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The LSH YouTube attracts over 1,300 'hits'

David's clear & concise YouTube video about why the non-religious should tick 'No Religion' on their National Census 2011 forms - and the consequences of not doing so - has been a great success ... so far.

And with your help that success can continue.

If you tell everyone in your e-mail address book to watch it ... and ask them to tell everyone in their address books to watch it ... then they tell everyone in theirs - (*you get the idea*) then we increase the likelihood of this Census being [at least] a bit more representative of the true picture of religiosity in Britain today.

There will still be people who unthinkingly tick Christian because - they were christened in infancy - they were born into a Christian family - they think of themselves as culturally Christian - they always tick CoFE on every other form ... & so on: not realising the question is in fact asking which religion you actually practice.

Others will ignore the question (*because answering it is 'voluntary'*) Still more will refuse to participate in the Census at all and throw the form away ... These will not be counted as 'protest votes' ... they just won't be counted! So - go to **YouTube** - watch the video - if you like it tick 'Like' ... and pass it on!

..... See Page 6

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A Gram Day Out

The BHA's GRAM [Group Representatives Annual Meeting] can be a tremendous fillip for groups of all shapes and sizes.

It's more than just an opportunity to get together, meet new people and put faces to names you've only seen in print.

It's also about sharing ideas with other Humanist Group across England & Wales.

- Hearing from them what they do
- Passing on to them what we do
- Discovering what has worked and what hasn't

Added to which there are reports from Gower St and [always] an inspirational speaker.

It's almost impossible to come away from a GRAM not feeling enthused and motivated to do more - and that's just what Helen discovered when she represented **LSH** at the 2010 GRAM in Birmingham [27th Nov.]

And Helen will be passing on some of what she learned there - as well as reporting back on the result of Stage I. of the BHA's consultation paper 'Working Better Together'.

Great Ecclestone Village Centre. PR3 0YB
7.30pm Wednesday 15th February.

A Few Good 'Stokes-Quotes'

Fergus Stokes was the guest speaker at **LSH's** January meeting [these quotes are taken from the BBC Radio 4 programme 'Beyond Belief' - (*broadcast Mon 16th Aug 2010*) - which was the subject of the **LSH** meeting on 19th Jan.*]

"... In a grown up society where people have learned that the prospect of heaven is a myth, and the church doesn't have power to condemn people to hell, then the idea of continuing to derive morality from religious codes is really very childish."

"... This idea of Alan's from a kind of meaning point of view - that we have to wait until somebody's dead for their life to amount to anything is a moral monstrosity! The idea that middle class people have a meaningful life and somehow the starving in Africa need the promise of heaven to offer any meaning to their squalid existence, I think is morally monstrous!"

"... We've got enough challenges in a secular life [and thank goodness people have not so much 'lost their faith' but found their 'freedom of ideas'] ... without adding mythical, pre-scientific, fairy-tale challenges into it Certainly, in my experience, since getting rid of those ideas I have been profoundly and permanently happier"

*You are still able to listen again to the programme by following the link in our January 2011 Newsletter.

Christians being forced into the closet

By Rev Kevin Logan - Lancashire Telegraph columnist ...
5:58pm Friday 28th January 2011

If you're a Christian, forget about using your home as a B&B for the Lancashire tourist trade. A court ruling last week - plus a new case this week - threaten only legal heartache and hefty bills for damages.

You can also rule yourself out of marriage counselling after a Christian Relate therapist was sacked ... and that rather pleasant job of marrying people in a registry office is also not for you, following the dismissal of a Christian registrar.

Hoping to adopt? Perhaps not ... Society is crying out for carers but not, it seems, Christians as the law closes down their adoption agencies.

The serial banning of Christians from public life, job by job, is due to equality laws favouring the beliefs of homosexuals rather than those of Christians.

Gay couple Martyn Hall and Steven Preddy could easily have chosen another hotel instead of demanding a double bed in a family B&B serving for a generation "married couples only".

So, too, could another gay couple suing Christian guesthouse owners this week.

Relate could have offered a gay couple another counsellor, just as the registry office could have provided another registrar.

