

Speakers Directory (Website Version)

Welcome to our Speakers Directory. The directory has recently been updated (2014) and we hope it gives you some good ideas for speakers. For reasons of privacy we have decided not to publish all contact details online, if there's a speaker you would like to contact please get in touch with the Education Officer at education@ahsstudents.org.uk and we'll give you their details, or alternatively societies can request the full directory from the same address.

Contents

All speakers have been placed under the relevant category. Speakers may appear more than once.

Please note all academic researchers are listed under the Science and Research category, and all performers (i.e. not "speakers") are listed under the Performance category.

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-----**Activism**-----

Sue Cox

Sue is a representative at Survivors' Voice, an organisation/charity which campaigns on the behalf of child victims of sexual abuse, particularly those abused by the Catholic Church and seeks to raise awareness and prevent further abuse.

About:

www.survivorsvoice-europe.org

Maryam Namazie

Location: London

Maryam Namazie is the spokesperson Council of Ex-Muslims of Britain, a rights activist, writer, speaker, commentator and broadcaster. She has lived in, Tehran, India, UK, US and Sudan. Previously Executive Director of the International Federation of Iranian Refugee, founded the Committee for Humanitarian Assistance to Iranian Refugees (CHAIR), was the Human Rights Advocates Training Programme Coordinator at Columbia University's Centre and the NYC Refugee Coordinator/ US National Steering Committee Member of Amnesty International. She also ran a refugee women's leadership training programme in NYC. She is the Campaign Organiser for Iran Solidarity, She is also spokesperson for Equal Rights Now - Organisation against Women's Discrimination in Iran, the One Law for All Campaign against Sharia Law in Britain and the Council of Ex-Muslims Central Committee member of the Worker-communist Party of Iran; co-editor of WPI Briefing; a National Secular Society Honorary Associate and the NSS' 2005 Secularist of the Year award winner; Distinguished Supporter of the British Humanist Association and an Emeritus member of the Secular Humanist League of Brazil. Executive director of the International Federation of Iranian Refugees, Her blog has been rated one of the top 100 atheist blogs.

She has worked on a number of campaigns including: against stoning, executions, sexual apartheid, and women's rights violations particularly in Islamic societies, opposing the veiling of children, opposing Sharia or religious laws, defending the banning of religious symbols from public institutions, opposing the incitement to religious hatred bill in the UK violence against women, political Islam, and secularism Islamic terrorism rights, cultural relativism, secularism, religion, political Islam, and calling for secularism and the de-religionisation of society.

About:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maryam_Namazie

<http://maryamnamazie.com/biography.html>

Fariborz Pooya

Location: London

Was recommended to us by the Council of Ex-Muslims (of which he was a founding member). He was the founder of the Iranian Secular Society, He is the co-editor of WPI Briefing and member of the Worker-communist Party of Iran.

About:

<http://www.zoominfo.com/p/Fariborz-Pooya/1230980128>

-----**Atheism**-----

Alom Shaha

Alom Shaha is the writer of *The Young Atheist's Handbook: Lessons for Living a Good Life without God*. Shaha discusses his exploration of belief through memoir, science and philosophy. Alom is also a Physics teacher and science enthusiast and educator, who has worked on a variety of programmes and projects including Horizon and Science Shack. His creative approach to science communication and teaching has been recognised with fellowships from the [National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts \(NESTA\)](#) and The Nuffield Foundation.

About:

www.alomshaha.com

www.sciencedemo.org

Nicholas Everitt

Location: East Anglia

After a first degree at Cambridge a postgraduate degree at Oxford, Nick Everitt taught for a short time at the University of Sussex, before moving to the University of East Anglia. While at UEA, he also taught briefly in the United States and in Singapore, and has for several decades tutored for the Open University. He took early retirement in 2007. He is going deaf, so if you do not mind speaking a bit louder he's be a great speaker.

He is the author of a number of articles in the philosophy of mind, epistemology and the philosophy of religion, and two books. His latest book, *The Non-existence of God* (Routledge 2004) examines in some detail a wide number of arguments for and against the existence of God before coming to a robustly atheist conclusion. The existence of God and his alleged nature remain the focal point of his current interests.

Norman Ralph

Location: Leeds

Norman has been heavily involved in the student atheist movement, both within the Leeds Atheist Society and as president and co-founder of the AHS. He studied computing and management and now works for Telefonica O2. Norman has developed a critical approach to life and strongly believes that reason and scientific investigation are key to understanding the universe and our place within it. During his presidency of Leeds Atheist Society, Norman built an ethos of education and ethical action and demonstrated this by launching the Perspective Course over seeing the biggest ever awareness week run by a student atheist society and demanding that unethically slaughtered meat be removed from sale in the Students Union. He is an established speaker and has given talks on a variety of subjects including The Life and Times of Mohammed and An Introduction to Atheism. His specific areas of interest include the role of students atheist societies within the wider atheist, humanist and secularist movements, the application of humanist ethics to modern questions of morality and charity, how to build and maintain an atheist, humanist or secularist student society and atheism in the media. Norman is open to all invitations to speak and debate on virtually any subject whether it be an informal seminar style session or a large formal lecture.

Chris Worfolk

Location: Leeds

Witty and entertaining, Chris has an impressive CV as founder of Leeds Atheist Society, AHS trustee, head of Leeds Skeptics and co-founder of the Humanist Action Group, Chris's specialist topics are student atheism, religion, applied humanism and homeopathy.

-----**Author**-----

Chris Brookmyre

Location:Glasgow

Christopher Brookmyre is the author of fourteen published novels to-date, the latest being Where The Bodies Are Buried. Since 2008 he has been the President of the Humanist Society of Scotland. However only comfortable giving talks on his books.

