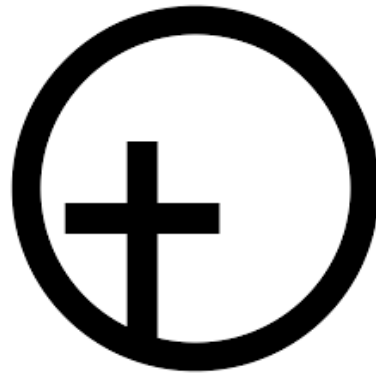


PROLOGUE HISTORIES

Contributions to the formation
of the Unitarian Universalist movement



Elof Axel Carlson

Designated historian,

Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington, Indiana

2016

PROLOGUE HISTORIES

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This book is dedicated to those dissident individuals who favored reason over revelation, scholarship over belief, science over the supernatural, virtue over obedience, caring over piety, activism over passivity, and appreciation of diversity over conformity. Out of them came the Unitarian Universalist movement and the effort to make the world a better place for each generation.

Preface

I expressed an interest to be appointed Designated Historian of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington, Indiana (UUCB). After an interview with Reverend Mary Ann Macklin, I was appointed in 2012. I had proposed a short article (about 250 words) in each issue of the newsletter, called the *Prologue*, sent twice a month to the members. These *Prologue* pieces are presented in this volume. I used the Fuchs Library in the UUCB church building on Fee Lane in Bloomington to prepare a book on the history of our church and in so doing learned a lot about the origins of the UU movement. I took notes for the *Prologue* pieces from the books and articles I read to prepare that book and used these for the *Prologue* pieces. I also used the *Dictionary of UU Biography* which contains longer essays (about 1000-2000 words). Carol Marks, the Church Administrator, helped me locate and insert pictures of these UU contributors and most of them I now get from Wikipedia articles on the web.

My desire was not a short encyclopedia type article but a way to convey a contribution and humanize the person who contributed to our history. We often omit from our heroes the contradictions in personality, the circumstances in which they lived, and the unusual events that shaped their careers. It is a challenge to do this in 200 - 250 words, but that is why I hope these can be shared with a wider audience. I much appreciated the feedback from my fellow UUs.

The *Prologue* histories are organized chronologically to give a sense of the changes and new ideas that took place through the evolution of liberal religion from antiquity to the present.

Elof Axel Carlson

Bloomington, Indiana

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INTRODUCTION

There are several ways to learn history. The most conventional is through a book with chapters, each on a theme, person, or event. In such books the key figures are mentioned by name, usually Kings, Presidents, Dictators, Generals, and cultural icons. Histories of any significant topic involve dozens if not hundreds of people who have contributed to its origins and development. One cannot list, or even know, all the persons involved in a complex project. A skyscraper like the Empire State Building in Manhattan would require lists of numerous engineers, architects, materials scientists, chemists, physicists, mathematicians, city planners, investors, bankers, plumbers, limestone cutters, construction workers, electricians, truckers, crane designers and operators, and hundreds of other specialists, each adding those skills to the intricate details of an enormous building.

In this book we include a sample of people who were motivated to worship in non-traditional ways. It is a religion that grew out of the Middle East in antiquity and which was eclipsed by the rise of Christianity, especially Trinitarian Roman Catholic doctrine for 1500 years before reforms shifted it into several directions. There were many religions or theological movements born during the Reformation and centuries after Martin Luther initiated his revolt during the 1500s. One was Unitarianism. A second was Universalism. A third was humanism. A fourth was Deism, A fifth was agnosticism. A sixth was atheism. These six departures co-existed with Judaic traditions and Christian traditions. At the same time European civilization was changing and shifting from monarchies to democracies. The introduction of printing played a role, as did scholarship (the rise of European Universities as centers of learning), and translation of ancient documents written in Arabic from earlier Greek and Roman cultures. Major cultural shifts occurred, transforming medieval into modern society. The rise of science created new tools for the fields of biology, chemistry, physics, psychology, geology, and astronomy. These challenged interpretations of nature based on ancient texts and beliefs saturated with error, superstition, mythology, and the supernatural. All of these events and social changes forced changes in how people worshipped and what they believed was the purpose or meaning that religion filled in their lives.

These *Prologue* historical pieces are meant to be brief. They are grouped around the themes mentioned in this introduction. Each section or group of individuals is tied to a major theme that ended up in 20th century and early 21st century Unitarian Universalism. Each of those five sections will include a brief historical summary.

ESSAY 1**UNITARIANISM UNTIL THE LATE 1600S**

The word Unitarian means a belief in a single god as opposed to polytheism or the belief in multiple gods. Another name for a belief in one god is monotheism. Most of the religions in antiquity were polytheistic. The Mesopotamian religions, Egypt's religion, and the Greek and Roman religions were all polytheistic. Today the major polytheistic religion is Hinduism.

The one major religion in antiquity that was monotheistic was Judaism. When reading the *Old Testament* it is hard not to interpret the God of the Hebrew people as a tribal god who evolved into a universal god. His concerns are the Hebrew people and their efforts to establish themselves as a nation. The only other monotheistic religion in the Middle East in antiquity was of brief duration. Pharaoh Akhenaton attempted to convert his people to a worship of a single god, Amon Ra. After Akhenaton's death, the later pharaohs reverted back to polytheistic deities.

Monotheism was largely limited to the Middle East where both Judaism and Islam (the followers of Mohammed's teachings) coexisted. Jews do not seek to convert others and thus remained a small population of believers in a single God. Mohammedans did seek to convert others and over a millennium spread from the Middle East into Africa, parts of Mediterranean and Balkan Europe, and across southern Asia and into many of the Pacific Islands. From the fall of the Roman Empire until the 1500s the major religion in Europe was Catholic Christianity. Roman Catholic theology tried to preserve monotheism by fusing three aspects of Christian belief into a single deity. The Trinitarian view claimed the God of the Old Testament was the father of the universe. Jesus was the son who was sent to earth to establish a prophetic and moral message of salvation. The Holy Spirit was the aspect of God used to inseminate Mary to produce Jesus. Jesus evolved from being a reform Jewish teacher into a deity who gave his name to Christianity. Over three or more centuries there were debates and meetings of theologians that established Roman Catholic Trinitarian Christianity.

Things changed in the 1500s. Martin Luther was an Augustinian monk and teacher who was disillusioned with the abuses of the Church. He felt it was corrupt and needed numerous reforms to meet the needs of a civilization in transition. Medieval society was shifting. Nations were emerging from collections of medieval baronetcies. Travel was more frequent. Trade was bringing in knowledge of other cultures, other religions, and the retrieval of ancient knowledge. Printing made literacy more common and books were conveying knowledge to those fortunate

enough to read and purchase books. Luther began the Reformation and from it Protestant Christianity emerged. Some kept the Trinity and a few dropped or questioned it. Chief among these reformers questioning the Trinity was Michael Servetus, a Spanish scholar whose books rejecting the Trinity were condemned by both Calvinist Protestants and Roman Catholic Christians. Servetus was arrested and tried by Calvinists and killed by them for his heresy of rejecting the Trinity. Fortunately, he was not alone and Unitarians (under a variety of names) began to spread from Switzerland and France where Servetus taught, to northern Italy, Poland, Hungary, Holland, and England.

The New World opened up after Columbus's voyages. It created a Roman Catholic South America, a Roman Catholic Central America, and a largely Protestant North America (the exception being a Catholic Quebec province in Canada). Anglicans, Pilgrims and Puritans (largely Calvinist), Lutherans, Methodists, and Presbyterians came from England, Wales, Scotland, Germany, and Scandinavia. The Colonies were not only opportunities for dissident denominations to establish new communities; they were also opportunities for ministers to develop their own new denominations. This was particularly true for ministers serving the farmers opening westward as the colonies began to cultivate the Midwest in the early 1800s.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE TERM “RELIGION.”

The term **religion** comes from the Latin *religio*, coined by **Marcus Tullius Cicero** (106 BCE – 43 BCE) to describe the beliefs of other countries conquered by the Roman Empire. Before Cicero’s introduction of the idea of religion, no ancient civilization had a word for religion because the state, community, and its culture were commingled. Cicero used the Latin *re* (again) and *legiere* (to read). In the fourth century a Christian theologian, Lactantius, used the Latin word *religare* (to bind together) to describe what today we would call religion. Augustine adopted Lactantius’s word and Catholicism described itself as the only real religion, with other belief systems described as heresies or heathen errors rather than competing religions. The idea of other religions as varieties of faiths starts about 1300. The definition of religion as a belief in a higher power (especially God) begins with the Protestant revolution about 1530.

If you look up the term “religion” on the web, you will find that there are three contenders for the definition of that term. Cicero (re-reading or re-thinking about life’s meaning), Lactantius (the ties that bind people together), and Augustine (choosing again because sin separates us from the divine). Unitarian Universalists have favored the “ties that bind” definition and origin because it was popularized by Joseph Campbell’s 1988 PBS TV series on mythology.



Cicero

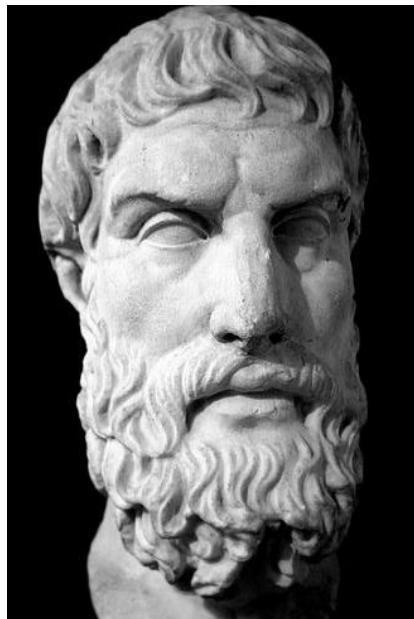
AKHENATEN AND THE ORIGINS OF MONOTHEISM

We are familiar with some Egyptian art, including the well known bust of Nefertiti and for those who attended it, the King Tut exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York some 40 or 50 years ago. Nefertiti was the queen of Pharaoh Akhenaten and their son was Pharaoh Tutankhamen (King Tut) which was proven in 2010 by DNA tests of their mummified remains. Akhenaten lived in the 18th Dynasty which was about 1370-1300 BCE. He began thinking of the Egyptian gods as minor figures derived by popular imagination from a single god whom he called Aten (some believe it was actually the god Ra that he elevated). He asked that Aten be represented by the solar disk with rays ending in hands. He described Aten as “the mother and father of all that is.” The rays represented the sun’s energy that made the earth and all its life possible and some historians have argued that this makes Akenaten the first known scientist. Sigmund Freud argued that Akhenaten was the source of origin for the Jewish God Adonai, the Greek god Adonis, and the Egyptian god Aten. He also believed Moses was a priest for Aten. Monotheism was retained by Jews, modified by Christians (with the problematic status of Jesus and the Holy Ghost), Moslems (with Allah as that deity), and the early Unitarians. After Akhenaten’s death, the succeeding Pharaohs returned to the polytheistic faith Akhenaten had rejected.



EPICURUS TOLD US HOW TO LIVE

Epicurus (341-270 BCE) was a Greek philosopher who was influenced by the views of Democritus. Epicurus took the atomic theory of Democritus and extended it by claiming atoms occasionally swerved or moved at unpredictable angles and this made their encounters and outcomes less predictable and made the universe more diverse, less determinate, and more complex. Epicurus never married but taught at home, calling his meeting place “the Garden.” He believed happiness came from the avoidance of fear and suffering. He believed in self-reliance and shunning power, glory, or wealth. He claimed death ends our body and soul. He believed gods do not punish us or reward us. He thought the universe was infinite and eternal. He urged his students to trust only what they saw, inferred through deduction, or tested first-hand. He suffered from kidney stones and eventually they blocked his ureters, killing him. Despite his pain he felt happiness in learning, writing, and teaching as a way of life. The small pleasures were what made life enjoyable. It is sad that critics of Epicurus and his epicurean philosophy equated it with self-indulgent hedonism or the life style of voluptuaries pursuing pleasure through over-eating, sex, and drugs or through the lust for power. When I was a youth I read Walter Pater’s Victorian novel, *Marius the Epicurean* and first became acquainted with his philosophy. I often think of myself, in his thoughtful sense, of being an Epicurean. I would consider Thoreau to be a more modern adherent of that outlook.