Many secular adoption agencies offer children to all forms of partnerships, but that's not enough for the gay lobby. It appears it must seek and destroy any who discriminate against them. Only its beliefs must prevail.

Now, Christians are discriminated against and forced into their private closets.

Do we really want Christians and their values squeezed out of British public life?

Will there be any Christians left in the public arena if we don't do something sensible, and soon?

Go to Page 4 to read [LSH's](#) reply to Lancashire Telegraph

Unashamedly Stolen From
www.agoodlifewithoutreligion.com

Did You Know ...

Since The Beginning Of Recorded History Around 6,000 Years Ago, Human Beings Have Worshipped Over 3,700 Different Supernatural Beings Or Gods?



From
The
Committee
Room

The First Committee Meeting of 2011 took place at Knott End on Saturday 8th January.

It was confirmed that future Committee Meetings would be held at 10.30am on the first Saturday of each 3rd calendar month (making the next meeting Sat 2nd April) and for the foreseeable future the venue will be the Committee Room at Gt Eccleston Village Centre.

The meeting considered the BHA's consultation paper & questionnaire '**Working Better Together**' and decided this would be circulated to every **LSH** member to consider the arguments and return the completed questionnaire to Ian [Chair] to then be collated [by Helen C-W] in order that a response in the form of a group consensus could be returned to the BHA.

Consequently – regarding the question of engaging a 'Facilitator' - discussed at our AGM [*to better identify specific focus of the group*] – it was thought this BHA Consultation process may go some way to signalling what those directions may be and we should therefore consider these **LSH** members responses before committing ourselves to the next step along the road of defining specific objectives.

There was also some discussion about Phase II of our 'Award Winning' web-site and some exchanges of ideas about fundraising – (that necessary evil without which no group could function).

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Any & all fully 'paid up' members of Lancashire Secular Humanists are eligible to participate in Committee Meetings - irrespective of any office they do or do not hold within the group.

Items for the agenda to be submitted by Saturday 27th March to be included in the next meeting.

What You Think of Us

These are just some of the comments added to the BHA's 'Working Better Together' Consultation Paper & Questionnaire:

"I'm proud to be a member of the BHA which does a great job with such a small staff team."

"I really enjoy being a member of the local group LSH."

"I spend loads of time in meetings as part of my paid work and don't normally volunteer to attend any more in my spare time, BUT I never miss the LSH if I can help it."

You **KNOW** they're all SCAMS

Southeast Regional Atheist Meet

January 29-30

atheists.org/huntsville



American Atheists • Telling the Truth since 1963

Subtly and understatement is clearly not 'American Atheists' strongest suite if their billboards are anything to go by.

And this one announcing a forthcoming regional atheists meeting in Huntsville, Alabama [*arguably the buckle on the Bible Belt*] was clearly intended to leave no-one in any doubt about where they stood.

Blair Scott, communications director for American Atheists, explained:

Our target is not the Christians, but all the atheists & agnostics still in the closet who're still pretending, still playing the game, still putting up a facade.

And just to be sure nobody was still confused Bill went on to assert exactly where AA stand:

*Let's face it: religion tells a good story. All you need to do is follow the preacher and good things will happen. You will never really die, and due to your involvement in (*insert name of religion here*) you will benefit for eternity. Yes, it pleases the invisible man-in-the-sky that you follow your preacher. Just ask your preacher and he will tell you."*

To discover what else 'American Atheists' are up to why not visit their site <http://www.atheists.org/>

A Friend In Need

LSH Members & 'Friends of **LSH**' will remember meeting Maryam Namazie & Goranka Gudelj when they addressed our 'One Law For All' event - *Wed. 15th July 09* - Well now The Council of Ex-Muslims of Britain (CEMB) needs our support!

Please read this '**Emergency Call**' from Maryam - then go to page 4 to see how you can donate:

.....

An ex-Muslim from Birmingham writes:

"I've discarded Islam and I want to be with others like me in the effort to break the taboo associated with leaving Islam. This organisation is significant because it represents one of the most difficult things I must deal with in my life, and is the only effort in the UK to tackle the hardships of those in much worse situations than I."

Another ex-Muslim woman from the UK writes:

"After 20 years of Islam, I finally gave up the prison for my freedom... It has been a long and painful journey, with many more obstacles ahead, but I am confident that things can only get better for the long-term. Well done CEMB for creating this unified voice for ex-Muslims!"