About:

<http://www.brookmyre.co.uk/>

-----**Brights**-----

Quentin Brodie Cooper

Location: London/Surrey

Quentin was present at the first ever gathering of Brights at the Garlic & Shoots bar in London in December of 2003. Since then he has coordinated the activities of Brights in the UK. It was as a student at Oxford, that Richard Dawkins' lectures dispelled from him any lingering suspicion of the need for a supernatural creative force to explain the world in which we exist today. In talking about the Brights, Quentin will describe what it was about the neologism that appealed and persuaded him to devote time to promoting it. He'll also discuss

the origins of the word, the nature of the Brights movement and the challenges of growing a constituency that relies entirely on the voluntary support of its proponents. He is available within reasonable travelling distance of either where I live or work (Camberley, Surrey GU15 or Waterloo, London SE1).

-----**Christianity**-----

David Paterson

David Paterson is a practising Priest of the Church of England, and a co-founder of the Sea of Faith Network. He believes that gods do not exist except as human creations for which we (the human race) are responsible, and that religions can nevertheless be valuable sources of inspiration, just as art, music, literature and science can. He would like to find a way for humanity to work towards a secularism based on humanism, re-interpreting the treasures of religious traditions and spiritual experience.

He did a talk for Oxford Atheists.

He is happy to talk about the Sea of Faiths Network, and also would like do talks such as, 'Can we co-operate to build a genuinely secular state on humanist principles and with religious inspiration?' And how on earth do we get people with other power agendas to take such an aim seriously?

-----**Ex-theist**-----

Paula Kirby

Location: Inverness

Paula is a freelance writer and project manager living in the Highlands of Scotland. She has experienced both the journey into and out of religion as an adult: for several years she was a very devout Christian, until suddenly realising that there were no grounds for thinking her religious beliefs were actually true and that she had no more grounds for rejecting the beliefs she rejected than for believing the ones she accepted. She was already an atheist before reading *The God Delusion*, but says she has Richard Dawkins to thank for arousing in her a deep interest in science: a subject she had previously gone out of her way to avoid. She now works with Dawkins on a number of projects, and has interviewed him several times on stage for various public events (all available on YouTube), including one for Channel 4 at the Cheltenham Science Festival. She is also a member of the Washington Post's On Faith panel, for which she regularly writes responses to a range of questions about religion (you can find her articles here), and is also one of the invited speakers at the 2010 Atheist Alliance International conference in Copenhagen. Realising that many Christians (especially in the UK) are not deeply fundamentalist about their beliefs but simply find them a comfort, she is currently researching a book on how atheists approach their lives in the absence of religion. Suggested topics - What makes people become - and remain - Christian, My journey into, through, and out of Christianity, Why Christianity is fundamentally immoral, Why life can be both more moral and more meaningful without religion, Why the campaign against religion matters, Faith schools - why they are divisive, Secularism - why it offers a fairer deal to all, Good arguments against Christian apologists, but she is flexible and if you'd like her talk on another topic, just ask.

She would be doing this as part of the work for Richard Dawkins, so I wouldn't charge a fee or travel expenses!

-----**Education**-----

Dermot Bolton

Location: Bradford

Dermot is a volunteer with the British Humanist Association and a supporter of the Humanist Volunteers for Schools Project. He is particularly knowledgeable about Religious Education in schools. He is involved with two SACRE boards (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) which decide upon the RE syllabus for local districts, where he promotes the teaching of humanism and non-religious philosophies in schools. Dermot is happy to talk on a variety of topics relating to religious education.

About:

<https://humanism.org.uk/2014/07/17/inaugural-bha-religious-education-teachers-conference-held-london/>

Mike Lake

Location: Derby

Has a degree in Psychology, has worked as a teacher and set up a software company and electronics/software company. He founded Derbyshire Secularists and Humanists in 2005, represents Humanism on Derby SACRE, attends all meetings of Derbyshire SACRE and is a Trustee Director of Derby Open Centre. He participated in the 2009 teachers' working group which helped to revise the Agreed Syllabus for RE for Derby City schools. He is a member of the National Secular Society and the British Humanist Association. Despite being taught in a C of E primary school, and going to Sunday school, he cannot remember a time when he was not an atheist. He claims to be the only atheist in Derbyshire living in an Old Rectory and looking after the church yard! Mike is totally opposed to acts of religious worship in schools but he supports teaching about religion and belief - though he would prefer that it was done as part of Philosophy and Ethics to reflect its proper place in the history of human thought and belief. He does not charge for his time or expenses - though the Open Centre makes a small administrative charge to arrange a booking. He is a qualified teacher and holds a CRB certificate.

He can provide assemblies, "chats", talks, discussions or debates from KS2 to adult level. He can present talks and run discussions on a very wide range of topics pitched at all levels. For a list of topics, visit www.secularderby.org

About:

<http://secularderby.org/>

<http://www.derbyopencentre.org/mike.htm>

Jonny Scaramanga

Jonny grew up in the UK in a Christian fundamentalist household and was educated under the ACE (Accelerated Christian Education) programme which he now campaigns against. He has written about ACE and fundamentalism for The Guardian and the Times Education Supplement among others. For the first year writing his blog (below) he focused on Accelerated Christian Education, "a cult-like fundamentalist education system where children work individually, in silence, at isolated desks. The science curriculum emphasises Young Earth Creationism and mocks evolution. The politics curriculum teaches the views of the Christian Right." He also collects accounts of people who have experienced ACE and provides insight into his experiences of leaving fundamentalist religion.

Jonny is also a keen musician (see his site) and is working on a book about his life as a fundamentalist.

