30 AM

Discussion leader:
Patty McCaffrey

Topic:
Discussion on policies and challenges relating to health-care in the U.S.

Book Club

March 11, 2007
Barnes & Noble Books
5:00 PM

This month's selection is

MARCH - Sprawl
by Robert Breugmann

APRIL - The Chalice and the Blade by Riane Eisler

MAY - What's your life worth
by David Dranove

JUNE - The Ethical Brain
by Michael Gazzaniga

JULY - Our Inner Ape
by DeWaal

Philosophy

March 18, 2007
Pellissippi State
10:30 AM

Presenter:
Michael Lance:

Topic:
A talk covering the philosophical origins and current implications of The Idea of Progress.

Deja vu who?

Below is an extended quote about science and religion. From Gould to some current scientists the claim that religion and science are not in conflict has been throw out to ward off the fundamentalist and politicians. But this has been addressed by a prominent figure.

In the face of the onslaught of the Fundamentalists, some scientists are content to repeat over and over that they believe in evolution, but that there is no conflict between science and religion. They only obscure the real issue. The statement may be true but it depends entirely upon the definition of "religion."

If "religion" means the emotions of sympathy, charity and humanity, which to some extent are a part of every human structure, then this statement is no doubt true. If it means that great seers and prophets of the world, from the earliest times, have almost without exception emphasized these emotions, then the statement is true. The scientists who repeat that there is no conflict evidently define "religion" in some such way.

If "religion" means that the earth and man were created in six days measured by the morning and evening; that the sun was made on the fourth day; that the first woman was made from Adam's rib; that the sun stood still for Joshua; that the earth was completely drowned out by a flood; that the ark saved two of every kind of organic life, gathered from all over the globe to start a new world; that all present life comes from the animals that were saved in the ark; that each species is the result of a separate creation; that the human race was doomed to eternal torture because Eve was tempted by the serpent and man was tempted by Eve; that two or three thousand years later man was offered a chance for redemption by believing in an immaculate conception and a physical resurrection; if all this is part of "religion" - and it must be believed if one is religious - then the chances are that there are no scientists who will say that religion and science are in harmony.

Why should not these scientists, who say that science and religion do not conflict, define in plain terms what they mean by "religion"?

The time is past due for the scientist to speak in no uncertain terms. The Fundamentalist does not quibble or dodge. He is honest if not intelligent. He is using every means in his power to place the bible and his interpretation of religion in the field of learning. The battle has been fought many times in the history of the world. Once more the combat is upon us. It cannot be won by quibbling and dodging. Science must openly and fairly meet the issue. The question to be determined is whether learning should be by hampered by dogma and creeds.

Excerpted from an Essay by Clarence Darrow, 1927
Reprinted most recently in Freethought Today, Jan/Feb 2007 page 8



Ingersoll Quotes

Churches and political organizations....

It probably will not be long until the churches will divide as sharply upon political, as upon theological questions; and when that day comes, if there are not liberals enough to hold the balance of power, this Government will be destroyed. The liberty of man is not safe in the hands of any church. Wherever the Bible and sword are in partnership, man is a slave. All laws for the purpose of making man worship God, are born of the same spirit that kindled the fires of the auto da fe, and lovingly built the dungeons of the Inquisition. All laws defining and punishing blasphemy -- making it a crime to give your honest ideas about the Bible, or to laugh at the ignorance of the ancient Jews, or to enjoy yourself on the Sabbath, or to give your opinion of Jehovah, were passed by impudent bigots, and should be at once repealed by honest men. An infinite God ought to be able to protect himself, without going in partnership with State Legislatures. Certainly he ought not so to act that laws become necessary to keep him from being laughed at. No one thinks of protecting Shakespeare from ridicule, by the threat of fine and imprisonment. It strikes me that God might write a book that would not necessarily excite the laughter of his children. In fact, I think it would be safe to say that a real God could produce a work that would excite the admiration of mankind. Surely politicians could be better employed than in passing laws to protect the literary reputation of the Jewish God.

-- Robert Green Ingersoll, proving himself a prophet, of sorts, while discrediting prophesy itself! quoted from, Some Mistakes of Moses, Section III, "The Politicians," in Works, Dresden Edition, Volume 2

Web Links of Interest

Dale Haste provided these links to readings of Ingersoll's works

http://www.podcastalley.com/podcast_details.php?pod_id=33319

<http://www.podcastdirectory.com/podcasts/18527>

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For submissions contact

Carl Ledendecker at: (ledendecker@earthlink.net) 2123 Stonybrook Rd., Louisville, TN 3777 982-8687 evenings

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