ARIUS AND THE INTERPRETATION OF JESUS IN CHRISTIAN BELIEF

Theology is a field that is based on interpretations of the divine using scripture, revelation, tradition, or guesswork. All religions evolve their doctrines over centuries or millennia. When Jesus preached and died as a rabbi and self-identified Jew, his followers began to attribute a divine relation to him. They emphasized his miracles and wrote these in gospels. Some attributed comments of Jesus that implied he was the son of God. During the three centuries after his death Christianity began to emerge not as a Jewish sect but as a new religion. For Roman emperors this was not a problem if new religions merely added to Roman religious diversity. It became a problem when Christianity had a mass appeal. Constantine wanted Christianity to be the new Roman religion, but which of several brands should that be? **Arius** (256-336 CE) was born in Libya, preached in Alexandria, Egypt, and died in Constantinople. He argued that Jesus was conceived by God and thus there was a time when Jesus did not exist and he cannot be of the same substance as God but was a separate being like a child to a parent. At the first Nicene Council called by **Constantine**, Arius lost and the Trinitarian doctrine proposed by **Athanasius** won for the Catholic Church. Arius went into exile and later was allowed to return to Constantinople but either he was poisoned or he died shortly after his return. His movement, Arianism, lived on especially in Eastern Europe and revived during the Protestant reformation, feeding into different Unitarian movements.



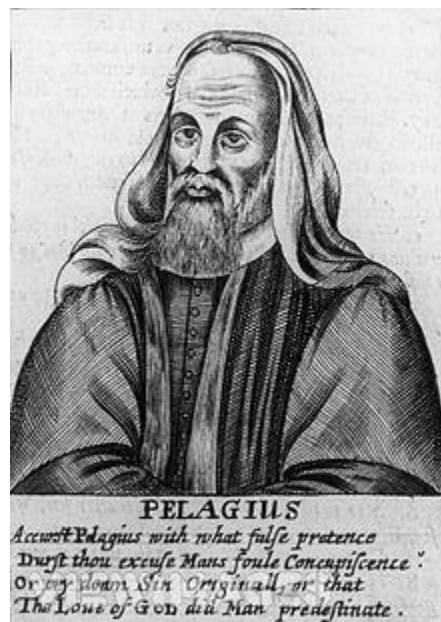
THE NICENE CREED REJECTED ARIANISM

After Jesus was crucified, the movement he started splintered into several groups. Some were Jews who thought of themselves as reformers. Some believed Jesus was divine and thus a lesser God. Some believed Jesus was the son of God. Others thought Jesus was human and a prophet. The disputes occurred wherever Christianity took root in a new community. It was settled by a gathering of 318 church fathers who met in a Turkish town, Nicaea. They proposed and adopted what is called the **Nicene Creed**. They met in the year 325 CE (AD in older terminology). It was amended in a smaller council held in 381. The competing ideology was proposed by Arius and Jesus was seen as a human prophet inspired by God. Arius was condemned as a heretic and his books were burned. The Nicene council preserved its monotheism by a proposal from **Athanasius** of Alexandria attributing three aspects to one divinity — God the father, the son, and the Holy Spirit. Virtually all of Christianity adopted the Nicene Creed. Arianism was crushed in Europe with relatively small revivals over the next 1200 years. It was revived again during the Protestant reformation and it infiltrated several dissenting churches that rejected the Nicene Creed.



PELAGIUS, A DISSIDENT CHRISTIAN HERETIC

Pelagius (360-418) was raised in Britain and may have been Irish. He became a monk known as a scholar and theologian. He went to Rome and there developed a following and at first was admired by Augustine, Jerome, and other Church fathers. Pelagius felt predestination was an error if not an impossibility and he promoted the idea of free will. He acknowledged that there may be acts of divine grace that shift people's lives and values, but without free will what was the point of listening to a preacher? Pelagius also rejected one of Augustine's chief proposals. He doubted the existence of original sin. He claimed death was part of nature for all living things and death was not a punishment imposed by God for Adam's disobedience. His views created much debate and in 418 he was declared a heretic and exiled to Egypt. His writings were collected and destroyed so most of what Pelagius wrote is known from quotations in his trials for heresy. Pelagianism is the term used for his proposal that we have free will in the choices we make about our behavior. Later, Unitarians accepted free will. Calvinists accepted predestination.



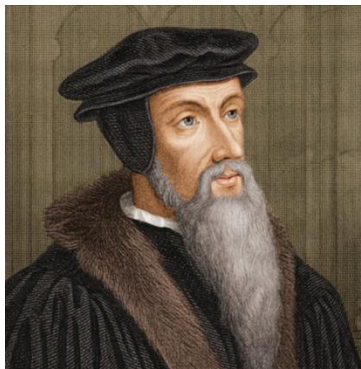
MARTIN LUTHER TRIES REFORMING THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Martin Luther (1483-1546) was born in Saxony. His father owned copper mines and hoped his son would become a lawyer. Luther rejected this career and became an Augustinian monk, earning his room and board as a street sweeper who sang to escape the drudgery of that work. He got his doctorate in theology and became a professor at Wittenberg University. He travelled to Rome and was appalled at its lack of piety. He felt the Church was corrupt, especially by selling redemption (indulgences) to sinners. In 1517 he wrote 95 needed reforms of the Church and posted these on the Cathedral door in Wittenberg. His support for the rulers over church authority protected him from arrest on grounds of heresy. He crushed a peasant's revolt and he was virulently anti-Semitic. On the positive side, he introduced hymns (many composed by him) in the church service, translated the Bible into German, and broke with the power of the Vatican. Most of Catholic doctrine he kept, but he chose an austere church, the authority of the Bible and the need for universal literacy to read it, and a belief that faith, not good works, was necessary for salvation. He argued for the marriage of priests and rejected celibacy. His revolt unleashed many reformers throughout Europe to usher in the Protestant Reformation.



JOHN CALVIN RESHAPES CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE WITH GLOOMY CONSEQUENCES

John Calvin (1509-1564) was born in Noyon, France. His father was a notary and hoped his son would have an equally prosperous career. Calvin studied law and shifted to theology. He joined a group of dissident students and faculty in the University of Paris and was forced to flee to Switzerland. In Geneva he and one of his professors established a reform church. Calvin was 21 when he began writing his influential *Institutes of Christian Religion*. He rejected the authority of the Vatican and agreed with Luther on the importance of reading the Bible as the authority for theology. He argued that redemption was no guarantee of salvation because all of life is known to God, both past and future because God is omniscient. Predestination was God's design of who would join him. Since everyone is tainted with original sin, a probable sign of future redemption is admitting one is a sinner and embracing Jesus as a savior. Calvin was accused by his critics of closing the convents and monasteries by making the entire Christian world a giant convent and monastery where pleasures were denied and piety was demanded. Calvin had a short but happy marriage but both his wife and son died early in his marriage and he never remarried. Calvinism permeated Baptist and most Protestant churches in America. While he was a heretic to the Vatican for his theology, he had little tolerance for those who challenged his views.



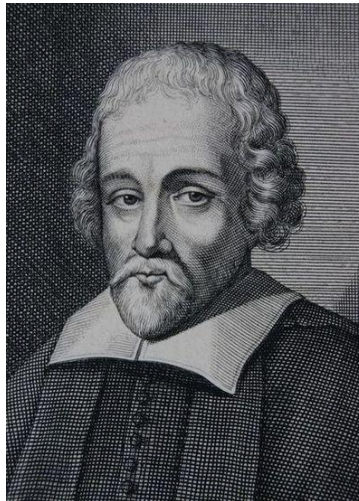
MICHAEL SERVETUS, THE REFORMATION, AND THE ROLE OF HERESY IN SHAPING UNITARIANISM

Michael Servetus (1511-1553) was born in Spain and perished in Geneva at the stake as a heretic. His father was Catholic and his mother's ancestry was from converted Jews (Conversos). One of his brothers was a Catholic priest. Servetus had a talent for scholarship and in 1531 published his first book *Errors of the Trinity*. This led to accusations of heresy and to avoid arrest, Servetus used a pseudonym, Michel de Villeneuve, and moved often, frequently switching fields. He wrote about cartography, Ptolemaic astronomy, astrology, and medicine. He is best known for his working out the pulmonary circulation. He argued that blood is pumped by the heart to the lungs so that it could be transformed by fresh air and stale air exhaled from the lungs. While he was a student he made the acquaintance of John Calvin and they corresponded for many years, with Servetus sending critiques of Calvin's work and Calvin critiquing the work of Servetus. Servetus began arguing forcefully that Christianity should purge itself of the doctrine of original sin, that baptism of infants was unnecessary, and that predestination was uncalled for, God instead condemning those who condemned themselves. His most flagrant claim, for Calvin, was the argument that Jesus was God in disguise to preach to humanity and, after the Crucifixion, Jesus played no further role in Heaven; God being the only deity.



EARLY UNITARIANS WERE CALLED SOCINIANS. WHY?

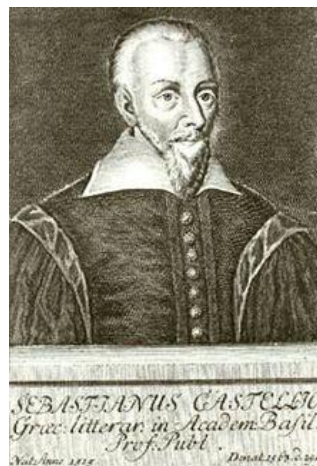
During the Renaissance in Northern Italy, Siena, Padua and Venice were centers of scholarship in all fields, including theology. One Italian family, the Sozzinis, from Siena had wealth and a long tradition of scholars. **Lelio Sozzini** (Latinized as Laelius Socinus) (1525-1562) travelled to Switzerland to become friends with John Calvin. He shared many of Calvin's views which probably saved him from the fate of Servetus. But Socinus was also anti-Trinitarian. He believed Christ did not pre-exist his own birth as Jesus. He doubted the omniscience of God because that would make human free will impossible. Lelio's nephew, **Faustus Socinus** (1539-1604) extended his uncle's views and wrote mostly using a pseudonym because of the growing Inquisition. He moved to Transylvania and then to Krakow and there influenced the thinking of Polish Protestants known as the Polish Brethren. He rejected the idea of the immortality of the soul, he felt baptism was suitable only for adult converts, and he favored human reason over the supernatural. He was independently wealthy and this helped him publish and spread his views. When he finally gained protection of a patron in Poland, he published under his own name and a mob beat him up, destroyed his home, and forced him to leave Krakow. The movement by the Socinus family spread during the reformation and their doctrine was called Socinianism. It entered into the English dissenters thinking in the late 1600s, especially English Unitarians. Until the early nineteenth century Socinianism was used as a term to describe Unitarians and other dissenting doctrines from the Catholic or Anglican traditions.



Fausto Socinus

SEBASTIAN CASTELLIO AND THE RIGHT TO RELIGIOUS BELIEF

Sebastian Castellio (1515-1563) was born in France near Geneva and died in Switzerland. Although he was condemned to die for heresy, he died in prison before he could be executed. Like Michael Servetus, Castellio challenged both Catholic Church doctrine and John Calvin's views on predestination. He, too, thought he was a friend of Calvin but was betrayed. He translated the bible into French. He preached tolerance for all religious points of view. He had originally come to Calvin's attention because of his bravery, being one of the few ministers who helped plague victims during an outbreak in Geneva. Calvin began to distance himself from Castellio as he read Castellio's religious views. When Calvin ordered Servetus's execution for heresy Castellio called Calvin a murderer, arguing that ideas should be refuted by reason, using the famous statement "to kill a man is not to protect a doctrine but to kill a man." He claimed this would lead to more murders as interpretations of the bible changed. He asked Calvin how he could condemn Servetus for his beliefs when Calvin made more changes in biblical interpretation than the Church had made in the previous millennium. Castellio wrote under the pseudonym Martinus Bellius, a book in 1554 with Laelio Socinus, *Should Heretics be Persecuted?* His religious view was one of simplicity. Religion should convert others through its message of love. Religion should be embraced out of that loving feeling and not out of fear or coercion. He also believed in the separation of church and state.