About:

<http://leavingfundamentalism.wordpress.com/>
www.jonnyscaramanga.com

Ken Smith

A former Anglican Priest who spent most of his working life spent in Religious Education - the last 17 as chaplain to Whitgift School in Croydon. From the mid-eighties he has spent much time in inter-faith dialogue, running a very successful Multi-faith group in Croydon. Ken met Don Cupitt, the inspiration behind the Sea of Faith Network about 20 years ago and much of his present philosophical position is due to Don's writings. As a non-dualist he finds religious atheism to be the only tenable position around today that has serious intellectual mileage for the future. "The Sea of Faith has an essentially non-dualist philosophy. It refuses to regard itself as an organisation - rather it's a network of people exploring the implications both for religion and the world at large, of the Death of God."

-----**Freedom of Expression**-----

Ian Cram

Location: Leeds

Has written on the topic of the Danish cartoons and has been critical of attempts to curtail freedom of expression on grounds of offence to religious belief. His research lies in comparative constitutional protection for expression and speech, with an especial focus on the US first amendment.

Prof Paul Sturges

Location: Loughborough

Professor Emeritus, Loughborough University; Professor Extraordinary, University of Pretoria. He has written, taught and given conference presentations on intellectual freedom matters for over ten years. During this time he has touched on most aspects of intellectual freedom, including freedom of access to information, freedom of expression, and freedom of opinion. In the 1990s he advised the Council of Europe on the potential damage to access to information caused by Internet filtering. The controversy over the Danish cartoons depicting the Prophet Mohammed in 2005 led him to work on tolerance in relation to freedom of expression, and in 2010 he is looking at the problem of blasphemy. The most enjoyable aspect of all this has been researching comedy and freedom of expression, which justified going to lots of comedy gigs and interviewing stand-up comedians.

-----Humanism-----

David Bothwell

David has spoken twice to Southampton Atheist Society and given talks about Humanism to several schools in recent years.

The experience of reading Christian Theology as part of his degree at Cambridge confirmed his skepticism about the dogma and doctrines of Christianity. His early attempts to come to terms with a slimmed-down version of Christianity, similar to the views currently held by members of The Sea of Faith, soon gave way to total disbelief. He joined the British Humanist Association about 35 years ago and for a time was chair of their education committee. For many years he also represented Humanism on the Religious Education Council. Although he supports religious education in schools provided it is open and inclusive of the beliefs of those who choose to live without religion, he regards fundamentalism religious or secular as an evil influence in society.

In recent years he has used Keynote, the Apple equivalent of PowerPoint, incorporating various illustrations of the antecedents of modern Humanism and their beliefs. He is especially interested in the concepts of atheism and agnosticism and how these relate to humanism.

Andrew Copson

Location: London

Andrew Copson has been Chief Executive of the British Humanist Association since January 2010, after five years coordinating the BHA's education and public affairs work. He has written on humanist and secularist issues for The Guardian, The Times, The Independent, and New Statesman as well as various journals. He is a director of the European Humanist Federation as well as a delegate of the International Humanist and Ethical Union to the Council of Europe. He is a Member of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, an Associate of the Centre for Law and Religion at Cardiff University.

He can talk about Humanism, 'Objections to Humanism', the work of the BHA, Secularism, Faith Schools, and many other topics related to atheism, humanism and secularism.

About:

<https://humanism.org.uk/about/our-people/staff/>

Billy Jenkins

Billy Jenkins was recommended to us by Stuart Lee. He has been a musician, performer and secular blues preacher for four decades. Although from an Anglican family he has been a lifelong humanist. Saddened at misrepresentation when attending funerals of friends he trained in 2008 with the British Humanist Association to become a humanist funeral officiant – going , as he puts it ‘one step on from the blues’ and describing humanist funerals as an ‘absolute avant-garde gig’.

From function work to free improvisation, stand up comedy to classical recitals, jazz festivals to punk gigs, from radio shows to street corners, from lecturing at the Royal Academy to puppeteering in kids shows – Jenkins has been there, done that. And strangely, all these experiences morph into his new funereal vocation.

Biography written by his 8 year old grandson: Mr Jenkins is a good man he plays bowls he does funerals he plays a guitar he is married to Mrs Jenkins he has twin daughters Alice and Harriet he had two cats that died and now he has two new cats called Lula and Kia the end.

Paul Pettinger

Location: London

Paul Pettinger joined the BHA in April 2009. Paul came to the BHA from Liberal Youth, where he had been their Head of Office. Paul has also worked as a Peer’s Researcher in the House of Lords, as well as being elected Councillor on Exeter City Council. Paul is responsible for BHA campaigning on faith schools and other education-related issues, such as Religious Education and collective worship. Paul is happy talk about the BHA’s education campaigns and about why education should not divide on faith.

Richy Thompson

Richy Thompson is the campaigns officer (faith schools and education) at the British Humanist Association. He was formerly head of the AHS.

About:

<http://www.theguardian.com/profile/richy-thompson>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jQICICMup98>

Silvana Uhrich

Location: Belgium
(but often visits London)

President of International Humanist and Ethical Youth Organisation IHEYO.

About:

<https://www.facebook.com/IHEYO/>

<http://www.iheyo.org/>

British Humanist Society (BHA)

If a student group was interested in having a BHA registered speaker, they can put you in touch.

About:

www.humanism.org.uk

Contact details:

local@humanism.org.uk

BHA Distinguished Supporters

The BHA distinguished supporters can be contacted through them.

About:

<http://www.humanism.org.uk/about/people/distinguished-supporters>

Contact details:

local@humanism.org.uk

-----Intercultural Relations-----

Ted Cantle

Ted Cantle established the former Institute of Community Cohesion (iCoCo) in 2005 and this became the UK's leading authority on community cohesion and intercultural relations. Ted's work is now carried on by the iCoCo Foundation which promotes interculturalism and community cohesion.

In 2001, Ted was appointed by the Home Secretary to review the causes of the summer disturbances in a number of northern towns and cities. The groundbreaking report - 'the Cantle Report' made around 70 recommendations. Since then the concept of 'community cohesion' has been adopted by UK government. Community cohesion programmes succeeded in reducing tension in local communities by promoting cross cultural contact, developing support for diversity and promoting unity.

