

# Manitoba Humanist



**HAAM presents:**  
**An Evening with Niigaan Sinclair**

**Saturday October 17<sup>th</sup>**

**Canad Inns Polo Park, 1405 St Matthews Ave, 5:30 PM**

We are thrilled to announce that the Guest Speaker at our next meeting will be **Niigaanwewidean (Niigaan) Sinclair**. Niigaan is Anishinaabe (St. Peter's/Little Peguis) and an Assistant Professor at the University of Manitoba. He is a regular commentator on Indigenous Issues on CTV, CBC, and APTN, and his written work can be found in the pages of *The Exile Edition of Native Canadian Fiction and Drama*, newspapers like *The Guardian*, and online with *CBC Books: Canada Writes*. Niigaan is the co-editor of the award-winning *Manitowapow: Aboriginal Writings from the Land of Water* and *Centering Anishinaabeg Studies: Understanding the World Through Stories*, and the Editorial Director of *The Debwe Series* with Portage and Main Press. He obtained his BA in Education at the University of Winnipeg, before completing an MA in Native and African-American literatures at the University of Oklahoma, and a PhD in First Nations and American Literatures from the University of British Columbia.

**We look forward to hearing Niigaan speak about the contemporary  
ABORIGINAL ISSUES  
that concern all of us as Humanists and Canadians.  
Bring your questions!**

Our social time is from 5:30 to 6:30. Come for dinner, drinks, or just to visit. The meeting follows at 6:30 and then the presentation from 7:00 to 8:00. Late-comers and drop-ins are welcome, so if you can't make it for the start or stay till the end, don't worry about it. And you can still eat during the meeting if you're late - the buffet is open till 8:00.

Published by and  
for the Humanists,  
Atheists, and  
Agnostics of  
Manitoba



**HAAM**

[www.mbhumanistsatheists.ca](http://www.mbhumanistsatheists.ca)

**Our October charity is**

**"The  
Bannock  
Lady"  
(Althea  
Guiboche)  
(see page 2)**



I feed those people  
who are wandering around  
the cold, the hungry  
the homeless sitting on the ground  
the down on their luck  
the ones asking for a buck  
the ones who need someone  
to show them some love  
to show that they care  
these are someone's loved ones too  
everyone has a story  
everyone has a past  
whether good or bad  
I don't look at that  
it serves as a reminder  
we are all connected  
we all belong  
agimaawag akina  
everyone counts.

## COMING UP!

If you're new to HAAM, welcome! Our regular monthly meetings are always open to the public, but *our other events are intended for paid members only*. If you would like to check us out, you are welcome to attend one or two events before becoming a member. After that, if you wish to continue to participate, we ask that you support the group by joining. Annual fees are affordable and assist with community outreach as well as our own activities. Memberships are available at the door.

Contact and membership info is on page 6. All events are subject to change, and some details may be TBA. Past newsletters are archived on the HAAM website. Watch future newsletters, our website, Facebook page, or join us on Meetup for more information.



### Saturday November 14<sup>th</sup>, Humanism: A Superior World View, Canad Inns Polo Park, 5:30 PM

Yes, the topic of our November meeting does sound a little pompous, but if we're honest with ourselves, if we didn't think it was a superior world view, Humanists would move on to something better. Right?

Please join us as we discuss humanism, its history, its principles, and its relationship to atheism. How does it measure up, compared to other world views? Discover why, as we go forward as a species, it is the best world view humanity has come up with so far.



For some long-time humanists, this may be a meeting to re-evaluate what they believe and why they believe it. For others it will be an introduction to a humanist world view they may have held all their lives, but simply didn't know it. Bring your questions! There will be plenty of time for Q & A after the presentation.

**Saturday December 12<sup>th</sup>, Winter Solstice party**, Belgian Club, 407 Provencher Blvd, 6:00 PM (*Note date and time*) \$10 per person plus potluck item. Kids under 12 free. More details to follow.

## CHARITY OF THE MONTH

Donations made in October will go to "**The Bannock Lady**". Her name is **Althea Guiboche**, a stay-at-home single parent who comes from the same poverty as those who she speaks for. Her charity, Got Bannock?, is

a grassroots cause to feed the hungry, the homeless, the less fortunate on the cold streets of Winnipeg.

Althea and her group meet in the morning every couple of weeks to



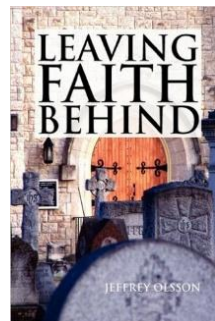
bake bannock. Then they serve it on the street, along with other foods, at Dufferin and Main (next to Neechi Commons) in the afternoon. Their next cooking date is October 18, so food donated at our meeting will be served the next day.