MATTEO GRIBALDI AND THE REVIVAL OF ARIANISM IN THE RENAISSANCE

Matteo Gribaldi (1505-1564) was born near Turin in Northern Italy. He was a lawyer and taught law in France, Switzerland, Germany, and Italy. He was successful in his practice and married an heiress from Farges near Geneva. They had 7 children. He read Servetus's *Errors of the Trinity* and was persuaded that Jesus did not pre-exist before his birth and he rejected the Holy Spirit. These views were then called Arianism, a heresy condemned by the Church. Wherever Gribaldi taught, he was investigated, arrested, or forced to flee. When he learned of Servetus's arrest by Calvin, he asked to debate Calvin, who refused. He was stabbed in Bern over a lawsuit and survived. He wrote numerous tracts on Servetus and converted two Polish students in his class at Padua to Servetus's views which they brought back to Poland, smuggling his manuscripts so they could be copied and circulated. Padua at that time had more Protestant students than Catholic and their tuition was a major source of income for the University. This was one reason Padua was a relatively safe city during the Reformation. He worked with Lelio Soccini to write commentaries and promote Servetus's work. While both Protestant and Catholic agents were looking for him, he went back to Farges in 1564, where a plague epidemic broke out, killing him.



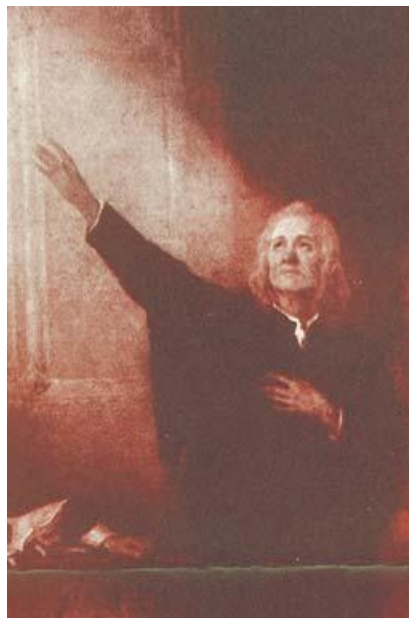
GIORDANO BRUNO AND THE INFINITY OF WORLDS

Giordano Bruno (1549-1600) was born near Naples. His father was a soldier but Bruno chose to be a priest. He entered the Dominican order at 17 and was ordained at 24. He taught mathematics and philosophy throughout Europe – in Genoa, Turin, Venice, Padua, Lyon, Geneva, Paris, Wittenberg, Prague, Frankfurt, and Oxford. During this time he wrote many books (mostly lost) and his views frequently cost him his jobs. He denied the divinity of Jesus. He rejected the Trinity and adopted an Arian view of God. He denied Mary had a virgin birth. He claimed transubstantiation does not occur. He dabbled in magic and science (the two were often merged in the Renaissance). He believed Copernicus was correct and extended Copernicus's view by claiming the sun was a star and there were an infinite number of stars in the heavens each with its own solar system and very likely supporting life. He was condemned by Calvin and Luther but it was the Catholic Church that arrested him in 1592. He spent the next 7 years in jail defending himself against eight major charges (only one was on his scientific views). Unlike Galileo a decade later, he did not recant his views. He was found guilty and burned at the stake in Rome on February 17, 1600 and his ashes were tossed in the Tiber River. All copies of his books that could be located were also destroyed. Scientists still debate the merits of Bruno as a scientist. His views, unlike those of Copernicus, were largely insights and not based on astronomical observations or mathematical calculations.



FRANCIS DAVID AND THE ORIGINS OF TRANSYLVANIAN UNITARIANISM

Francis David (Ferenc David) was born in 1510 and died in prison in Hungary in 1579. He was raised Catholic and became a Lutheran when he went to Wittenberg to study. He switched to Calvinism in Frankfurt and came back a Calvinist Bishop in Transylvania where he became preacher to Prince (later King) Sigismund. In 1565 he absorbed the teachings of Laelio Sozzini and considered Jesus a human who had no prior existence before his birth. He rejected the existence of the Holy Spirit, and felt prayer should be directed to God and not to Jesus. He preached that we should follow Jesus's moral teachings and not worship Jesus. He called his movement Unitarianism. When Prince John became King he adopted David's Unitarianism and encouraged its spread in Transylvania by providing support for its churches along with Catholic, Calvinist, and Eastern Orthodox churches already present. David urged the King for an act of toleration because of resistance of the established churches to the new reform movement. King John did so in 1568, but he died a few years later and the new king revoked the edict of Torda. David was summoned to a hearing on charges of heresy and when he refused to recant his Unitarian views he was imprisoned, dying seven years later in prison.



KING JOHN SIGISMUND AND THE ACT OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

King John Sigismund (1540-1571) became king in 1561 of the independent country of Transylvania (1543-1691) before it was reunited with Hungary and many years later assimilated into Romania. Sigismund became a Unitarian through the preaching of Francis David. David advised King John to issue a proclamation of religious tolerance during the reformation when Protestants and Catholics were in contention. In his short life of 31 years, John Sigismund is remembered for the world's first state authorized act of religious tolerance. It was initiated in 1557, extended in 1563, and issued as a proclamation to be read at all churches in 1568. The governing body was called the Diet of Torda (a city in Transylvania) and it proclaimed that "faith is the gift of God" which we learn and which we can preach but which cannot be coerced nor can anyone who preaches be removed from a church or arrested because of the religious views expressed. Prior to the proclamation Unitarians were attacked by Calvinist Protestants, Eastern Orthodox Catholics, and Roman Catholics with leaders frequently arrested, some dying in prison and some being beheaded or burned alive for heresy. Unfortunately, King John's early death was followed by a new king who was Catholic and who nullified the Proclamation of Torda. As a consequence Unitarians were decimated by attacks from other Protestants and by Catholics as they were in Poland. Some fled to Holland and later to England spreading Unitarian belief in Europe. Those surviving in Transylvania kept Unitarianism going to the present.



ESSAY 2**UNITARIANISM FROM 1700 TO THE MID 1800S**

The rise of modern science is often associated with the work of Galileo in physics and astronomy confirming the Copernican theory that the earth revolves around the sun. He also used a telescope which led to his discovery that Jupiter had four moons (and he calculated their orbits and where they would be on any given day). That predictive power of science won out over the more traditional beliefs that the earth was the center of the universe and that supernatural agents were involved in the movement of the planets. Isaac Newton also played a role in shaping the Enlightenment, by introducing his laws of motion and his theory of gravity. With his mathematical tools, Newton showed that the same forces on earth were acting in the heavenly bodies. The Enlightenment was more than the rise of science. It included the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution and the colonization of many unexplored parts of the earth. It included the belief that reason and not revelation or faith was more productive in solving human needs and understanding how the universe works. This led to a different outcome than the fight over the Catholic or Protestant views of Christianity and religion. It led to the rise of Deism, a belief that the Creator's role was making the laws of Nature and then Nature was on its own. For traditional religious belief this was unacceptable. The Unitarian movement of Servetus began to spread across Europe and into England stimulating dissident or non-established churches. The term Unitarian began appearing in the 1660s. It became more widely known a century later through the work of Joseph Priestley a chemist, a scholar, and a minister who promoted Unitarian beliefs in his sermons and writings. Priestley was forced to leave England after his laboratory, church, and residence were burned by a mob in Birmingham. He knew many of the founding fathers of the American Revolution and brought Unitarian views to bolster the fledgling American Unitarian churches (not yet using the name Unitarian). Those churches in the Colonies were mostly Congregational Churches (they chose their own ministers) and were more open to new ideas.

Also in the mid 1700s the ideas of God as a judge of human behavior began to change. In England John Murray embraced the idea that a loving God would not condemn his children. He would welcome them and purge them of their earthly failings. Murray rejected the concept of a Hell for everlasting punishment. He saw an opportunity to find a new life in the Colonies and brought his Universalist message. Both Unitarianism and Universalism would remain separate denominations until the 20th century but both were motivated to do good works for others as a major reason for religious belief. They both saw an evil in slavery and were active in

the Abolitionist movement. Many of their ministers and congregational members supported women's rights to own property, have jobs outside the house, and to vote. They both believed in the importance of free public education. These views in some regions of the country were subversive. Neither Unitarians nor Universalists fared well in the slave owning states. Many congregations were split over the proper response to these social issues. Many chose peace over war and wanted to avoid a dissolving of the United States into a slave country and a free country. The major center of Unitarian influence was New England. Universalism fanned out to the Midwest where Unitarians were rare. Both Unitarians and Universalists helped form the Underground Railroad to smuggle escaped slaves to free states or to Canada.

During the early 1800s Unitarians began shifting away from an identification as Christian Unitarians (where Jesus was a human prophet and not divine). Instead, they saw themselves as Deists with a spiritual need found in their congregations. God was less determinate and not based on either the descriptions of the Old Testament or by the views of the early Christians who shifted from reforming Judaism to setting up a new religion that severed its connections to Judaism.

The late 1600s also saw the entry of Universalism, but not by that name. Gerard Winstanley proposed changing the idea of Hell from a place of perpetual punishment to a place for transforming those who sinned into redeemed souls who could enjoy a union with a loving God.

GERARD WINSTANLEY AND THE DIGGERS

Gerard Winstanley (1609 – 1676) was born in Wigan (near Manchester) in England. He belonged to a tailor's guild but the outbreak of the civil war deposing King Charles I left him bankrupt. He tried making a living as a cowherd. He worked with Quakers and converted to their religious views but modified it by adding a belief that a loving God would not create an everlasting punishment in Hell for those who were sinners. Instead, he argued, hell would be a place where sinners are converted to equal status with those who entered Heaven. He also organized a group of his congregants to occupy public lands that had become enclosures for private development and ownership. He said the land belonged to the people, and *Genesis* shows God wanted all of Adam and Eve's descendants to have the care and use of the land. His movement he called "the Levellers" but his critics called them "the Diggers" because they filled in the disturbed land of the closures and planted crops which they distributed free to all members. Winstanley rejected wages and property and tried (and failed) to establish Digger communities. His message of Christian Universalism, however, survived.



SPINOZA OFFERS A PHILOSOPHER'S MONOTHEISM

Benedict Spinoza (1632-1677) was born in Amsterdam as Baruch Spinoza to a family of Sephardic Jews. They had been conversos in Portugal after expulsion in Spain and over the next century they moved to France before settling in Holland, where they renounced their Christian faith and reestablished themselves as Jews in 1593. Both of Spinoza's parents died while he was young. He had started his education with the thought of being a rabbi, but shifted to philosophy after learning Latin and reading widely. He supported himself by grinding lenses for reading glasses, microscopes and telescopes, an occupation that may have given him silicosis (he died of lung disease at age 45). His views immediately led to expulsion, at age 20, from the Jewish community. Spinoza argued that Moses did not write the Torah, the soul was not immortal, and that God and nature were one reality. Spinoza lived frugally and never married. Instead of converting to Christianity, he chose to remain a Jew without a congregation, a secular Jew. He supported a separation of church and state and argued the state should be secular. He practiced "tolerance and benevolence." He did not believe there was free will or that chance events happened. Everything that happens, he claimed, has a determined cause, but usually that cause is not known to us. His views are similar to Vedantist Hindu views but he never came in contact with Hindu writings. They are also similar to Emerson's Transcendentalism. Einstein considered Spinoza his hero and adopted "the God of Spinoza" as his own.



ISAAC NEWTON AND THE QUEST FOR UNIVERSAL UNDERSTANDING

Isaac Newton (1642-1727) was born shortly after his father died and as a young child he was rejected by his stepfather and given to his grandparents to raise. He was an Anglican until he was in 20s when he read books on the history of Christianity and concluded the Trinity was an invention of the fourth century imposed by Athanasius who defeated the Unitarian Arias. He kept his Arian beliefs secret because it would have cost him his academic and professional life to publicize them. Newton was largely self taught as a youth, reading virtually every book he encountered in the homes where he was raised. At Cambridge he excelled and in the 1660s he began working on his laws of motion, his theory of gravitation, and his analysis of light and optical perception. He invented a reflecting telescope that was superior to any refracting telescope (simple lenses like a sailor's spyglass) then available. He attributed his delay in publishing because he wanted to be free of the influence of Robert Hooke who detested him in the Royal Society. He also invented differential and integral calculus (and claimed Leibniz stole the idea from him). He never married. He was reclusive until he left Cambridge and became Keeper of the Mint in London. He became wealthy through his investments. He became President of the Royal Society and shifted it from a club to a major scientific institution whose published works were read by scientists throughout the world. He said his idea for gravity came from his occult studies (God as an attractant to his believers around the world) and not from being bopped by an apple on his head).