Community cohesion also continues to tackle inequality and prejudice, while interculturalism is a broader programme intended to replace the outdated concept of multiculturalism.

About:

www.tedcandle.co.uk

-----**Interfaith**-----

-----Sea of Faiths-----

David Paterson

David Paterson is a practising Priest of the Church of England, and a co-founder of the Sea of Faith Network. He believes that gods do not exist except as human creations for which we (the human race) are responsible, and that religions can nevertheless be valuable sources of inspiration, just as art, music, literature and science can. He would like to find a way for humanity to work towards a secularism based on humanism, re-interpreting the treasures of religious traditions and spiritual experience.

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-----**Islam**-----

Tehmina Kazi

Director of British Muslims for Secular Democracy.

British Muslims for Secular Democracy is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting secularism in the UK, founded in 2006 The group believes the diversity of views among British

Muslims is not adequately represented to wider British society and that their image is distorted. The organization is a one of the growing number of feminist and progressive Muslim organizations.

About:

<http://bmsd.org.uk/>

Muslim Debates Initiative (MDI)

MDI is formed of members from the Muslim community with experience in public speaking, apologetics, polemics, research and community work. The speakers or researchers come from various academic backgrounds, and so bring a wealth and variety of research and experience in theological, philosophical, scientific, historiographical, jurisprudential and political fields of study. This organization has connections with all Muslim speakers, so if you contact them, they'll find a speaker to fit your needs.

About:

<http://www.thedebateinitiative.com/>

-----**Journalism**-----

Nick Cohen

Nick Cohen is a columnist for the Observer. He does occasional pieces for Time, the Spectator, Standpoint and New Humanist. *You Can't Read This Book: Censorship in an Age of Freedom* was published in 2012. He frequently speaks for the British Humanist Association and the National Secular Society.

About:

www.nickcohen.net

Lord Lyndon Harrison

Location: London and Chester

Happy to talk in general terms or particularly about parliament and the House of Lords' involvement with religious issues. He is a member of the All Party Parliamentary Humanist Group and a Distinguished Supporter of the British Humanist Association. He is not a good traveller although he lives in Chester and London so doesn't mind nearby visits.

About:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lyndon_Harrison,_Baron_Harrison

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/democracylive/hi/representatives/profiles/26907.stm>

Dr Kenan Malik

He is a writer, broadcaster and lecturer. He is a Senior Visiting Lecturer at the Department of Political, International and Policy Studies at the University of Surrey, presents BBC Radio 4's flagship current affairs program, 'Analysis' and is a panelist on the 'Moral Maze'. He has campaigned for 'equal rights', 'freedom of expression' and a secular society, and in defence of rationalism and Humanism in the face of the growing culture of irrationalism, mysticism, and misanthropy. He was shortlisted for the Orwell Prize in 2010. His most recent book is The Quest for a Moral Compass: A Global History of Ethics. He is also a trustee of the free speech magazine Index on Censorship.

About:

<http://kenanmalik.wordpress.com/>

<http://www.kenanmalik.com/>

Dr Simon Thompson

Location: Bristol

Research Interests: The politics of recognition, deliberative democracy, the politics of multiculturalism. He has spoken to Bristol on the case for banning incitement to religious hatred (2010). His perspective is that we should seek to eliminate the climates of hatred which allow violence to thrive.

About:

http://www.uwe.ac.uk/hlss/politics/staff_sThompson.shtml

Samantha Stein

Location: London

Samantha Stein is a writer, public speaker, and student is best known for her involvement with Camp Quest. After reading about this US secular summer camp in Richard Dawkins' "The God Delusion", Samantha volunteered at Camp Quest Michigan in 2007 where the idea for bringing Camp Quest to the UK was first discussed. She is now Camp Director for Camp Quest UK, the UK's first residential summer camp for the children of atheists, agnostics, humanists, freethinkers and all those who embrace a naturalistic rather than supernatural world view. The first camp was held in July 2009, with two more camps planned for 2010. Samantha graduated from York University with a BSc in Psychology and is currently taking an MA in Religion in Contemporary Society at Kings College London.

-----LGBT-----

Gay and Lesbian Humanist Association (GALHA)

GALHA is a democratic membership organisation based in the UK with members worldwide, providing fellowship and a voice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) Humanists and those who share their values. They Campaign to promote equality and diversity, combat prejudice and discrimination against lesbians and gay men and to achieve complete legal equality with heterosexuals as well as issues of concern to Humanists. They lobby MPs and media They are present at demonstrations and rallies concerning these rights. They have close links with the BHA and NSS, which have each consistently backed homosexual law reform and supported making the age of sexual consent for gay men equal to that for heterosexuals. GALHA is represented on the Humanist Forum (a liaison committee) and co-sponsors Humanist functions. They hold regular public meetings with speakers and discussions as part of on-going educational activity and provide stalls and information at Humanist and related events as resources allow.

About:

<http://www.galha.org/>

Contact details:

Secretary@GALHA.org

-----Organisations-----

Brights

Would like to provide whatever support they can and are happy to supply promotional flyers that can be overprinted with local details (<http://tinyurl.com/5uu7y7>) for free. They will put out a request for speakers in their next newsletter and get back to us with the result.

About:

<http://www.the-Brights.net/>

British Humanist Society (BHA)

If a student group was interested in having a BHA registered speaker, they could contact The BHA, who will put you in contact.

Contact details:

local@humanism.org.uk

BHA Distinguished Supporters

The BHA distinguished supporters can be contacted through them.

About:

<http://www.humanism.org.uk/about/people/distinguished-supporters>

Contact details:

local@humanism.org.uk

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About:

<http://www.galha.org/>

Contact details:

Secretary@GALHA.org

International Humanist and Ethical Youth Organisation (IHEYO)

International organisation (I've asked for UK contacts, so we'll hopefully get some at some point). They are devoted to promoting the spread of humanism among young people. They work together with many groups and individuals around the world. With humanism in practice IHEYO means all humanist, freethinker, laique, skeptic, rationalist, atheist, agnostics, etc. groups.