We'll be accepting fresh fruit, water bottles, juice, granola bars, cheese, bread, and luncheon meats. Flour and lard are needed for making the bannock, and money is also welcomed for the purchase of any of the above ingredients and supplies. Clothing donations will also be accepted, and with winter coming, there's a special appeal for warm socks.

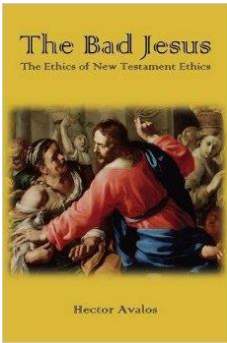
The Got Bannock? folks are a non-profit group but are not yet registered as a charity, so if you'd like a tax receipt for your financial donation, please give the money to HAAM. We'll issue you the receipt and then forward the donation to Got Bannock?.

<https://www.facebook.com/GotBannock>  
<http://gotbannock.ca/>

## ON THE BOOKSHELF



As we wrap up River City Reasonfest, we have two more books in our library to feature this month. The first is by our very own **Jeff Olsson**, a past president of HAAM, who acted as the MC. Even if you did not attend Reasonfest, you may have met Jeff at a meeting. Did you know that he is a former priest? After leaving the church, he wrote **Leaving Faith Behind**, articulating his thoughts on all the factors that combined to propel him to shed his faith. These include social and contemporary issues like residential schools and the church's treatment of the LGBT community, as well as issues of morality and dogma. It's a fascinating read, made more interesting because the author lives right here and we know him. It's not long – only 128 pages. Anyone who has left their own faith will surely relate to at least some of Jeff's thoughts.



Speaker **Hector Avalos** has a brand new book called **The Bad Jesus: The Ethics of New Testament Ethics**. He brought a few copies with him, and we retained one for our library. Spoiler alert: His wife told us that Hector's conclusion was that NT ethics are even worse than Old Testament ethics – but why not read the book

and discover all the gory details for yourself?

Contact HAAM if you would like to borrow a library book. *Note that borrowing privileges are now restricted to paid HAAM members only.*

## CFI ANNOUNCES NEW MANITOBA BRANCH

HAAM welcomes **The Center For Inquiry** to Manitoba.

\* So what is CFI?

CFI Canada is one of Canada's fastest growing communities for humanists, skeptics and freethinkers. CFIC



promotes reason, science, secularism and freedom of inquiry in every human endeavor. They have local branches all across Canada, except Manitoba - till now.

\* Why welcome them? Aren't they just a competing group?

No, not at all. Although our mission statements overlap somewhat, our organizations' goals differ. They do complement each other quite nicely, however. As a local group, HAAM focuses on local people and issues. With the addition of Manitoba, and soon Newfoundland, CFI Canada becomes a truly national organization. HAAM looks forward to working together with CFI on national and international concerns.

\* Why support a national organization?

Because organizations such as CFI Canada and Humanist Canada can do what we can't. They support and

advocate for secular causes and values across the country and internationally. Already CFIC, along with Humanist Canada, has met with government ministers to advocate ending

Canada's ridiculous blasphemy law. They've also met with Canada's Office of Religious Freedom to try to persuade the government to do something about the plight of atheist and humanist bloggers who are being jailed or killed in many countries around the world simply for what they think. These concerns, and many others, are issues that we all care about.



Two of our speakers at Reasonfest represented these organizations – Eric Adriaans from CFI and Lloyd Hawkeye Robertson from Humanist Canada. In addition to your HAAM membership, we hope you will support our national organizations. Because the more voices we have, the louder we are.

Welcome CFI! We look forward to working with you. The new CFI Manitoba website can be found here: <http://centreforinquiry.ca/cfi-manitoba/>

## ON THE WEB

New content is gradually being added to our website, so if you haven't looked lately, head over there now!



Our **Library** is now complete. Please take advantage of it! Browse the collection (alphabetically by title) using the Book Table page, or search for a particular author or subject via the main Library page. Just click the

'Request Book' link to have a book brought to our next meeting or event, or to arrange an alternate pick-up drop-off. (*Paid members only.*)

## THE NIQAB – YES OR NO?

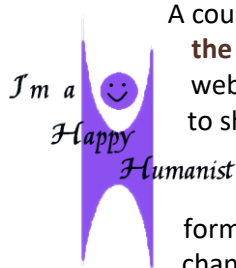
Most of us probably didn't know exactly what a niqab was until recently, when all of a sudden it's in the news every day. Many people are uncomfortable with women who wear it, because it pits competing human rights issues (freedom of religious expression vs concerns about the oppression of women) against each other. Almost everyone has an opinion, and HAAM members are no different. **Gloria Froese**, however, has a unique perspective that can only be truly understood and appreciated by the minority of people who have actually lived in a culture that enforces modesty and puritanical dress codes for women. Gloria spent her teen years in a fundamentalist, conservative Christian cult (here in Manitoba), where she was required to follow strict and repressive rules. She recently wrote about how her experiences enable her to understand the humiliation and panic that Muslim women who wear the niqab must feel at the threat of being exposed in front of strange men.