GEORGE DE BENNEVILLE AND THE PIETIST TRADITION IN UNIVERSALISM

George de Benneville (1703-1793) was born in London to exiled French Nobility who were of Huguenot faith. He was the youngest of nine children and his mother died shortly after his birth. He was sent to (and raised by) his uncle who worked in the court of Queen Anne of England. At age 12 he was sent to sea and in Algiers noted the caring behavior of Moors for each other. He had a conversion experience on his return to France and began preaching what were considered heretical views that were similar to Universalism. He was arrested twice and moved to Germany where he became a physician and worked with Dunkers and other pietists, absorbing their doctrines of a separation of church and state, pacificism, universal salvation, and a striving for self-perfection. He heard about the freedom of religion in America and emigrated in 1743 settling in Pennsylvania. There he practiced medicine, married, and had six children. He combined in his preaching the best he found in the world's religions, believing that all religions were imperfect, but all religions had virtues that were worth adopting. He was unusual in learning the languages of the American natives with whom he lived, believing this was a way to show respect for his neighbors.



CONDORCET PROMOTES THE ENLIGHTENMENT

The Marquis de Condorcet (Marie Jean Antoine Nicolas de Caritat) lived 1743-1794. He was born in Aisne, France and excelled as a scholar in school, especially in mathematics. He extended the mathematics of calculus and applied mathematics to social conditions and problems. He supported the American Revolution, opposed slavery, and joined the French Revolution in its overthrow of the Monarchy. As the Revolution broke into factions, he went into hiding and wrote *Progress of the Human Spirit* (1795) in which he summed up his teaching and argued that the more one learns, using reason and science to explore life and the universe, the more humanity moves toward perfectibility. Monarchies would be replaced by democracies and republics, women and men would be treated as equals, discrimination against races would end, equality of opportunity would emerge, and moral behavior and compassion would dominate our relations. Condorcet was arrested and taken to prison and died two days later. The cause was never found out. His optimism about reason and science was embraced by idealists in North America before and after the American Revolution and it entered into Unitarian thinking and helped those motivated to try experimental Utopias.



HERMANN SAMUEL REIMARUS AND THE ORIGINS OF DEISM

Deism was a movement that began in the Enlightenment questioning religion based on revelation and tradition and seeking instead a rational basis for belief in God. A leader of this movement was **Hermann Samuel Reimarus** (1694-1768). He was born and died in Hamburg. He taught philosophy, theology, mathematics, and logic in German universities and he published books on these topics. His most important work, however was published after his death. He called this work *An Apology or Defense for Reasoning Worshippers of God* (1774-1778). He denied miracles. He claimed both the Old and New Testaments were flawed documents written by humans and reflected their many errors, contradictions, and biases. Instead he offered a religion based on reason. The universe exists and needs a creator and that creator is God. Humans have existed for the six thousand years of history presented in the Bible and since Christ was assumed to have been born. They had to have been created too. God very likely had a plan for humans and thus Reimarus infers they have souls and the souls are immortal. Out went virgin birth, resurrection of the dead, the Trinity, and the Second Coming. What was left was Deism.



FOUNDERS OF THE UNITARIAN OUTLOOK: JOSEPH PRIESTLEY

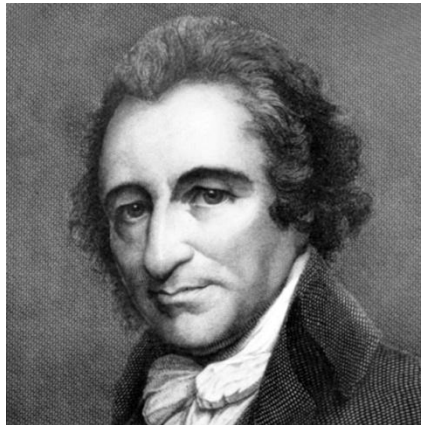
Joseph Priestley (1733-1804) made major contributions to science, education, theology, and political science. He joined what the British called the “dissenters” because he tried to preach a Christianity that was “uncorrupted”. His book, on “the corruptions of Christianity” proposed a Unitarian view of God. Jesus was the son of Joseph and Mary; he was human; and he taught us how to live an ethical life. Priestley read about Benjamin Franklin’s discovery that lightening was a form of electricity and he conducted hundreds of experiments that he compiled and sent a copy to Franklin. Priestley championed the independence of the Colonies. He adopted the Enlightenment philosophy that knowledge would bring about social change and lead to progress and happiness. He invented the time-line to represent a horizontal history of influential people from antiquity to his own time. He did experiments at a brewery and discovered carbon dioxide. He bubbled this gas through water and found it produced soda water which he found pleasing as a refreshment. He also isolated oxygen from a mercury compound.

Public opinion turned against Priestley for his beliefs. A mob gathered forcing him to flee with his family, and his church, home, and laboratory were burnt to the ground. Priestley came to the US. He became friends with Thomas Jefferson who used Priestley’s book to compose the *Jefferson Bible*, a collection of teachings about Jesus stripped of his deification.



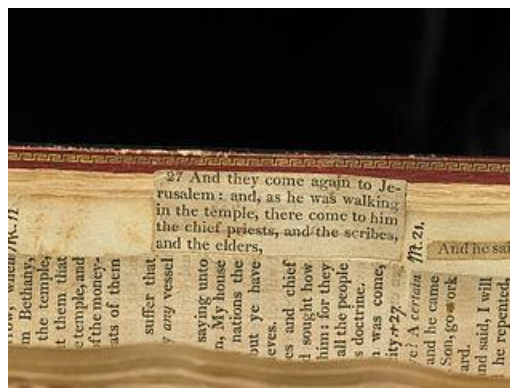
THOMAS PAINE AND *THE AGE OF REASON*

Thomas Paine (1737-1809) was born in England, his father a Quaker and his mother Anglican. He became a corset maker like his father but preferred reading and writing. His rebellious nature made him an outcast for most of his life. He organized workers to strike for higher wages and was fired. He met Ben Franklin and decided to sail for the Colonies. There he saw the discontent with British rule and he wrote *Common Sense*, a pamphlet urging independence and revolution. It became a best seller and sold more than 100,000 copies. His pamphlet encouraging the revolutionary army, *The Crisis*, became required reading for Washington's troops. After the war he returned to England and wrote *The Rights of Man*, praising democracy. He was harassed out of England and he went to France and supported the revolution but was arrested by Robespierre for supporting universal suffrage. There he wrote *The Age of Reason*, expecting to be beheaded. Robespierre was overthrown and Paine was released and returned to the US where he was vilified for his attacks on religion and for his belief in Deism which he defined as a belief in "one God and an imitation of his moral character" which was all the religion that humanity needed to appreciate and contribute to life. His attacks on established religion were used to damage his reputation and when he died in poverty in New York City, only six people attended his funeral, two of them freed slaves.



THE JEFFERSON BIBLE

Thomas Jefferson enjoyed the friendship of Benjamin Rush, a physician from Philadelphia and Joseph Priestley, a scientist and recent immigrant to the United States. Rush was a Universalist and Priestley a Unitarian. Jefferson mentioned to Rush that he admired Priestley's book on *The Corruptions of Christianity* and that he wished the New Testament could be purged of its corruptions by editing. Rush urged him to do so. Jefferson thought Priestley might help him with the project but Priestley died before he could answer Jefferson's letter. Instead, in 1804, over a 2 or 3 day session alone, he took a scissors and pasted excerpts of the New Testament using the moral teachings of Jesus as his guide. This led to a 46 page book that is today called *The Jefferson Bible*. Jefferson decided not to publish it while he was in public office or active in politics. It was not until 1820, after John Adams came across a letter by Priestley, that he was urged once again to publish the book. He did. Jefferson said he omitted any reference to the supernatural (virgin birth or resurrection from the dead) or to miracles. Instead he felt Jesus was a moral philosopher and this edited version presented how one should live one's life, not who should be venerated as a deity. *The Jefferson Bible* was a rare book until Beacon Press reprinted it in 2001 with historical essays by E. Forrest Church and Jaroslav Pelikan.



WILLIAM BENTLEY AND THE SHAPING OF THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN CHURCH

William Bentley (1759-1819) was raised in the Congregational faith. He was tutored in Latin and Greek and attended Harvard. After the Revolutionary War he became a minister of the East Church in Salem where he lived out his life. He was a scholar and wrote to Enlightenment figures like Priestley and shifted to the more liberal theology of the English Unitarians. He faced rejection by the more traditional Congregationalists whose views were closer to Calvin. Bentley rejected predestination and he believed Jesus did not exist before he was conceived and born to Mary. His outlook was one of reason over emotionalism or faith. He claimed that “the only evidence I wish to have of my integrity is a good life, and as to faith, his can’t be wrong who has a life in the right.” He had a library of 4000 books and was admired as a scholar, historian, and antiquarian. He loved Salem. He turned down the Presidency of the University of Virginia offered to him by Thomas Jefferson. He turned down serving as the first Chaplain of Congress. He never married. His church in Salem had mostly sea captains and local merchants as congregants. They kept his cabinet of curiosities filled with items from around the world that he sought. He kept a diary starting at age 23 until he died. It was not meditative, but reveals the daily life of those who lived in the early days of our Republic and the conflicts of the evolving Protestant denominations in a new nation that permitted freedom of establishing religious institutions.



JAMES RELLY AND THE SHIFT FROM METHODISM TO UNIVERSALISM

James Relly (1722-1778) was born in Pembroke in SW Wales. He became a Methodist minister but modified his views as he read more widely. He believed a loving God would not allow humans to suffer eternal punishment. If humans were steeped in original sin, then they shouldn't be blamed for their failings. If humans learned to do harm to others, they could learn to redeem themselves through good works. Relly was fired as a Methodist in 1746. With his brother John he wrote a hymnal. He also wrote a book, *Union*, in 1759 that spelled out his beliefs. He preached his doctrine of universal salvation which his critics called "Rellyism" in England and later "noHellism" in the Colonies. When he preached at major cities in Great Britain, his views were usually rejected. In Tewkesbury, he was chased out of town by a mob. His most famous convert was John Murray who established Universalism in the Colonies of North America after his ship was grounded by bad weather in New Jersey. Universalism flourished in the new United States of America but it failed to take root in England. Relly did not live to see that later success. He died in London, frustrated by the slow progress he had made.



RICHARD ALLEN AND WHY AFRICAN AMERICANS ARE RARE IN THE UU CHURCH

African Americans were originally brought to the North American colonies as slaves. In the south they were often used to build the plantation system for cash crops like tobacco and cotton. They tended to be Baptist and Methodists with slave owners regulating their religious observance. In the North they tended to be Methodists and Anglicans and worshipped at an early hour (often 5 AM) on Sundays with the later hours reserved for white members of the Church. Segregation was the rule even after the Revolutionary War. **Richard Allen** (1760-1831) was born a slave in Delaware. He was known as “negro Richard” and three of his siblings and parents were sold to a different family than the one he and his remaining siblings were assigned. He learned to read and write on his own, his new owner in Delaware encouraging him. His owner offered to let him work extra to purchase his freedom and “negro Richard” did so and changed his name to Richard Allen. He became a Methodist minister but was limited by white oversight on what he could do and preach. He led the black members of the congregation into a separate movement and founded the AME [African Methodist Episcopal] church in 1816. It was the first Protestant denomination formed for sociological and not theological reasons. African Americans were not attracted to Unitarian or Universalist Churches because these churches were virtually absent in the southern states and in the north their rejection of the trinity and traditional Christian theology did not attract African Americans raised in Baptist, Methodist, or Anglican faiths. Despite playing a major role in the Abolitionist movement, the theology of Unitarian and Universalist churches did not appeal and the community-centered, African American, spiritual richness of the AME church predominated after the Civil War and continues today.