About:

<https://www.facebook.com/IHEYO/>

<http://www.iheyo.org/> (infrequently updated)

Contact details:

silvana.uhlich@iheyo.org

Muslim Debates Initiative (MDI)

MDI is formed of members from the Muslim community with experience in public speaking, apologetics, polemics, research and community work. The speakers or researchers come from various academic backgrounds, and so bring a wealth and variety of research and experience in theological, philosophical, scientific, historiographical, jurisprudential and political fields of study. This organization has connections with all Muslim speakers, so if you contact them, they'll find a speaker to fit your needs.

About:

<http://www.thedebateinitiative.com/>

Contact:

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=66833933052&ref=ts>

or through the contact page or their website

National Secular Society (NSS)

The National Secular Society demands the complete separation of Church and State and the abolition of all privileges granted to religious organisations. They seek to spread education, to promote the friendship of all peoples as a means of advancing universal peace to further common cultural interests. They campaign on a number of other issues and will give AHS societies leaflets and badges for free! They would be delighted to speak for any AHS group and would like us to know their support comes from the whole council.

NSS Distinguished Supporters

They have also kindly said they will pass on any requests for any of their Honorary Associates, please include if you can pay travel expenses.

About:

<http://www.secularism.org.uk/honoraryassociates.html>

<http://www.secularism.org.uk/>

Contact details:

enquiries@secularism.org.uk

They have also kindly said they will pass on any requests for any of their Honorary Associates, please include if you can pay travel expenses.

-----**Performance**-----

-----Comedy-----

Robin Ince

Location - London

(Or get him when he's touring!)

Comedian, massive Atheist, awesome guy! Comes highly recommended by Leeds Atheist Society

About:

<http://robinince.com/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPv4FMtxO9o>

Iszi Lawrence

Iszi Lawrence is a comedian to watch. She cuts a lean figure onstage that is counterbalance to the crackle of intelligent, silly jokes that drum through her. She's resident compere of the Lil Fat Comedy Club Witney, has had sell out shows at the Camden, Brighton, Oxfringe and Edinburgh fringe. Her debut show 'Matter of Tact' focused on being caught between christian friends and her muslim family - how an awkward atheist can still join in. The show was Time Out Recommended, London Lite Comedy Pick and received three and four star reviews from Chortle, Threeweeks and the Scotsman. She also takes part in Skeptic events, Atheist ThinkWeek and other charity events. She has a free weekly podcast www.sundayssupplement.com that is enjoyed by thousands of regular listeners.

Has spoken at:

About:

www.iszi.com

Stewart Lee

Does he really need a blurb?

About:

www.stewartlee.co.uk

-----Magic-----

Mark Cairns

Mark is a magician and atheist who explores the nature of belief with "mind reading" and some cool tricks. Comes highly recommended from the University of Liverpool Humanists.

About:

<http://www.markcairns.co.uk/>

-----Music-----

The BHA Choir

Location: London and the South East

If you'd like the BHA Choir to perform please get in contact with the BHA.

The Lovely Electric

Ariane Sherine and Graham Nunn, organiser and designer of the 2008-9 Atheist bus campaign, have formed a comedy pop group. The group are looking to tour UK Universities during October, November, December of 2014. They have a funny song about the Pope, and all the songs are about sex. They have all their own gear, and could produce poster designs so that societies could print out their own poster for each gig. They would not need payment, only petrol money along with the chance to sell signed CDs after the gig.

About:

Contact the Education Officer if you'd like to find out more. We can forward you some promotional materials and a couple of their tracks for you to listen to.

Jonny Scaramanga

Jonny is probably best known in AHS circles for his work campaigning against fundamentalist Christian education and sharing his experience of leaving fundamentalist religion (for more on this see his bio under the Education section). But he is also a musician! He appeared at the International Guitar Festival every year from 2004-2010, finally doing a headlining gig in 2010. He describes his musical style as a "power-drill pop artist" and released his EP "Listen" in 2012. You can check out some of his music through his website.

About:

www.jonnyscaramanga.com

-----Philosophy-----

Julian Baggini

Julian Baggini is editor and co-founder of The Philosophers' Magazine. He is the author of several books, including *Welcome to Everytown: A Journey into the English Mind* (Granta), *Complaint* (Profile) and, most recently, *Should You Judge This Book by Its Cover?* (Granta). His monthly philosophy podcast is available on iTunes or via his website, www.julianbaggini.com. He has written for numerous newspapers and magazines, including the Guardian, the Financial Times, Prospect and the New Statesman, as well as for the think tanks The Institute of Public Policy Research and Demos. He has also appeared as a character in two Alexander McCall-Smith novels. His PhD (University College London, 1996) was on personal identity.

www.julianbaggini.com

www.philosophersmag.com

Dr Havi Carel

Location: Bristol

She works at the University of the West of England. Her current research explores the phenomenology of illness. She is interested in augmenting the naturalistic approach to illness with a phenomenological perspective. She believes that as embodied persons we experience illness primarily as a disruption of lived body rather than as a dysfunction of biological body. But medicine has traditionally focused on returning the biological body to normal functioning, and has therefore worked from within a problem-focused, deficit perspective that ignores the lived body. A phenomenological approach can provide a framework for incorporating the experience of illness into the medical naturalistic account, by providing a rich description of the altered relationship of the ill person to her world.

She spoke to Bristol about *Philosophical Conceptions of Death* (2009). In this, she compared and contrasted Epicurus and Heidegger's views about death and dying. It was a surprisingly uplifting talk given its content!