If you have not made up your mind about this issue – or even if you have – take a look at Gloria's insightful article. It's too long for this newsletter; you will find it on our website.

<http://mbhumanistsatheists.ca/the-niqab-yes-or-no/>

## SHARE YOUR STORY!



A couple of years ago, we added a “**Meet the Humanist**” page to the HAAM website. It gives our members a chance to share their personal stories, which is often cathartic, especially for those who have left restrictive forms of religion. It gives readers a chance to realize that they are not alone,

as they are likely to find some shared experiences with others who have posted their stories. And finally, it demonstrates to the public that non-believers really are just ordinary people, like everyone else.

It's time to update that page by adding some new faces and stories. We all have interesting histories that might inspire others or help them to realize that they are part of a growing community. It doesn't matter if you're 'out' as a non-believer; *you can share your story using a pseudonym, alter the details, and even use a photo of your favorite cartoon character to hide your identity if you wish.* Please send your submissions to HAAM (if you're not 'out', only our exec will know who you are), and we'll add your profile to the page.

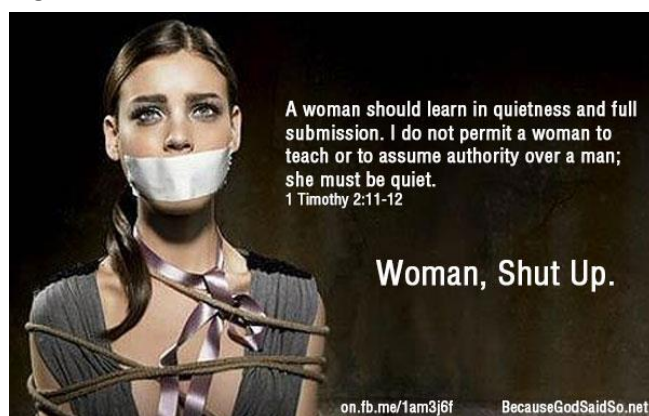


We're nearing the home stretch! In October we will cover the remainder of the **Epistles**. Of the 13 traditionally attributed to

Paul, only 7 are now believed to have been actually written by Paul: **Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon**. Four more (**Ephesians, 1 & 2 Timothy, and Titus**) are viewed by most scholars as pseudepigraphical (falsely attributed works, texts whose claimed author is represented by a separate author, or a work whose real author attributed it to a figure of the past). Authorship of the remaining two Pauline letters (**2 Thessalonians and Colossians**) is disputed, with no agreement among scholars.

We start with Galatians, written around 55 CE and mainly concerned with the application of Mosaic Law to Gentile Christians. Next is Ephesians, written in Paul's name by a later author. It deals with maintaining unity and keeping the church pure and holy. Then Philippians, written sometime between 52 and 62. (Estimates of the dates of most of these epistles vary widely.) Colossians was supposedly written in the mid 50's while Paul was in prison, but could have been written as late as 80 by another author. 1 Thessalonians, around 51 CE, was probably the first book of NT. Its content is mostly

personal except for the last two chapters. 2 Thessalonians cannot be dated because of disputed authorship. If Paul wrote it, then it belongs in the early 50's; otherwise, it's the work of someone else much later. 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and sometimes Philemon, are referred to as the Pastoral Epistles, because they are addressed to pastors of churches and discuss issues of Christian living, doctrine, and leadership. The letters to Timothy cannot be dated; either Paul wrote them between 62-67 CE, or (more likely) another author wrote them in the late first to mid-2nd century. They were not necessarily even written by the same author. Titus, likely written in the late first or early second century, is similar in style to 1 Timothy. Philemon, supposedly written around 52-54 CE, concerns forgiveness and reconciliation.



The last 8 books are referred to as 'General Epistles', because they were written for general audiences rather than specific churches or congregations. Hebrews (originally attributed to Paul but long known to have been written by an unknown author) encouraged Christians, in polished and eloquent Greek, to persevere in the face of persecution. No one knows when James was written or who by whom; it may not even actually be a letter, but an example of Wisdom Literature. The author of the two letters of Peter claimed to be Peter the apostle (Saint Peter), but this has long been debunked. The 3 letters of John are traditionally attributed to John the Evangelist (the apostle), who also supposedly wrote the Gospel of John, and Revelation (but of course everything is disputed). And finally, Jude; not much is known about exactly who he was.