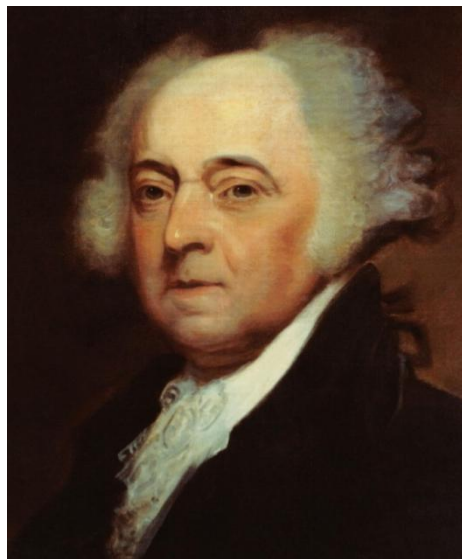
CHARLES CHAUNCEY AND THE ORIGINS OF AMERICAN UNIVERSALISM

Charles Chauncey (1705-1787) was born in Boston. His father was a wealthy merchant and the family followed Puritan religious traditions. He was well educated being the great great grandson of Harvard's second president. At Harvard he took an interest in theology and read widely. He became the pastor for the First Church a position he held the rest of his life. It was a Congregational Church that reflected the nonconformist tradition of Great Britain and it competed with the Anglican Church (later Episcopalian) in the Colonies. He corresponded with nonconformist ministers in Great Britain and urged them to lobby Parliament so religious tolerance would be permitted in the Colonies. He opposed the emerging trend to emotionalism in the revivalist churches that mushroomed after 1735 (a movement called the Great Awakening) and defended rationalism. He supported the American Revolution and served as a chaplain in George Washington's army. After the war he shifted his views to universal salvation arguing that reason can only be exercised effectively if there is freewill rather than predestination as the Puritan Calvinists believed. Chauncey was an elitist socially and his ministry catered to Boston's merchants and landowners, but he was a liberal in his views on theology. His strong defense of using reason and exercising freewill and dissent on religious doctrine found support in the growing movements that established the Universalist and Unitarian Churches in North America.



JOHN ADAMS: THE RELIGIOUS CONVICTIONS OF OUR SECOND PRESIDENT

John Adams (1735-1826) was born in Braintree, Massachusetts. His father was a Congregational deacon and shoemaker. Adams considered becoming a minister but felt that it was “too contentious” a field and he chose law instead. While he was opposed to the Stamp Act and other injustices of the British rule of the Colonies, he defended the eight British soldiers who participated in the Boston Massacre and six were acquitted and two convicted of a lesser charge of manslaughter. He did so because he believed all people have a right to legal counsel. He attended a nonconforming Arminian church (the term used before Unitarian replaced it). He raised money for the Revolution in France and Holland. After the war he served as the first Ambassador to Great Britain, where he met Priestley and Lindsey, the major British Unitarians. Adams shared the Enlightenment culture with Thomas Jefferson, his political rival and friend. He told Jefferson “The ten commandments and the Sermon on the Mount contain my religion.” Adams opposed a monarchy and favored the republican political system of early Rome. He believed in a “natural aristocracy” that ran in families. His personality was sometimes pompous (he favored calling the President “His mightiness”) and because he was obese, his critics called him “His Rotundity.” He was Vice-President under Washington and served one term as President. Adams married Abigail Smith who corresponded with him while he was in public service. She shared a Christian Unitarian belief and they are buried in the Quincy Unitarian church graveyard.



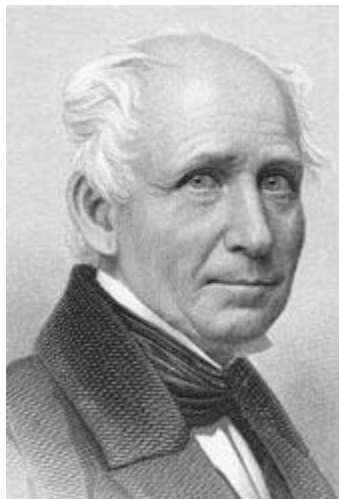
HANNAH ADAMS: THE FIRST U.S. FEMALE AUTHOR TO EARN HER LIVING AS A WRITER

Hannah Adams (1755-1831) was born in Massachusetts. Her father was a teacher, farmer, and book seller and she was home schooled. Her mother died when she was 11. She took an interest in Unitarian history and began reading works by Socinian authors before the English non-conformists of that belief called themselves Unitarians. She learned Greek and Latin. She then invited ministers to describe their own faith beliefs and began corresponding with divines in other countries. She realized from her readings on the world's religions that various Christian authors would describe other religions as heretical and flawed. She felt that a scholar should find and present what other religions believed so readers could form their own judgments. She is considered the founder of the field of comparative religion. Her book appeared in 1784. It sold well but her publisher kept all the profits. She lobbied Congress and in 1790 got a copyright law enacted. She then got another publisher to issue a revised version which went through several editions and sold well in the US and in Europe. She became the first female author to make a living as a full time writer. She wrote a History of New England, a History of the Jews, and several other works on comparative religion. She never married because her father's businesses failed and she supported him and her younger sister. She was a distant cousin of President John Adams and enjoyed visiting him.



HOSEA BALLOU: A UNIVERSALIST WHO PREACHED UNITARIAN THEOLOGY

Hosea Ballou (1771-1852) was born in New Hampshire and died in Boston. He was raised a Baptist Calvinist by his father. His father died when Ballou was 6 years old and he was educated by his mother. As a teenager he heard about universal salvation and began studying the bible using reason rather than faith as his guide. He took Paul's message that if one man's transgression (Adam) condemned all of humanity to mortality, then one man's goodness (Jesus) liberated all men for salvation. During the Revolutionary War Ballou established a friendship with patriot Ethan Allen of the Green Mountain Boys, a deist, like Thomas Paine, who rejected what could not be supported by reason. This led Ballou to dismiss the Trinity as inconsistent to logical thinking as "invoking infinity multiplied by three". His theology then became that of a Unitarian but he remained a Universalist. He believed that one should love God and not fear God, the act of loving leading to a moral life and doing good works for humanity. He also favored a strong separation of church and state. Ballou's views were expressed in many books, his most important being a *Treatise on Atonement*. He edited and published several Universalist magazines and newsletters.



JOSEPH TUCKERMAN AND THE UNITARIAN MINISTRY AT LARGE

Joseph Tuckerman (1778-1840) was the son of a wealthy landowner and founder of a Fire Insurance Company. He attended Harvard and roomed with William Ellery Channing as a fellow student. After he was ordained as a Unitarian minister, he took an interest in the growing number of impoverished people living in Boston. Many were new immigrants. Some were alcoholics. There were prostitutes and beggars as well as orphaned children and widows struggling to survive in an era where neglect was the norm and the poor were often blamed for their own condition. Tuckerman believed in the “perfectibility of humanity” (a credo of Condorcet and the French Enlightenment) and felt it was an obligation the privileged owed to the underprivileged to help them. He began a ministry at large and visited the poor, going to their homes, helping them with necessities and organizing shelters and chapels where they and their children could be taught and where they could form networks and help each other. He believed alcoholism was a disease and not a lapse of moral judgment. He opposed government programs which he felt were based on containment and punishment. Instead he offered summer camps for children and vocational training of the children so they could find jobs. He published his findings in 1826 as a scientific study of poverty.



MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT AND THE ORIGINS OF MODERN FEMINISM

Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) was born and died in London. Her father was a weaver and alcoholic. She was raised Unitarian and as a teenager was introduced by her minister to a Unitarian and Deist circle including Joseph Priestley, Thomas Paine, William Wordsworth, Samuel Coleridge, and William Godwin. She was largely self-educated through reading books. She suffered from depression. To support herself she taught school children, served as a governess, worked as a seamstress, and wrote articles and books. She believed in the use of reason to guide her moral life. She criticized social class and gender bias arguing that merit and talent should be the sole basis for recognition in life. She had two affairs, one leading to an out of wedlock daughter, and she moved to France to witness the French Revolution. She twice attempted suicide, once by jumping into the Thames River but was rescued by a passing stranger. She created a sensation in 1792 by writing *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, asserting that women and men were intellectual equals and advocating co-educational schools so boys and girls could learn together. She fell in love with Godwin and they married, but she had the misfortune of dying shortly after giving birth to her second child, also named Mary. She died of puerperal fever. Her daughter followed her mother in a literary career and is best known for marrying the poet Percy Shelley and writing the novel *Frankenstein*. Godwin's biography of his wife led to condemnation of her as immoral and Godwin as having "a heart of stone" for making public his wife's affairs and mental condition. In the twentieth century, Mary Wollstonecraft became an icon of the feminist movement.



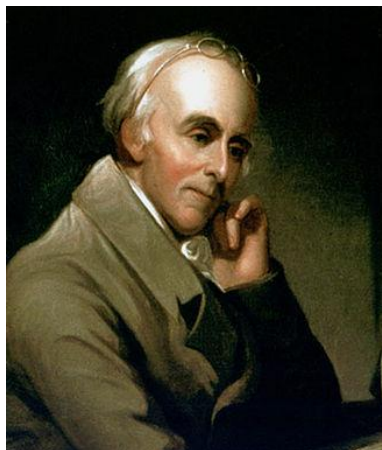
RAMAHUN ROY AND THE SPREAD OF UNITARIANISM TO INDIA

Ramahun Roy [né Rama Mohanan Raya] (1772-1833) was born in Bengal in the Brahmin caste. His father was a civil servant. He learned Bengali, Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, and English. He became a money-lender and worked for the civil service, amassing a fortune. In the custom of the time he had been married three times by the age of 10. He had two children with his second wife and was survived by his third wife. His first wife died as a child. He became a monotheist and believed in one god and doing no harm to others. He campaigned against idol worship, sati (burning widows upon the death of their husbands), and the caste system. He lobbied in England to get parliament to outlaw sati. He learned of Unitarianism while in England. When he returned to India, he stripped the miracles and divinity of Jesus in his articles on Christianity and converted to Unitarianism. He founded the first Unitarian church in India. He promoted literacy for women. He translated the Upanishad and Vedic writings into English in 1818. He published Channing's sermons in India. His translations of Vedic writings were read by Emerson and contributed to his Transcendental movement. Roy is sometimes called "the father of modern India."



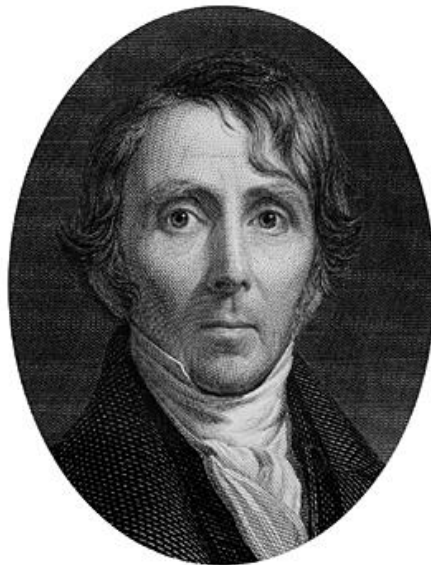
BENJAMIN RUSH AND AMERICAN UNIVERSALISM

Benjamin Rush (1746-1813) was a Founding Father and signer of the Declaration of Independence. He got his BA at Princeton and went to Edinburgh for his MD. He returned with an enthusiasm for the Enlightenment and joined Washington's army as surgeon-general. He was more successful with his public health measures than his medical knowledge, which was antiquated (based on copious blood-letting). He drained ditches and stagnant pools to prevent infectious epidemics of typhus, typhoid, and cholera. He believed the insane would benefit by being unchained and given productive labor tasks in the mental hospital. He opposed slavery and he helped black leaders establish the AME church. His own views were of a shifting nature – Episcopalian, Universalist, Christian Unitarian, and opposed to Calvinism. Rush believed in universal salvation. He encouraged Jefferson to prepare *The Jefferson Bible*. He was the founder of Dickenson College in Pennsylvania and he was a professor of medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. He had a temper and sharp tongue which got him into difficulties throughout his career. He begged Washington's biographers not to publish his criticisms of Washington's leadership during the start of the Revolutionary War because he realized how great a leader Washington was and he expected more than could be provided for his care of the wounded during trying times.



WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING CREATES UNITARIANISM FROM CONGREGATIONALISM

William Ellery Channing (1780-1842) was born in Newport, Rhode Island and died in Boston. He came from a prominent family, his father being the Attorney General for the State of Rhode Island. He was raised as a Congregationalist and he attended Harvard for his BA. There he took a liking to stoic philosophy and it shaped his moral outlook. He married his first cousin, a wealthy heiress, and he began to preach as a liberal in the Congregational Church. He argued that disputes over the Trinity and demands for orthodoxy in doctrine “did not inspire Christian love.” In 1819 he gave a sermon on “Christian Unitarianism” which was published and sold thousands of copies. It launched the Unitarian movement because reaction by the Congregational churches was swift. The liberals were ousted from congregational association and they formed their own Unitarian churches. Channing argued that the Bible was written by and for humans teaching them how to live. He argued for a middle ground between secularism and spirituality. He rejected the Trinity as irrational and lacking support in the New Testament. He rejected predestination. Although his grandparents owned slaves, Channing felt slavery was immoral and he joined Abolitionist movements. While he supported the plight of the poor and their need to organize to improve their lot, he was opposed to a strict separation of church and state, believing it was important to have government support all religions.