About:

http://www.uwe.ac.uk/hlss/courses/philosophy/staff_hcarel.shtml

AC Grayling MA, DPhil (Oxon) FRSL, FRSA

Location: London

Professor of Philosophy at University of London, and a Supernumerary Fellow of Oxford. He has written and edited over twenty books. He is a columnist for national newspapers, frequent broadcaster on BBC Radios 4, 3 and the World Service. He sits on the editorial boards of several academic journals, and was the Honorary Secretary of the principal British philosophical association. He is a representative to the UN Human Rights Council for the International Humanist and Ethical Union. He was a Fellow of the World Economic Forum, and works with relations between the West and the Islamic world. He is a Trustee of the London Library, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature and also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. In 2003 he was a Booker Prize judge. He is also a keen supporter of the AHS! Oxford Atheists found it more effective to contact him through the BHA.

Philosopher and Master of New College of the Humanities

About:

<http://acgrayling.com>

If you are interested in having AC Grayling speak for your society, it may be worth speaking to the BHA about contacting him through their Distinguished Supporters programme.

Prof. J.J. Haldane

Location: St Andrews, Scotland

He is a Professor of Philosophy at St Andrews, has written several books, including one on Atheism. Can talk on: Philosophy of Religion, history of philosophy, Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Value, Metaphysics, Medieval Philosophy.

Peter Kail

Location: Oxford

Fellow of Philosophy.

Stephen Law

Location: London

Stephen Law is Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, Heythrop College University of London, editor of the Royal Institute of Philosophy journal THINK: Philosophy for everyone, Provost of Centre for Inquiry UK. He has written several philosophy books for the general public, including the award-winning The Philosophy Gym and The Philosophy Files (aimed at children 12+), and has appeared on TV, radio and in the national press. He has also published in Religious Studies, the leading Philosophy of Religion journal.

Topics: The Existence of God (based on his God of Eth argument), Faith schools and religious education (based on the book The War For Children's Minds), Secularism - why it's a good idea, What's it all about then? Life the universe and everything, Intellectual black holes

About:

<http://stephenlaw.blogspot.co.uk/>

Tim Mawson

Location: Oxford

Fellow and Tutor of Philosophy and Dean at St Peters College, University of Oxford. He is interested in the philosophy of religion, philosophical theology, and moral philosophy. He is religious and has authored the book 'Belief in God - and Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion' as well as contributed to a number of journals. Mawson is the current Secretary of the British Society for the Philosophy of Religion.

Unfortunately he is only able to travel within the Oxford area.

About:

http://www.philosophy.ox.ac.uk/members/tim_mawson

-----**Politics**-----

Nia Griffith MP

Location: Llanelli / London

Nia Griffith is Labour MP for Llanelli. Nia has previously spoken to groups on Faith Schools with the University of Liverpool Humanists.

About:

www.niagriffith.org.uk

John Barry

John Barry is Reader in the School of Politics, International Studies and Philosophy and Associate Director of the Institute for a Sustainable World at Queens University Belfast. He has written extensively about normative aspects of the politics and ethics of sustainability, citizenship and sustainability; the green movement and the political economy of sustainability and the politics of renewable energy and the transition to a low carbon economy. While based within social science, he approaches issues around un/sustainability such as climate change from an explicitly interdisciplinary perspective. He also has direct experience and expertise on the politics of Northern Ireland, as he was co-leader of the Green Party in Northern Ireland from 2003-2009. He can speak about these and related topics such as the public role of the academic and the university, atheism and humanism in modern politics and society and the creeping commercialisation of the modern university.

-----**Science and Research**-----

-----Archaeogenetics-----

Dr Luca Ermini

Location: Newcastle

Dr Luca Ermini is an evolutionary and population geneticist. One of the major topics of his research is paleo-genetics and ancient DNA studies and its connection with human evolution, history of diseases and population genetics.

Luca Ermini carried out genetic investigations on the so-called Tyrolean Iceman (also popularly known as the Similaun Man, or Ötzi), a naturally mummified male corpse found on the Alps on September 19th, 1991. This is one of the world's most celebrated human mummies whose age, 5350–5100 years before present, corresponds to the Late Neolithic or the Copper Age.

The first genetic studies performed by Luca Ermini on Ötzi's DNA led to the reconstruction of the man's last meals and to the characterization of his intestinal microflora. These studies, then, allowed details of Ötzi's last hours of life to be inferred.

More recently, Luca Ermini, collaborating with the University of Leeds (UK) and the University of Camerino (Italy) has sequenced the Ötzi's entire mitochondrial genome and found that he belonged to a maternal genetic lineage that is either extremely rare, or that has died out. These findings may have important consequences for the genetic history of modern human populations and may help in shedding light on the contentious issue of the interbreeding between Neanderthals and Sapiens.

Luca Ermini is currently a research associate at Newcastle University.

About:

http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Luca_Ermini

-----Biochemistry-----

Prof Tom Blundell

Location: Cambridge

Prof. Tom Blundell is a British biochemist and science administrator. Up until 2009, he was the Sir William Dunn Professor of Biochemistry and former head of the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Cambridge. His speciality is molecular biology and his research on identifying the chemical processes of diseases has led to the development of drugs to treat Aids, cancer, cataracts and diabetes.

In September 2010, Blundell, along with 54 other public figures, signed an open letter published in *The Guardian*, stating their opposition to Pope Benedict XVI's state visit to the UK. He is a supporter of the the British Humanist Association.

He is a highly sought after speaker, so book months in advance.

About:

<https://humanism.org.uk/about/our-people/distinguished-supporters/sir-tom-blundell/>

<http://www.bioc.cam.ac.uk/people/uto/blundell>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Blundell

-----Evolutionary Biology-----

Dr. Robert Asher

Location: Cambridge

He works on the evolutionary biology (including palaeontology) of mammals, focusing on the evolution of insectivoran-grade and endemic African mammals, their patterns of genealogical relationships, and development of teeth and bones in certain living species. My website (linked below) lists several publications that provide more detail on my scientific interests. He also has an interest in the intersection of science and religion, and would welcome the opportunity to discuss how palaeobiology in general relates to the ongoing debates on creationism, "intelligent design", etc.