And here's one from Pakistan:

"I was born and raised in a Muslim family and later studied medicine, two polarizing aspects, which led me to the conclusion that there is no god... Living in a place like Pakistan, where there's zero tolerance for freedom of thought and choice, I find this Council a big step forward in the face of religious conservatism, a place where people like myself can find acceptance. I reject the religious hypocrisy that surrounds me and thank you all for accepting a free mind."

Since its establishment in 2007, the Council of Ex-Muslims of Britain (CEMB) has become the refuge for people to come to if they have left Islam and religion. It is a hugely important sanctuary for women and men who face threats, intimidation and/or isolation for taking this step.

And, since our inception, we've always been here to help – whether it is finding a safe house and giving support or defending the right to asylum for 'apostates' fleeing Sharia law.

In the past year, we've helped hundreds of people; held an important conference on Apostasy and Sharia Law; had speaking engagements across the country & developed a number of crucial resources including Guidelines for Ex-Muslims and Frontline practitioners and an information document on Apostasy and Asylum in the UK.

But all this work needs money and the CEMB is in the worst financial situation since its inception. It is incredibly hard to get support for our work from funders, even some who might be perceived as allies ... The media and government, too, continue to avoid real discussion on the issues at hand. That's why we have to depend on you for your help in getting the word out, supporting ex-Muslims and challenging Islamism and Sharia law, which punishes 'apostates' with the death penalty.

We hope you can take time out to send us a donation - Any amount, whatever you can give, will truly help ... We are looking for people to give just £3 a month (more, if possible), so that we can begin to have an income that we can rely on.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Warmest wishes - Maryam

[Maryam Namazie – Spokesperson] ... Go To Pg 4 ↓

As Chair of Lancashire Secular Humanist can I throw my support behind Rev Kevin Logan’s opening salvo in his article ‘Christians are being forced into the closet?’ [L.T. Fri 28th Jan].

I couldn’t agree more: anybody whose religious belief so limits their ability to integrate with the rest of society that it compels them to ignore the law of the land, certainly shouldn’t be opening a B&B in Lancashire; or anywhere else in the UK for that matter.

Neither should they be considering a career as a registrar; or in marriage counselling, where they could conceivably encounter people whose lifestyle is so incompatible with their own narrow view of right & wrong it restricts their ability to provide those services.

I don’t say such people should [necessarily] be confined to a closet but I do say they should not be purporting to offer a service accessible to everybody under a deluded misapprehension that they’ll then be allowed to refuse it to ‘some’ on religious grounds.

Don’t misunderstand me.

I’m very happy that we live in a country where people are free to follow whatever religious practices their little hearts’ desire.

I’m delighted they’re permitted to prevent whomever they want from entering the privacy of their own home: but if they put a B&B / Guest House sign outside that home they ‘must’ know that every member of the public has a right to access the services they are offering.

[- I’d have thought, as Christians, they would appreciate the concept of ‘a bed for the night!’]

Similarly, such people certainly should not be compelled to work in marriage guidance or as a registrar: but having freely made such a career choice for themselves they can’t then demand the right to say ‘but I refuse to counsel you or marry you’.

For goodness sake grow up.

Laws forbidding prejudice don’t discriminate against people who are prejudiced – they prevent discrimination against people who are not!

Come on Kevin: being gay isn’t a belief – it isn’t a choice.

It may be hard for you to swallow but gay people are a fact of life and as much a part of our society as you and I.

Try to look on the bright side – you could always start searching for a gay couple running a B&B and refusing accommodation to narrow minded, blinkered, homophobic, religious bigots – then you can have your day in court!

WHERE WOULD WE BE WITHOUT GOD?



[A Friend In Need](#)

To donate to the crucial work of the Council of Ex-Muslims of Britain, please either send a cheque, made payable to CEMB, to:

BM Box 1919, London WC1N 3XX, UK
or pay via World Pay by visiting our website.

We desperately need regular support that we can rely on and are asking for supporters to commit to giving at least £3 a month via direct debit . . .