ROBERT OWEN'S UTOPIAN VIEWS AND REFORMS ENTERED UNITARIAN THINKING

Robert Owen (1771-1858) was born and died in Newtown, Wales. His father was a farmer and invested in the steel industry. He was apprenticed in Manchester and proved skillful in managing the cotton mill factory there. He was sent to New Lanark, Scotland and became manager of a mill and fell in love with Caroline Dale, daughter of its owner. They married with the understanding she would raise the children Presbyterian and he would retain his belief that all religions are false and while God was the author of nature, no religion could formulate God's character or desires. Instead, Owen believed all people are shaped by society and thus all children should be well-educated in moral judgment, community involvement, and high ideals. He put this into practice at New Lanark by eliminating child labor, setting up a cooperative for workers, providing schooling for all their children, and building their own homes. In 1816 he published his utopian views in *A New View of Human Character*. He wanted to set up larger scale communities but couldn't raise the money so he bought land in Indiana on the Wabash River and established New Harmony in 1825. It attracted 800 people but failed after two years. He returned to London and became a proto-socialist. His sons returned to Indiana and promoted their father's cooperative movement and social reforms. Richard Owen became a geologist and taught science at Indiana University and Owen Hall is named for him. Son Robert Dale Owen became an Indiana Congressman and established free public school education in 1850 and the right of women to hold property and get divorced. Owenites, as they were called, shared and contributed to Unitarian and Universalist social outlooks.



JOHN MURRAY AND THE ORIGINS OF AMERICAN UNIVERSALISM

John Murray (1741-1815) was born in a small town about 50 miles southwest of London. His father was a strict Calvinist who preached in the Anglican Church. He beat his son and made him feel God was hostile to humanity and life was a dreary procession of sins and negative feelings towards the rest of humanity. He broke with his father after hearing a Methodist preach and soon became acquainted with John Wesley, who inspired him to consider the ministry. In London he encountered the views of John Rely who preached a doctrine of universal salvation. This had immense appeal to John Murray who was then excommunicated by the Methodists who resisted this doctrine. Murray's wife and infant son died leaving him grief-stricken and he decided to settle to the Colonies. He arrived in New Jersey when the ship nearly ran aground and was befriended by a Universalist farmer named Potter. He preached at the invitation of Potter and was well received. Later the Universalists would buy Potter's farm and rename it as Murray Grove, a Universalist retreat.

Murray was resented in Massachusetts for his Universalism which included Murray's belief that Hell did not exist. His critics called his religion "nohellism." They claimed he was a British spy sent to keep an eye on the colonies now in revolt. Fortunately, George Washington had confidence in Murray and made him a Chaplain in his army. While Murray's personal life was filled with sorrows and a cruel upbringing, he had an outward and positive personality that meshed well with his religious views. He sought a religion that stressed human progress both in this life on earth and in an eventual union with like souls in heaven. With universal salvation and an absence of hell, humanity could stress its good works as applications of a love of God. Unlike the Unitarians, Universalists were trinitarians at the time of their foundation and did not challenge the divinity of Christ. Their heresy, from the view of most protestant denominations was their rejection of predestination, salvation through faith alone, and a wrathful, punitive God who made humanity wallow in sin and feelings of corruption.



THE PEABODY SISTERS AND THE TRANSCENDENTAL UNITARIAN MOVEMENT

The Peabodies were a Massachusetts family that played a major role in promoting Unitarian beliefs through their interests in the arts, the Transcendental movement, and teaching. Their father was a physician and dentist, more of a dreamer than practical with many business failures. Their mother was a teacher who taught her girls how to survive in a man's world by becoming educated. **Elizabeth Peabody** (1804-1894) followed her mother's advice and opened schools for girls using European methods that favored discovery rather than rote learning. She introduced the kindergarten to the United States. She also opened a bookstore in Boston and used it for soirees among the educated class. Emerson was impressed by her writing skills and she became editor of his magazine, *The Dial*. She never married. **Mary Peabody** (1806-1887) liked writing children's books and through Elizabeth she met and married Horace Mann who served in Congress and was President of Antioch College. Mann promoted public school education in the United States. Mary served as his secretary for many of his educational activities. **Sophia Peabody** (1809-1871) was the most artistic of the three sisters. She painted and sculpted and was recognized for her art in Boston. She met and married Nathaniel Hawthorne and they adored each other. Sophia had frail health and while they were in London, England, visiting, she died. The two Peabody brothers were not so fortunate. They were like their father and both died young, one from alcoholism and the other after a number of business failures.



Elizabeth



Mary



Sophia

CHARLES DICKENS – A UNITARIAN TALE OF TWO WRITERS

In his own time, **Charles Dickens** (1812-1870) was regarded next to Shakespeare as England's greatest writer. In the first half of the 20th century, he went into eclipse as "mawkish" and not worthy of inclusion as a serious writer. I favor the former assessment. Two of my favorite novels are *Oliver Twist* (1839) and *Hard Times* (1855). They describe the crimes against the poor by the wealthy and by the state which kowtows to the wealthy. They are very Unitarian novels because Dickens hoped to change humanity by practicing a philosophy he taught his nine children: "to do good always." Dickens's father was a naval pay clerk and chronically in debt. His mother was a natural story teller. At age 12 when his father went to debtor's prison, Dickens took a job as a shoe polish apprentice. He later switched to journalism, taught himself shorthand, and became a court clerk. These experiences brought him in contact with social failures, the judicial system, and an opportunity to write humorous sketches of those he observed which he published under a pseudonym. They became a book, *Pickwick Papers* and made him famous. *Oliver Twist* was his second novel, focusing on degeneracy caused by neglect of society. His portrayal of Fagin was considered anti-Semitic and in a later novel, *Our Mutual Friend*, he made atonement by portraying a virtuous Jew who rescues Christian neighbors. Dickens became a Unitarian in the 1840s and admired Channing and much of Emerson's essays, but satirized Transcendentalism in his novel *Martin Chuzzlewit*.



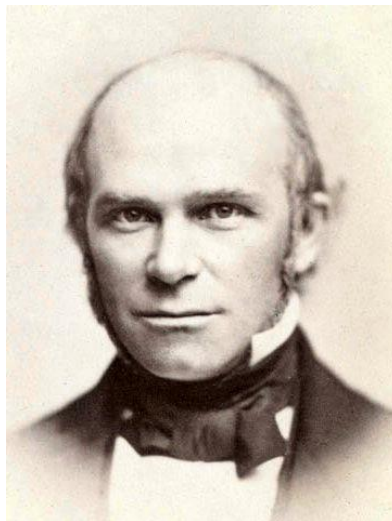
HARRIET MARTINEAU –FAMOUS IN HER OWN TIME, FORGOTTEN IN OUR OWN

Harriet Martineau (1802-1876) was well known in England and the United States as a writer, social activist, and critic of society. She was born in Norwich, England, the 6th child (of eight) of a mother she considered cold and constantly scolding and a father who was a successful textile manufacturer. As was the custom of the time, she was not college educated but her brothers were. She was raised Unitarian and rejected the idea of original sin as a hateful doctrine that made children feel they were unworthy. She wrote a book, *Household Education*, on treating children with love and affection. She was an admirer of Joseph Priestley's views on religion, Adam Smith's views on Capitalism, and Jeremy Bentham's Utilitarianism and published a series of 12 books on political economy for the general reader, a publishing success that made her independently wealthy. She visited the near east and studied their ancient religions and felt all religions evolved and doubt rather than certainty of faith was intellectually more honest, a view that alienated her family when she published her views as a book. She visited the US about the same time as Tocqueville and her *Society in America* praised American democracy but condemned its application of capitalism which she regarded as based on greed and corruption. She also alienated many of her American sponsors by denouncing slavery and arguing that women in American Democracy were treated like slaves without rights and adored as possessions of their husbands. Her career was hampered by progressive deafness and severe abdominal pain from ovarian cysts. In her later years she switched full time to writing as a journalist and wrote more than 1600 articles for newspapers and magazines in England and the US.



THEODORE PARKER INSPIRED AND RESHAPED EARLY AMERICAN UNITARIANISM

Theodore Parker (1810-1860) was a Unitarian minister born in Lexington, Massachusetts. He rejected the Calvinism of his youth and was attracted to Emerson's Transcendentalist movement, but unlike most Transcendentalists he incorporated this spiritual outlook into his Unitarian leanings. He denied the existence of miracles, the authority of the Bible, and the divinity of Jesus, which made him heretical to many Unitarians of the 1840s when he began his preaching. Most important was Parker's moral conviction of the evil of slavery and he became the leading Unitarian voice for abolition of that crime against black people. He defied the Fugitive Slave law of 1850 and helped hide escaped black slaves and he financially supported John Brown's attack on slavery. Parker's religious credo was published in *The Dial* in 1843, a journal for the Transcendentalist movement. He argued Unitarians should love man and love God. To do this they should help the weak and return good for evil. All people were related to one another as equals. He felt all other aspects of religion, including rites and professions of faith in church were transient but the core principles were how we acted to better the lot of others. Parker's family suffered from tuberculosis and he too succumbed to this disease shortly after a visit to Florence, Italy, where he is buried.



CLARA BARTON A FOUNDER OF THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

Clara Barton (1821-1912) was born in N. Oxford, Massachusetts and died in Maryland in her 91st year. She was raised a Universalist by her parents. She took an interest in teaching and read widely during those 12 years she taught. She then became a patent office clerk but male employees pressured and got her demoted. During the Civil War she organized efforts to supply bandages and supplies to the wounded. She also pressured the army until 1862 when she was given permission to work with the wounded on the battlefield. Soldiers called her the “angel of the battlefield.” After the war she helped families locate their missing and wounded sons. She joined Susan B. Anthony to support women’s right to vote and Frederick Douglass to help freed blacks to secure their civil rights. She then went to Europe for several years and became active with the International Red Cross and helped both sides in the Franco-Prussian War and wars in Turkey and returned to the US. She gave speeches and wrote articles for American recognition of that organization. She founded and became first President of the American Red Cross, overcoming a belief that it was unnecessary because the US was unlikely to engage in war again. She advocated its value not just for war but for natural disasters. This she demonstrated after flooding from hurricanes. She wrote books on the American Red Cross which remains today as one of the most admired charitable organizations in this country.



THOMAS STARR KING: THE UNITARIAN WHO SAVED THE UNION

Thomas Starr King (1824-1864) was born in New York City. His father was a Universalist Minister with very little money. Young Thomas had to drop out of school at age 16 and help support his family while studying on his own to become a minister. He first served as a minister at his father's church and then went to Boston as a Unitarian minister. He was called to San Francisco, California, to help spread Unitarian ideas on the West Coast. He was also an abolitionist and supported Lincoln's election campaign. During the Civil War he was a founder of the Pacific Coast Sanitary Commission, a predecessor of the Red Cross. He gave speeches in California cities to prevent secessionists who wanted to establish California as an independent country. Lincoln called him "the orator who saved the Union." He died young in San Francisco of diphtherial pneumonia. His enthusiasm for preaching Unitarian views was rewarded posthumously when the Pacific Coast School for the Ministry was renamed as The Starr King School for the Ministry which is today located in Berkeley.