### Readings for the week of:

**Oct 4:** Galatians 1-3; 4-6; Ephesians 1-3; 4-6; Philippians  
**Oct 11:** Colossians; 1 Thessalonians; 2 Thess; 1 Timothy; 2 Tim  
**Oct 18:** Titus, Philemon; Hebrews 1-6; 7-10; 11-13; James  
**Oct 25:** 1 Peter; 2 Peter; 1 John; 2 John, 3 John, Jude; Revelation 1-3

Please share your comments or questions on our Atheist Bible Study Facebook group page  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/234461256751696/>

## REASONFEST WRAP-UP

After months of planning, River City Reasonfest was a great success! It came and went incredibly fast, and (almost) everything ran smoothly, which was amazing for our first attempt at something of this magnitude!

A huge thanks to the organizing committee who worked countless hours to make it all come together: Todd De Ryck, Karen Donald, Cheri Frazer, Helen Friesen, Donna Harris, and Sherry Marginet. Also thanks to all our sponsors, volunteers, and contributors: Luc and Tammy Blanchette, Rob (Athe) Chamberlain, Rob Daly, David Donald, Dying With Dignity, Diana Goods, Christian Kelly (Canad Inns), McNally Robinson Booksellers, Pat Morrow, Paul Morrow, Ken Mahon, Heather Murray (Murray Web Works), Jeff Olsson, and others who need to remain anonymous. And lastly, to our speakers who took time out of their busy schedules, and everyone who attended!

After two memorable days and 9 great speeches, we learned a lot! There was plenty of food for thought, as well as information, resources, and suggestions for

future activities, organizations, or topics that HAAM could consider. We also gained some great advice that we can use to benefit and grow our group. We appreciate the input of everyone who completed the evaluation forms at the end, and are extremely happy that we received mostly positive responses. Even critical feedback is valuable, and best of all, we got lots of super ideas for the future.

Some people have already asked if there will be a Reasonfest 2. Not next year – events like this require a tremendous amount of planning and effort, and we need some time to reflect before deciding to do this again. But one thing is for sure - the more involved members we have, the more challenges we can take on.

**Our Mistake:** Arthur Schafer's topic at Reasonfest was different from what was published in the schedule. To clarify, that error was ours, not Professor Schafer's. There was a misunderstanding and the schedule had the wrong information. Our sincere apologies for any inconvenience.

Here are a few photos from the conference.



Above: Hector Avalos discusses religion and violence

Below: The Harmonizing Humanists sing about why bees don't go to heaven



Below: Pat Morrow and Tracie Harris



At the podium –  
Above: Greta Christina  
Below: Stephanie Zvan



Left: Todd De Ryck and Luc Blanchette at the registration table

Right: Dinner with the organizers and speakers Saturday evening. Scott Carnegie, Lloyd Robertson, and Sherry Marginet



Left: Eric Adriaans, PZ Myers, and Donna Harris at dinner

Below: MC Jeff Olsson addresses the crowd



## HAAM's Executive:

President Donna Harris  
Vice President Pat Morrow  
Treasurer Helen Friesen  
Secretary Cheri Frazer

## Members at Large:

Todd De Ryck  
Norm Goertzen  
Tony Governo  
Dorothy Stephens – Newsletter



Contact us at:

<http://mbhumanistsatheists.ca/contact-us/>

[mbhumanistsatheists@gmail.com](mailto:mbhumanistsatheists@gmail.com)

or Phone 204-612-0601



Humanists, Atheists, and  
Agnostics of Manitoba



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Agnostics of Manitoba



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Yes, I would like to **BECOME A MEMBER** of  
Humanists, Atheists & Agnostics of Manitoba

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Household Memberships: Please give the names  
of all additional Humanists in your household 18  
years or over:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

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New Member       Renewal

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 Household Membership\*      \$50.00  
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### Special Offer for New Members!

If you are a NEW member joining for the FIRST  
TIME, and you join after September 1st, your  
membership fee will include membership for the  
2016 calendar year.

**DONATION** (Tax receipts will be issued for  
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I would like to make a donation to HA<sup>2</sup>M of:

- \$10     \$20     \$30     \$50     \$100  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please DO NOT send cash in the mail. Make  
cheque payable to: **Humanist Association of  
Manitoba** and mail to: Humanist Association of  
Manitoba, 112 - 230 Barkman Avenue, Steinbach,  
MB R5G 0Y5.

Memberships are also available by credit card on  
our website, or by cash or cheque at any HA<sup>2</sup>M  
meeting or HA<sup>2</sup>M event.