You can find out details here:

<http://ex-muslim.org.uk/indexDonate.html>

There’ll also find out about our recent activities.

For further information contact:

Maryam Namazie
Spokesperson - CEMB
BM Box 1919
London WC1N 3XX, UK
Tel: +44 (0) 7719166731

exmuslimcouncil@gmail.com

www.ex-muslim.org.uk

Greater Manchester Humanist Group. Humanism – Any Questions?

From 7pm; Tuesday 15th February 2011

Friends Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester, M2 5NS (behind the Central Library).

Admission free [a collection will be taken in support of The Uganda Humanist Schools Trust]

LSH Chairman Ian Abbott will be a panel member.

Untangling the Web: 2. Forums

By Helen Cullen-Williams

A forum is an online area where you can have discussions with other people. They are usually about a particular topic, so anyone interested in that topic can debate and discuss with others who share their interest. Forums can be: public – anyone can join and comment; or private – your membership has to be approved before you're allowed to join.

Lancashire Secular Humanist's Forum

Our Forum is provided by Think Humanism. This is an international, public forum where you can debate on humanist issues with users worldwide. However, we have our own private area within Think Humanism. Only **LSH** members are allowed to access it.

We're keen for members to make more use of the **LSH** Forum.

It's proved successful for discussions on group decisions – such as the design of our new logo, content on the new website, and strategy for local campaigns.

But only a handful of members are using it, so only those members are making their voice heard on these decisions.

5 How to join the **LSH** Forum

Go to our website www.lancshumanism.org.uk and click on the "Forum" link at the bottom right hand side - There are two stages to registering.

Firstly, register with Think Humanism – click "Register" shown in the picture below circled in red and labelled "1".

Then follow the onscreen instructions. When you've finished the registration procedure, click on "send us your username" labelled "2" in the picture below.

You will receive an email from Peter when your access to the forum has been confirmed.

Using the **LSH** Forum

Whenever you want to use the **LSH** Forum go to www.lancshumanism.org.uk and click on the "Forum" link.

Complete the details and click "Login" – circled red and labelled "3" in the picture below.

Hey presto, you can now join in all the **LSH** discussions!

For further help, read the topic within the forum called "Getting the best out of the **LSH** Forum". Go on, give it a go! . . . You've got nothing to lose, and you might just find a whole new exciting world of debate and discussion, where you can make your voice heard.

The screenshot shows the Lancashire Secular Humanists website. At the top left is the logo for Lancashire Secular Humanists. A navigation bar contains links for Home, About, News, Events, Campaigns, Ceremonies, Join/Donate, and Contact. Below the navigation bar, a message states: "This is a private forum for LSH members, hosted by Think Humanism. If you are a LSH member, register with Think Humanism (click "Register" beneath the Think Humanism logo). Then **send us your username** to be given access to the LSH area." The word "send us your username" is circled in red and labeled with a red "2". Below this is the Think Humanism logo and a description: "An independent forum for those interested in humanism, secularism and freethought. If you have any enquiries, please contact Admin." A "Register" button is circled in red and labeled with a red "1". To the right of the "Register" button are links for "FAQ", "Search", and "Login". Below the "Register" button, there are links for "View unanswered posts" and "View active topics". A breadcrumb trail shows "Board index > Special Interest > Lancashire Secular Humanists". The current date and time are shown as "It is currently February 2nd, 2011, 5:17 pm". Below the breadcrumb trail is the heading "Lancashire Secular Humanists". There is a "Message" button and a message box containing the text: "You do not have the required permissions to read topics within this forum." Below this is a "Login" button and a login form with fields for "Username:" and "Password:", a checkbox for "Log me on automatically each visit", and a "Login" button. The entire login form area is circled in red and labeled with a red "3".

National Census Day - 27th March 2011

Just over one Months Left To Impress On Family & Friends This Important

**IF YOU'RE
NOT
RELIGIOUS
FOR GOD'S
SAKE SAY
SO**

It is very important that you answer the question on religion!

It is important that the Census generates accurate figures.

It is used to legitimise resource allocation and policy . . .

The more people who tick the

'*No Religion*' box, the less inaccurate 'evidence' there is that government should listen to religious groups and leaders over and above other groups.