Dr Oliver Curry

Location: Oxford

Oliver is a post-doctoral researcher at the Institute of Cognitive and Evolutionary Anthropology, at Oxford University. He works on the evolved psychology of cooperation and conflict -- that is, our moral and political instincts. He is available to speak on the evolution of morality -- covering aspects of game theory, animal behaviour, psychology and moral philosophy.

About:

www.olivercurry.com

Dr. Chris Harrod

Location: Belfast

Chris Harrod is a fish biologist and evolutionary biologist. His work involves examining the role of fish in foodwebs and the impacts of invasive species. His research has taken him from the high Arctic, through the Caribbean and down to the Altiplano of Chile. He is happy to talk about the utility of fish as models for rapid evolution and incipient speciation.

Peter Atkins

He has delivered talks for both Southampton Atheist Society and Oxford Atheist Society. He specialises in the conflict of science and religion (with science the winner, brooking no compromise); the justification of atheism.

Richard Dawkins

Oh. You know.

About:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Dawkins

www.richarddawkins.net

He's quite busy so if you're interested, get in contact well in advance.

It is generally best to contact him through the BHA's Distinguished Supporters programme.

-----Neurobiology-----

Kenan Malik

Neurobiologist and philosopher of race and multiculturalism

He is a writer, broadcaster and lecturer. He is a Senior Visiting Lecturer at the Department of Political, International and Policy Studies at the University of Surrey, presents BBC Radio 4's flagship current affairs program, 'Analysis' and is a panelist on the 'Moral Maze'. He has campaigned for 'equal rights', 'freedom of expression' and a secular society, and in defence of rationalism and Humanism in the face of the growing culture of irrationalism, mysticism, and misanthropy. He was shortlisted for the Orwell Prize in 2010. His most recent book is The Quest for a Moral Compass: A Global History of Ethics. He is also a trustee of the free speech magazine Index on Censorship.

About:

<http://kenanmalik.wordpress.com/>

<http://www.kenanmalik.com/>

-----Palaeobiology-----

Paul Barrett

Location: London

Paul Barrett is a palaeontologist at the Natural History Museum, London, who specialises in dinosaurs and other extinct reptiles. He is able to talk in detail about the evolution of birds from their dinosaur ancestors as well as on vertebrate evolution in general (excluding primates and hominids) and also on co-evolutionary interactions.

Paul Upchurch

Location: London

He is Senior Lecturer in Palaeobiology at University College London. His research interests include the evolution of dinosaurs, the physical events that control the spatial distributions of organisms, and the analysis of diversity patterns in the fossil record. He has had a long

standing interest in the evolution-Creation debate, particularly with regard to issues such as: 'Intelligent Design', the age of the Earth, intermediate forms in the fossil record, and the origins of novel anatomical features/adaptations. He also enjoys debating creationists.

-----Psychology-----

Professor Christopher C. French

He is Head of the Anomalistic Psychology Research Unit in the Psychology Department at Goldsmiths, University of London. He is a Fellow of the British Psychological Society and the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry. He has published over 100 articles and chapters covering a wide range of topics within psychology. His main current area of research is the psychology of paranormal beliefs and anomalous experiences. He frequently appears on radio and television casting a sceptical eye over paranormal claims. He is the editor of *The Skeptic* and writes a regular column for the Guardian's online science pages. He was recommended to us by Edinburgh Humanists.

Olivera Petrovich

Location: Oxford

A developmental psychologist working as a Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Experimental Psychology at Oxford. My main interest is how humans acquire certain metaphysical concepts, notably a concept of God, and further developments in this concept across age and culture. I have, indeed, done quite a bit of cross-cultural research, in Japan (with children and adults), in UK also with children and adults, and in UK with children from different faith schools. In all the research projects I have looked at this concept in the context of children's everyday understanding of the physical world. I also teach a course "Developmental Questions in Science and Religion" (for undergraduates in Experimental Psychology) and "Introduction to Psychology of Religion" (for undergraduates in Philosophy and Theology).

Dr. Gijsbert Stoet

Location: Leeds

Gijsbert is a Cognitive psychologist of Dutch origin and Leeds Atheist Society. He has worked and lived in Germany, England, Japan and the United States. Currently he works at the University of Leeds and studies cognition and individual differences. Gijsbert has a strong interest in the psychological aspects of how people come to their knowledge and beliefs.

Claire White

Claire White is the Research Co-ordinator for the EXREL project at the University of Oxford since 2009. Before coming to Oxford, Claire worked with Dr Nicholas Gibson as part of the

Psychology and Religion Research Group at the University of Cambridge. Claire completed a BSc. in Psychology at Queen's University, Belfast. Claire also completed a Ph.D. at the Institute of Cognition and Culture, Queen's University, Belfast, which included a cross-cultural component with the Jains in South India. Her research has focused on folk concepts of personal identity in the afterlife, and in reincarnation in particular. She is also interested in experimental philosophy and research on the topic of grief.

-----Sociology-----

Dr Nasar Meer

Location: Bristol and Southampton

He works at both University of Bristol and Soton. His research explores the relationships between minority identities and citizenship programmes in Britain and European Union member states. He is particularly concerned with the articulation of these relationships within arenas of education, anti-discrimination, political participation, and public and media representation. Other interests include a European reading of the African-American 'founding figure' of Sociology, W. E. B. Du Bois, as well as a focus upon the role of journalists as 'public intellectuals'. He is also researching the sociology and politics of conceptualising racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, alongside an emerging interest in Islamism and political Islam. He is a co-editor (with Dr. Varun Uberoi and Prof. Tariq Modood) of a forthcoming Palgrave Book Series on the theme of Contemporary Citizenship.

About:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/sociology/staff/nasarmeer.html>

-----Secularism-----

Allan Hayes

Allan Hayes went from Heywood Grammar School, Lancashire, to Trinity College Cambridge in 1953 to read Mathematics (BA 1956, PhD 1960). Since retiring from an academic career in Mathematics he has been increasingly involved in issues to do with Secularism and Humanism. He is currently President of Leicester Secular Society, Trustee of the British Humanist Association, Trustee of the Sea of Faith Network, Humanist Representative on Leicester Standing Advisory Committee on Religious Education and a life member of the National Secular Society. He has been elected to an RSA Fellowship 2010. He is interested in all things to do with human beings and human society: Education (RE, PSHE), Church and State issues (faith schools), political influence, origins of social and moral behaviour...

Living in one of the most diverse cities in the country (Leicester) he is keen to build bridges and is regularly invited to speak to religious and other groups.

Tehmina Kazi

– Director of British Muslims for Secular Democracy

British Muslims for Secular Democracy is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting secularism in the UK, founded in 2006. The group believes the diversity of views among British Muslims is not adequately represented to wider British society and that their image is distorted. The organization is one of the growing number of feminist and progressive Muslim organizations.

About:

<http://www.bmsd.org.uk/>

National Secular Society (NSS)

The National Secular Society demands the complete separation of Church and State and the abolition of all privileges granted to religious organisations. They seek to spread education, to promote the friendship of all peoples as a means of advancing universal peace to further common cultural interests. They campaign on a number of other issues and will give AHS societies leaflets and badges for free! They would be delighted to speak for any AHS group and would like us to know their support comes from the whole council.

NSS Distinguished Supporters

They have also kindly said they will pass on any requests for any of their Honorary Associates, please include if you can pay travel expenses.

About:

<http://www.secularism.org.uk/honoraryassociates.html>

<http://www.secularism.org.uk/>

Contact details:

enquiries@secularism.org.uk

-----**Scientology**-----

Dr Martin Poulter

Location: Bristol

Martin is a lecturer at University of Bristol. He has fingers in many pies - perhaps his website and videos best explain what he's about. He is a member of Bristol Skeptics in the Pub and his interests encompass many things including scientology, philosophy, economics and IT. He has given Bristol the talks Cognitive Bias: Introspection and Religious Belief (2008) and Scientology: It's worse than you think! (2008). He's quite a character!

<http://infobomb.org/> On Tom Cruise and Scientology On The Triumph of Social Knowledge.

-----**Skepticism**-----

Dr Richard Parker

Location: Leeds

Rich is a passionate advocate of humanism, secularism and rationality having made a personal journey from the influences of religion and 'New Age' thinking towards an evidence-based view of the world around us. Richard is a trustee of the Chris Worfolk Foundation and an active participant in - and regular speaker at - humanist and secular societies in his local region.
currently writing his first book.

-----**Theologians**-----

John Hedley Brooke

Location: Oxford

John Hedley Brooke held the Andreas Idreos Chair of Science & Religion and Directorship of the Ian Ramsey Centre at Oxford University from 1999 to 2006. He is an Emeritus Fellow of Harris Manchester College Oxford, Honorary Professor of the History of Science at Lancaster University and, in 2007, was appointed "Distinguished Fellow" at the Institute of Advanced Study, University of Durham. He is currently President of the International Society for Science and Religion. His books include Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives (Cambridge 1991) and (with Geoffrey Cantor) Reconstructing Nature: The Engagement of Science & Religion (Edinburgh 1998). He has contributed to both The Cambridge Companion to Darwin and to The Cambridge Companion to the "Origin of Species".

Happy to talk generally about 'science & religion', about Darwin, the Darwinian revolution and other aspects of the history of science.

Johannes Zachhuber

Location: Oxford

Johannes Zachhuber teaches Modern Theology at Oxford University. His interests include Christian theology, the history of religious thought in the 19th and 20th century, religion and politics, and theories of secularisation.

-----**Theists**-----

Abdullah Al Andalusi

Location: London

Abdullah is a former Christian who embraced Islam at a young age, and has studied Islam in depth since he was 18. He also has an academic background in Computer Science. His activities involve speaking at community centers, universities, colleges and appearances on various TV programs. He is also experienced in debating, and has debated extensively with Atheists, Secularists and Christians on a variety of platforms, including public debate, TV and

radio. His main areas are: Psychology, Anthropology, Islamic Sciences, Sociology, Classical Islamic rational philosophy, Politics - current affairs and political theory.

Edward Canfor-Dumas

Award-winning scriptwriter and novelist, having written for *Week Ending*, *Not The Nine O'Clock News*, *The Bill* and *Kavanagh QC*, as well as writing the police drama *Tough Love*, the BAFTA-nominated *Pompeii: The Last Day*, and its follow-up *Supervolcano*. He also ghost-wrote the non-fiction book *The Buddha in Daily Life*, and his most recent work is the successful novel, *The Buddha, Geoff and Me*. He is also chair of the ministry for peace pressure group, and helped establish the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Conflict Issues.

Adam Deen

Location: London

He is an international public speaker on Muslim Apologetics. A former Islam channel presenter and intellectual activist who has been working in the field of Muslim apologetics for almost a decade. He has contributed to debates on issues ranging from ethics, to religious philosophy and theology. Adam Deen has pioneered the use of contemporary western philosophy in defending Islam in public debates. He has debated USA's leading atheist Dan Barker author of 'Godless' and Norman Ralph the previous AHS president. He'd like to talk/debate about: Existence of God, Atheism, Morality, Miracle of the Quran, Philosophy, The Evidence for Islam, Religion and Politics, What is Jihad, Muslims in the media.