ESSAY 3**FROM 1865 TO 1920**

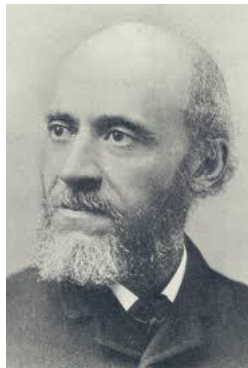
After the Civil War, both Unitarians and Universalists in the United States were well established. Unitarians still were concentrated in New England but they were moving into the Midwest. Universalists had an easier time establishing congregations because they appealed to farmers and small businessmen and their families whose parents and grandparents were pioneers. The northeast still had the largest concentration of intellectuals, artists, and wealthy elites who tended to favor Unitarian churches. Freed slaves were shifting to the AME churches and were betrayed by Republican administrations who reestablished ties with Southern states by allowing them to keep African Americans “in their place” by terror, poll taxes, and other discriminatory practices. The Civil rights movement of the 1950s to 1970s was largely isolated for almost a century. Unitarians were among the first to participate in the challenges to “Jim Crow laws.” But this was chiefly in mid 20th century. Instead, Unitarians in the last half of the 19th century put their energies into the women’s suffrage movement and they allied themselves with the alcohol prohibition movement. Other Unitarians advocated social reforms including the end to child labor, the importance of universal literacy through free public education, and the introduction of humane social changes such as ending poor houses, establishing public hospitals, promoting public health programs, providing asylums for the mentally disturbed, and allowing workers to unionize and go on strike for higher wages and worker safety measures. Unitarians were divided on the issue of pacifism. Many believed there were justified wars and they felt it was a patriotic duty to support the nation when it declared war. This was divisive when it came to the Spanish American War. As was the case for the Mexican War, the Unitarians were divided. Many, like David Starr Jordan, opposed American attempts to build an empire by colonization of Caribbean and Pacific nations. But few Unitarians took a stand against US involvement in World War 1. Those that did, like John Haynes Holmes were condemned by the AUA. Twenty years later the AUA changed policy and recognized the right of conscience of Unitarian ministers and Holmes was reinstated.

The twentieth century also shifted to a Unitarianism that shunned or minimized spirituality. Instead of congregations forming and establishing a church, small groups would meet in each other’s homes or in a rented space as Unitarian Fellowships. Very often in these Fellowships there were no choirs or singing, no ministers, and religious education followed the John Dewey and Sophia Fahs approach of emphasizing ethical behavior through stories in children’s books rather than in indoctrination through Bible stories. The Humanist movement was an outcome of this branch of Unitarian practice. Unitarian ministers did not feel uncomfortable calling themselves agnostics or atheists. Both Universalists and Unitarians were

small in relation to mainstream Protestant churches. They also shared a lot in common and a tolerance if not a preference for diversity. Individual Unitarian and Universalist congregations and fellowships voted on merger and the two denominations in 1962 became the Unitarian Universalists and the AUA became the UUA.

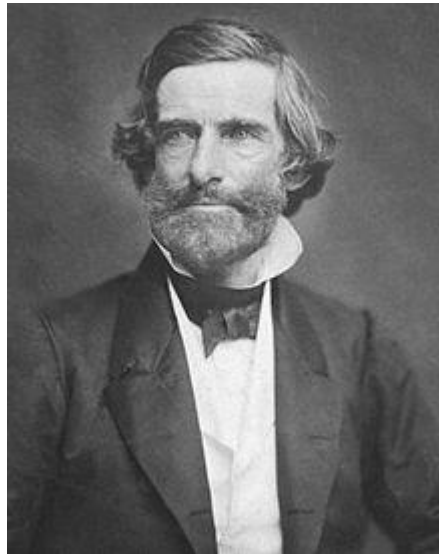
PETER HUMPHRIES CLARK, A FORGOTTEN BLACK UNITARIAN WHO DESERVES TO BE REMEMBERED.

Peter Humphries Clark (1829 – 1925) was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. His father was a freed slave who was a successful barber. His mother was of mixed ancestry with her father an indentured Irish laborer. He was educated in private schools because no schools for non-whites existed in Cincinnati at that time. After his father died in 1847, Clark tried barbering but disliked it. He was hired as a teacher by the first public “colored school” established in the city but was fired as an “infidel” when he praised the work of Thomas Paine. He became active as an abolitionist and became Frederick Douglass’s associate, writing articles and giving speeches. In 1857 he became the principal of a “colored school” and he focused on educating future teachers. He married Francis Williams, joined the new Republican Party, and became a Unitarian after meeting Republican Unitarians active in the abolitionist movement. After the Civil War he mobilized the black vote for Republicans who then reneged on their promises to deliver civil rights and opportunities for blacks. He responded by endorsing the Democratic Party and warned both parties that blacks would be swing voters and have no loyalty to either party. The Democrats won and most of the reforms he asked for were enacted and the segregation laws of the Republicans were removed. He moved his family to Alabama and then to St. Louis, Missouri where he lived the rest of his life, establishing schools for “colored students” and promoting black causes. His one regret was that he could not find any place where he could set up an integrated public school with both black and white teachers. He argued that an integrated school with all white teachers would fail because black students would see that their opportunities were limited.



SAMUEL GRIDLEY HOWE AND THE TEACHING OF THE DISABLED

Samuel Gridley Howe (1801-1876) grew up in Boston. His father was a ship owner and rope manufacturer. His family attended a liberal Congregational church which became Unitarian in 1825. Howe's father was a maverick Jeffersonian Democrat and young Howe adopted those ideals and championed the French Revolution. He went to school at Brown University but wasted most of his time in pranks. He did get to become friends with Horace Mann and they shared their idealism for social reforms. Howe shifted to medicine and went to Harvard medical school. After reading Byron's poems and views on the Greek Revolution, Howe volunteered to become a surgeon in the Greek army. He became the Lafayette of Greek independence. When he returned he took an interest in working with the blind and got a wealthy benefactor to establish the Perkins Institute. There he made innovations, including a printing press that produced raised type on paper that he used until the 1870s when Braille became available. In 1843 he married a wealthy heiress, Julia Ward, and they became active in the abolitionist movement. At the Perkins Institute, Howe became the first person to communicate with a deaf and blind person, Laura Bridgman, and their work eventually inspired the teacher of Helen Keller. Like Mann, Howe believed in an education that encouraged learning and avoided punishment. He argued that teaching should be guided by Baconian science, using "inductively derived laws of nature." He also favored a progressive income tax on the rich to give the poor an opportunity to escape from poverty.



JULIA WARD HOWE AND HER STRUGGLES TO BE A FEMALE ACTIVIST

Julia (née Ward) Howe (1819-1910) was born in New York City to a wealthy family. Her father was a Wall Street broker and young Julia was introduced to the wealthy society of New York through tutors and a finishing school. She loved to read and her first act of emancipation was to reject the Calvinism of her parents and adopt a liberal religious outlook. Her parents died when she was young and she became an heiress. She liked to write poetry and dramas and thought of herself as a social butterfly. She met Samuel Gridley Howe and although he was 18 years older, they married in 1843. It was Howe who made her aware of social inequality and the plight of the poor and the disabled. But Howe was a traditionalist and felt a woman's role should be that of a wife and mother. They had six children. Julia used her talents to write books of poetry and dramas (many under pseudonyms) and she and Samuel had a tense, angry marriage over their roles but decided to stay together and appreciate the good that each tried to do for others. They both became activists in the abolitionist movement and during the Civil War Julia wrote the lyrics to celebrate John Brown's martyrdom, calling her poem "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." After Samuel's death in 1876 she became a philanthropist, supporting the woman's suffrage movement. She tried to get Congress to establish Mother's Day as a movement for world peace but failed.



LOUISA MAY ALCOTT: AUTHOR AND ACTIVIST

Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888) was born in Germantown, Pennsylvania but raised in her childhood in Massachusetts. Her parents, Bronson Alcott and Abigail May were teachers. Abigail's brother was a Unitarian minister. The Alcott family grew up with the friendship and tutoring of Emerson and Thoreau. Bronson was not good at business and his schools often failed. Partly this was due to his strict standards and belief in the "sweetness of self denial." Louisa and many of Bronson's students believed in "plain living and high thinking." Louisa developed a skill for writing and became involved in the woman's and abolitionist movements. In the 1840s she worked with the Underground Railway to help escaped slaves find safe houses. She was fond of Theodore Parker's sermons. In the Civil War she served as a nurse and wrote newspaper articles on the survivors and the conditions of the hospitals. That volunteer work nearly took her life from typhoid fever. She wrote young adult novels in the early 1860s under a pen name and when some got good reviews, she switched to her own name. Her most famous novels are the quartet on the March family, largely autobiographical—*Little Women* and their sequels. Her character Jo is based on her own life growing up in Concord. Louisa was a lesbian and described herself as having "a man's soul put by some freak of nature into a woman's body." She was a semi-invalid the last 20 or so years of her life from the damage caused by typhoid fever which fortunately did not stem her numerous books and articles.



LYDIA MARIA (NÉE FRANCIS) CHILD AND THE FATE OF HISTORY

We are spared the verdict of history after we die and do not know what of our life's work will be remembered and that includes our own families because most of us have no idea of our relatives past our great grandparents. Although I had not encountered her name before, I did recall from my child hood a poem she wrote with a line most of you have heard: "Over the river and through the woods, to grandmother's house we go." **Lydia Maria Francis** (1802-1880) was the youngest of 7 children born to a Calvinist baker. Lydia's mother died a few years after Lydia was born and her father sent her to live with an older sister. Lydia had a passion to read and was largely self-taught by her sisters and her brothers who encouraged her. She became a school teacher and wrote the first American historical novel, *Hobomok* on the love of a New England girl and her Native American husband. Lydia had worked with Penobscot Indians when she lived on her oldest sister's farm. She was drawn to Unitarianism when she heard William Ellery Channing preach and this sparked an interest in the world's religions. She married a lawyer and became Lydia Maria Child. Her husband was a dreamer and not very practical so she supported the family with her writings. She wrote a best seller *The Frugal Housewife* describing how she managed their finances. She then attracted the attention of William Lloyd Garrison and wrote articles and books for the Abolitionist movement. She was shunned by most other publishers because of her advocacy. During the Civil War she wrote *The Freed Man's Book* which served as a primer for slaves learning to become literate. She wrote biographies of famous women to inspire young girls. She also became the first feminist historian with *The History and Condition of Women in Various Ages and Nations*. In her later years she was active with the liberal wing of the Unitarians in Boston.



MARGARET FULLER AND THE LAUNCHING OF AMERICAN FEMINISM

Margaret Fuller (1810-1850) was born in Cambridge Port, Massachusetts, of Unitarian parents. Her father was a lawyer and later a Congressman. Margaret was the first of eight children. She was taught by her father with the same rigor as John Stuart Mill was taught by his father and she learned several languages and a considerable sampling of the works of Western Civilization. She was not well versed in social graces so her father sent her to a finishing school. This provided contact with other women and Fuller became a hostess of soirées where women could enjoy intellectual conversation. Her father died in 1835 leaving Margaret with the rest of her siblings to raise. She helped out from the income she earned teaching and writing. She was a gifted writer, a successful translator of Goethe and other notables, and through her essays she came to Emerson's attention. He found her mind captivating and asked her to become editor of *The Dial*, the magazine of the Transcendentalist movement. In 1845 she wrote *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*, a manifesto for women's rights which helped launch the woman's movement at Seneca Falls in 1847. She left shortly after for Europe and followed Mazzini's efforts to unify Italy and wrote a manuscript on his life and career which she took back on the ship as it sailed for the US in 1850. A hurricane hit the East coast near Long Island, New York, and her ship was dashed and broken apart near Fire Island and Fuller perished with the passengers and crew along with her manuscript.



MARIA MITCHELL FIRST AMERICAN WOMAN ASTRONOMER

Maria Mitchell (1818-1889) was born on Nantucket Island to a Quaker household. Her father was an amateur astronomer and principal of a local school. He encouraged young Maria (she preferred muh-rye-uh as its pronunciation) to assist him during his astronomical observations and she became enthralled with making navigational and astronomical computations. She became a teacher in 1835 and then librarian of the Nantucket Athenaeum. She read all its books on astronomy. In 1847 she discovered a new comet and her descriptions and promotion of her discovery made her internationally known among astronomers. She found doubts about Quaker beliefs which were then hostile to science, and she was expelled as a Quaker and shifted to attending Unitarian services. In 1865 she was hired by Vassar College to be a professor of astronomy. She taught there until 1888 and published articles on the movement of sunspots and the transit of Venus across the surface of the sun. She told her female students "No matter where you are, nor what you do, you are a power. Your influence is incalculable." She was friends with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucy Stone, and Susan B. Anthony and attended their women's rights conventions. She also was co-founder of the American Association for the Advancement of Women. Mitchell never married and lived a private life, mostly with members of her family.