➤ **There** will be no negative repercussions on you personally if you do . . . The Census isn't interested in you personally - it is used to find general themes in the population. Although it is not anonymous, personal data will not be traced back to you in any analysis so there should be very limited issues about privacy.

➤ **You** will be affected by negative use of the data. Social policy, services and government action affects everyone.

➤ **This** may be the last Census ever held - if we get inaccurate data we may be stuck with it forever!

➤ **An** increased percentage of non-religious people will mean an increased voice for your issues as a non-religious person in society, particularly in equality work and education.

More information is available on the BHA campaign is available here
<http://census-campaign.org.uk>

Atheist, Humanist & Secularist Young People in Britain Today.

Dr Rebecca Catto & Dr Janet Eccles at Lancaster University are keen to hear from young people aged between 16 – 25 who are members of BHA / NSS or any similar group or organisation.

They're engaged on a research project to identify the views & attitudes of non-religious young people.

There is a great deal of research about young people who are 'religious' but almost nothing concerning the very many 'non-religious' ones.

To learn more or to participate in their research (which simply entails agreeing to Dr Janet Eccles travelling to meet and speak with you) then please contact either:

janet.b.eccles@btinternet.com [07753 986582]

or r.catto@lancaster.ac.uk [01524 510835]

LSH on BBC

Be sure to tune in to BBC Radio Lancashire's Sunday Morning Programme on Sunday 6th Feb. Presenter Joe Wilson will be chatting to LSH Chair - Ian Abbott; via a telephone link (around 08.20).

Joe wants to know [precisely] what our objections to the National Census 'religion' question are.

**IF YOU'RE NOT RELIGIOUS
FOR GOD'S SAKE
TUNE IN**

What Our Neighbours Friends Are Up To

Cumbria Humanists e-mail - oldcodger2@btinternet.com
Sadly Cumbria Humanists is currently disbanded enquiries can be directed to George Weston at the above e-mail address.

Isle of Man Freethinkers www.iomfreethinkers.co.uk

2.30 Sun 13 Feb - Morton Hall in Onchan
'Celebrating Darwin Day' - Talk by Fiona Gell from DEFA.

Liverpool Humanists <http://livehum.org>

No details posted yet - for update see website

Greater Manchester Humanists <http://gmh.humanist.org.uk>

7pm Wed 9 Feb: Friends Meeting House, Mount St, M2 5N
'Assisted Suicide' - Talk by Richard Scorer.
Former Board Member of Dignity in Dying.

South Cheshire And North Staffs Humanists
www.humanists.org.uk

Meetings start at 7.30pm - Details of January's meeting not yet posted - see website for further info.

Humanist Society of West Yorkshire
www.wyhumanists.org.uk

7pm Thus 10 Feb: Swathmore 3-7 Woodhouse Sq. Leeds,
'The Secret Life of Chaos' -
DVD showing of a Channel 4 programme

Amnesty Preston www.preston.amnesty.org.uk

7.30pm Mon 10 Jan: St Augustines Parish House,
St Augustines Place. Preston

Lytham St Annes & Blackpool Amnesty
www.amnesty.org.uk/lytham

7.30pm Mon 3 Jan: Church Rd Centre Methodist Church;
St Annes. FY8 5PX

LSH Meetings - The Small Print

Lancashire Secular Humanists is a group for free-thinking individuals living lives informed by **Logic, Science & Humanity**

All **LSH** meetings are 'open' meetings. Anyone is invited to join in our discussions regardless of whether they are humanist – secularist – religious - undecided - or [just] interested.

We are people who enjoy participating in intelligent discourse between ourselves and with others about wide ranging subjects on the understanding that the only common denominator will be that nobody resorts to dogma in defence of a contention.

Being freethinkers there are many things we secular humanists will not agree on between ourselves, but there are matters on which we do take a firm and unanimous stand ...

We do not condone discrimination of any sort - nor do we hate religious people ... Such views are entirely contrary to any humanist philosophy and we reserve the right to exclude any person promoting them!

Don't Forget - If you have trouble parking at Great Eccleston for our meetings you can use The Farmers Arms Car Park

* With apologies - the **hyperlinks** are for those reading this 'on-line' *