



## NTCOF COMPLETES 17 YEARS

The North Texas Church of Freethought held its first ever regular monthly service on February 5th, 1995. Featured was a dramatic interpretation of British Naturalist Thomas Henry Huxley's 1860 letter in reply to the Anglican cleric Charles Kingsley's letter of condolence after the death of Huxley's four-year-old son Noel. Some excerpts from TH Huxley's Letter To Kingsley: (visit the NTCOF website for the entire text)

"I have searched over the grounds of my belief, and if wife and child and name and fame were all to be lost to me one after the other as the penalty, still I will not lie."

"Understand that I have no a priori objections to the doctrine [of immortality]. No man who has to deal daily and hourly with nature can trouble himself about a priori difficulties. Give me such evidence as would justify me in believing anything else, and I will believe that. Why should I not? It is not half so wonderful as the conservation of force, or the indestructibility of matter. Whoso clearly appreciates all that is implied in the falling of a stone can have no difficulty about any doctrine simply on account of its marvelousness. But the longer I live, the more obvious it is to me that the most sacred act of a man's life is to say and to feel, 'I believe such and such to be true.' All the greatest rewards and all the heaviest penalties of existence cling about that act. The universe is one and the same throughout; and if the condition of my success in unraveling some little difficulty of anatomy or physiology is that I shall rigorously refuse to put faith in that which does not rest on sufficient evidence, I cannot believe that the great mysteries of existence will be laid open to me on other terms. It is no use to talk to me of analogies and probabilities. I know what I mean when I say I believe in the law of the inverse squares, and I will not rest my life and hopes upon weaker convictions. I dare not if I would."

"Surely it must be plain that an ingenious man could speculate without end on both sides, and find analogies for all his dreams. Nor does it help me to tell me that the aspirations of mankind - that my own highest aspirations even - lead me towards the doctrine of immortality. I doubt the fact, to begin with, but if it be so even, what is this but in grand words asking me to believe a thing because I like it?"

"Science has taught to me ... to be careful how I adopt a view which jumps with my preconceptions, and to require stronger evidence for such belief than for one to which I was previously hostile. My business is to teach my aspirations to conform themselves to fact, not to try and make facts harmonise with my aspirations."

"Sit down before fact as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever and to whatever abysses nature leads, or you shall learn nothing. I have only begun to learn content and peace of mind since I have resolved at all risks to do this."

"The more I know intimately of the lives of other men (to say nothing of my own), the more obvious it is to me that the wicked does not flourish nor is the righteous punished. But for this to be clear we must bear in mind what almost all forget, that the rewards of life are contingent upon obedience to the whole law - physical as well as moral - and that moral obedience will not atone for physical sin, or vice versa."

"Nature is juster than we. She takes into account what a man brings with him into the world, which human justice cannot do. If I, born a bloodthirsty and savage brute, inheriting these qualities from others, kill you, my fellow-men will very justly hang me, but I shall not be visited with the horrible remorse which would be my real punishment if, my nature being higher, I had done the same thing. The absolute justice of the system of things is as clear to me as any scientific fact. ... Not only, then, do I disbelieve in the need for compensation, but I believe that the seeking for rewards and punishments out of this life leads men to a ruinous ignorance of the fact that their inevitable rewards and punishments are here."



**RESCHEDULED!**

**The Faithless Companions**

will be performing at the new, 2nd location of the

Blue Armadillo Winery in Princeton, TX (322 Main Street in Princeton 75407)

on February 25th beginning about 8pm.

Princeton is located about 30 miles NE of Dallas between McKinney and Greenville on US Hwy 380

Intelligence is no human sideshow but an evolutionary main event. The power to foresee, to call upon the past in terms of the future, to evaluate, to imagine solutions, is a power flowing from old time springs. The human mind may be denied the policeman's privilege of arresting this instinct or that. It may sit as no more than a moderator in the eternal instinctual debate. But it is a moderator with unlimited investigative powers."

- Robert Ardrey

We are the product of 4.5 billion years of fortuitous, slow biological evolution. There is no reason to think that the evolutionary process has stopped. Man is a transitional animal. He is not the climax of creation."

- Carl Sagan

Biologically the species is the accumulation of the experiments of all its successful individuals since the beginning. - H.G. Wells

"Natural selection is the only workable explanation for the beautiful and compelling illusion of 'design' that pervades every living body and every organ. Knowledge of evolution may not be strictly useful in everyday commerce. You can live some sort of life and die without ever hearing the name of Darwin. But if, before you die, you want to understand why you lived in the first place, Darwinism is the one subject that you must study."

- Richard Dawkins

**YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS TO THE NTCOF ARE NEEDED, APPRECIATED, AND TAX-DEDUCTIBLE!!**

**COMING NEXT MONTH:**

**"RELIGIOUS WARS"**

**>>> March 4th, 2012 <<<**

**SHERATON GRAND DFW AIRPORT SE CORNER OF 114 AND ESTERS**

All NTCOF events can be found through our website calendar (yes, website has now been updated thanks to Sarah and Rusty Nejd!), or through our meetup page, from which you can RSVP, at: [www.meetup.com/church-of-freethought](http://www.meetup.com/church-of-freethought) - **JOIN THE NTCOF MEETUP GROUP !!!**

**Social Luncheon:** Today, immediately after our Service, join us for lunch and discussion at the Golden Corral Buffet and Grill in Grapevine, located just across from the Grapevine Mills Mall, at 2605 E. Grapevine Mills Circle, phone (972) 874-7900. To reach Golden Corral from the Sheraton, cross over the freeway and make a left onto John W. Carpenter Freeway (114) going west. Then take the first exit RIGHT onto International Parkway (121), then Grapevine Mills Parkway exit. Turn LEFT on Stars and Stripes Way, continuing on to E. Grapevine Mills Circle.

**Freethought Salon:** Get together to discuss today's service topic or other conundrums of interest to Freethinkers. Most Sundays, over breakfast, at the Hilton Vineyard in Grapevine; see the meetup site!

**Game Night:** The regular game night crew meets nearly every Friday night at the IHOP on 2310 Stemmons Trail (I-35), near Northwest Highway (Loop 12). Plan to arrive at about 7:30 PM, and stay late playing Risk, Rummikub, and other fun games!

**Secular Singles:** Freethinkers have met their life-partners with whom they have begun families through the Secular Singles group. Check the meetup site for the next date, time and location!

"The theory of evolution is an accepted fact for everyone but a fundamentalist minority, whose objections are based not on reasoning but on doctrinaire adherence to religious principles."

- James D. Watson



**DFWCOR**

Dallas-Fort Worth Coalition of Reason

The North Texas Church of Freethought  
The Fellowship of Unbelievers

TODAY'S MUSIC by Faithless Companions (Ed McGuire, Jay Purrington, Kevin and Cathy Smith, and Scott Williams of faithlesscompanions.com)

Web Redesigners Rusty and Sarah Nejd

Welcome Coordinator Mark Barnick

Videographer: John Gauthier

Minister: Dr. Tim Gorski

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