DOROTHEA DIX : SOCIAL REFORMER

Dorothea Dix (1802-1887) was raised Unitarian in a family that had squandered its wealth. Her father was an abusive alcoholic. At age 12 she ran away from home and from age 14 on she lived with an aunt in Vermont and later her grandmother in Boston. Although her father had become a Methodist, she retained her Unitarian faith and was largely self-taught. She became a school teacher and wrote books for children, including one on “common things” that became a best-seller. She never married. In 1836 she went to England and stayed with a Quaker family. She learned from them about the social reforms taking place, especially the efforts to improve the conditions of committed lunatics (as the insane were then called). She returned to the US in 1840 and launched a statewide study of the insane in Massachusetts and presented a paper to the state legislature denouncing the “cages, stalls, and pens” in which they were kept. She got effective passage for construction of an asylum for the insane. She then went to Louisiana, Illinois, and other states to spread her movement. During the Civil War she was appointed head of nursing, but ran into conflicts because she demanded strict dress codes and training. She also alienated Republican radicals by treating Confederate wounded with the same care as Northern soldiers. After the war she returned to her lobbying efforts on behalf of the insane, the deaf, dumb, and blind, as well as unemployable paupers.

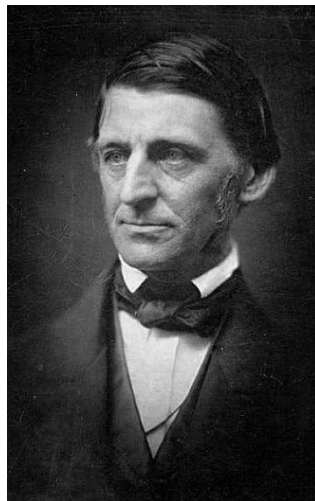


RALPH WALDO EMERSON AND THE UNITARIAN CHURCH

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) was born in Boston and died in Concord. His father was a Unitarian minister. Ill health forced Emerson to move to St. Augustine, Florida where he observed a slave auction and came away with a hatred for slavery. On his return, two brothers died of tuberculosis and he married only to have his wife also die of that disease. He went to Harvard Divinity School and was ordained in 1829 but soon resigned, feeling the church was antiquated.

In 1836 his essay *Nature*, created a sensation and launched the Transcendentalist movement in the US. The next year he wrote an essay, *the American Scholar*, urging American writers to use America's voice to launch a distinctive American literature. In 1838 he gave an address to the Harvard Divinity School and claimed there are no miracles, Jesus was a human, and that Christianity needed to purge itself of centuries of dubious doctrines. The speech created an uproar and Emerson was denounced as an atheist.

Emerson remarried and made his living from his lectures. Emerson argued that we see the world as a collection of pieces but they are all part of one universal soul. Emerson is America's Montaigne. Like Montaigne he raised the essay form to a great art. His essays express his life philosophy. Stylistically, Montaigne wrote as if you were having dinner with him. For Emerson, each sentence was polished into a gem.



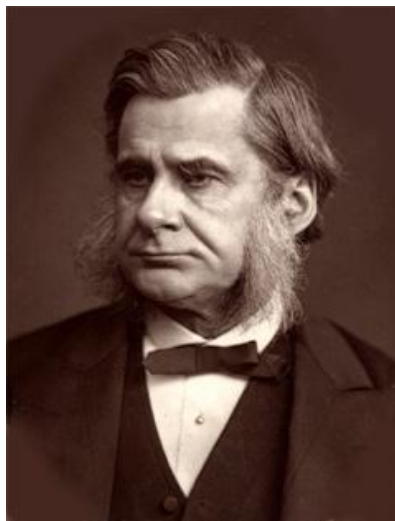
CHARLES DARWIN AND HIS ON-GOING INFLUENCE

Charles Darwin (1809- 1882) was born in Shrewsbury, England, his grandfather being a member of the Lunar Society and a Unitarian. He married his cousin, Emma Wedgwood, of the porcelain manufacturing family who were also Unitarians. Darwin chose the Anglican faith and the ministry after failing in medicine which he did not like. He had the good fortune to be chosen to accompany Captain Fitzroy on the *HMS Beagle* for five years around the world serving as a naturalist. This transformed his life. Darwin did not come up with a theory of evolution by natural selection while he was on the trip around the world. It came to him in 1838 a year after his return to England. He realized that the distribution of plants and animals, the fossil record in countries he visited, the effects of isolation on remote islands, and the immense diversity of life he surveyed made sense if living things became adapted to their environments and nature provided the means of sifting who would live and reproduce and who would die out before leaving replacements. Darwin kept his findings on evolution unpublished for 20 years and finally launched his theory in 1858. His wife took the children to the Unitarian church in Down, near London, but Darwin lost his belief in the supernatural. His work on *The Origin of Species* changed the way science, religion, and society saw our place in nature.



THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY AND AGNOSTICISM

Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895) grew up in a middle class family that hit hard times. His father was a mathematics teacher and his school went bankrupt. Young Huxley had to drop out of school at age 10 and he became an autodidact reading books avidly and learning German, Latin, and Greek. Other relatives helped him and he won a scholarship that allowed him to enter medical school, but he never completed it. Nevertheless, he passed the examinations to be certified as a surgeon and enlisted in the British navy. He went on an expedition to the south Pacific and studied invertebrates in New Guinea and Australia, specializing in the Coelenterates which he identified as two layered organisms. His skill as a surgeon was outstanding and the papers he sent back to be published earned him a reputation as a gifted biologist. He sought relationships of organisms and when Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection occurred, he became a staunch advocate and for thirty years defended evolution against its critics. He rejected the supernatural in science and felt uncomfortable with the supernatural in religion. He coined the word agnostic in 1869, using the Gnostic sects' term (gnostic = knowing) and claimed an agnostic does not know. He felt the question was not capable of scientific resolution. Huxley taught at the London School of Mines and helped shape the liberal arts education we identify today as a mixture of science, arts, and humanities.



“THE GREAT AGNOSTIC” –ROBERT GREEN INGERSOLL

Robert Green Ingersoll [1833-1899] contributed to the agnostic component of the UU spectrum of belief. He shared with Thomas Paine the view known as Deism during the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century—God played no direct role in human affairs and at most was the creator of the laws of science that made the world work. He was born in upstate NY near Lake Seneca where his father was a minister with nonconformist Congregationalist views and an outspoken advocate for the Abolitionist position. This forced the elder Ingersoll to shift churches and the younger Ingersoll was largely self-taught except for two years of elementary school. Ingersoll resented the orthodoxy of churches that made life for his father so hostile and he also disliked being forced to attend Sunday school lessons that he found intellectually dull and dreary. He happened to hear a person reading aloud from Shakespeare and bought the complete works and spent his teen years reading those plays. He became a lawyer and settled in Peoria, Illinois, married his wife Eva and enjoyed giving public lectures. During the Civil War he was captured by the Confederates. He was like a rock-star as an orator and he did not hesitate to express his views, that “our government was founded not upon the rights of gods but upon the rights of men.” He felt the greatest good was being happy, here, now, and by helping others.



ERNESTINE ROSE AND AMERICAN FEMINISM

Ernestine Rose [1810-1892] was born in Poland as Ernestine Polowsky. Her father was a rabbi and very stern in his orthodoxy. When his wife died and Ernestine was 16, he arranged a marriage for her. She told this person that she did not want to marry him and went to court to seek her freedom from her father's control. She won and left for Berlin, then England, where she made a living teaching Hebrew and selling room deodorizers from floral scents she prepared. She heard Robert Owen, a Utopian socialist, speak about human rights for all regardless of sex, race, class, or nationality. She married an "Owenite", William Rose, and they emigrated to New York in 1836. They made a living with her sales of room deodorizers and his skills as a silversmith. She became an orator much in demand speaking for the Abolitionist movement and women's rights to own property, hold a job, and vote. She was the inspiration of Susan B. Anthony who had a picture of her hanging in her living room. She criticized those who used the bible to justify slavery and to oppress women. In 1849 she began a petition campaign to give women the right to own property and succeeded in 1849 to get states to pass such laws. She was the first atheist to publically acknowledge her rejection of the supernatural and she argued "all children are atheists and were religion not inculcated in their minds, they would remain so."



THOMAS NAST AND THE POLITICAL CARTOON

Thomas Nast (1840-1902) was born in Bavaria. His father, a trombonist, left Germany in 1846 and brought his family to New York City. Nast was gifted as an artist and became an illustrator for newspapers and magazines. He was sent on assignment to England and to Italy and returned to witness the Civil War. His drawings of the riots in NYC, mostly by immigrant Irish, which led to the lynching of blacks and to the burning of the Colored Orphan Asylum, made him repudiate his Catholic upbringing. Surprisingly, Nast was virtually illiterate and his wife read to him. He became a champion of the abolitionist movement and the post war effort to secure opportunities and rights for black Americans. He also opposed the Oriental exclusion efforts on the west coast. His cartoons were both sentimental (he gave us the Santa Clause image and made it a family holiday) and stinging. His drawings on the front lines in the Civil War stimulated recruitment for the Union army. After the war he became a pro-Republican cartoonist and a friend of President Grant. He took on the corruption in NY City and exposed the Boss Tweed gang so effectively that the city voted them outside of office and into prison. Nast was also a friend of Theodore Roosevelt and he was appointed by him to be a Consul in Ecuador. He arrived only to succumb shortly after from a yellow fever outbreak. Nast's activism was admired and promoted by Unitarians and Universalists.



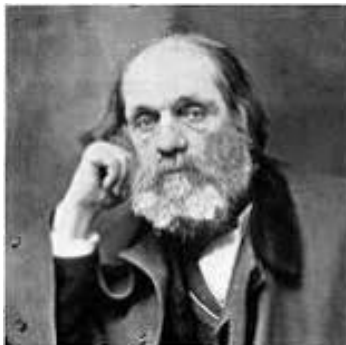
ABNER KNEELAND: THE LAST US CITIZEN CONVICTED OF BLASPHEMY

If I had to resurrect from the forgotten, one of my favorite UUs, I would put **Abner Kneeland** (1774-1844) up there with Michael Servetus and Joseph Priestley. He was born in Gardner, Massachusetts and raised a Baptist. He converted to Universalism when he was 22 and went through a hectic life, fathering 12 children, surviving three of his four wives, and leaving a wake of outrage among his parishioners and readers as he lobbed one mental bombshell after another questioning their (and his) beliefs. He was an abolitionist, a feminist who favored women's rights to birth control, divorce, keeping their own names in marriage, owning property, and having custody of their children. He said there was nothing immoral about interracial couples having children. He wrote books and articles promoting these social views and described the Trinitarian religions as "nothing more than a chimera of their own imagination." He became a pantheist and said "God and nature are synonymous." He preached that "our duty is living as long as we can... providing as much happiness as we can while we live." He published a free thought journal, *The Investigator* in 1832. His views were considered blasphemous under Massachusetts Law. He argued his arrest violated the US Constitution, his right to preach religion, and the freedom of the press. He was found guilty and the judge condemned him as "a cantankerous and inflexible heretic." Emerson and Channing supported him, but most ministers agreed with the verdict. He served 60 days in jail.



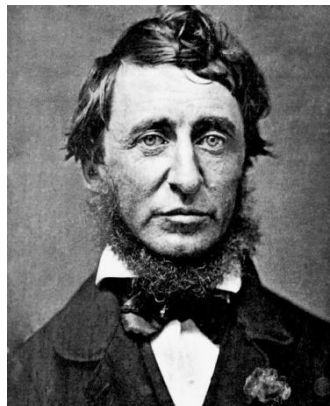
THE MANY TALENTED EDWARD EVERETT HALE

Edward Everett Hale (1822 – 1909) we remember most for a short story he published in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1863, “The Man Without a Country”. It was still being assigned when I went to public school in New York. He was born in Boston. His father was the owner and editor of a Boston newspaper and a bookseller. He was a grand nephew of Revolutionary War hero and spy, Nathan Hale (“I regret that I have but one life to give for my country.”) He was largely self taught using his father’s immense personal library and entered Harvard at age 13. While at Harvard he shed Calvinistic views of Christianity, and decided to become a Unitarian minister and was ordained in 1842. He believed religion should be simple in its demands and tried to live by his own motto “Look up, not down. Look forward, not back. Look out, and not in. Lend a hand.” He married the niece of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Emily Perkins, and raised nine children with her. He became an abolitionist and tried to keep Kansas a free state. He took an interest in the poor and founded the Lend a Hand Society which promoted a secular charity to better the lot of the working class and poor. They offered free classes to the illiterate and semi-literate. He also tried to bring together the conservative, spiritual, and radical branches of the Unitarian denominations arguing that diverse and larger congregations enriched the participants. He wrote histories, biographies, essays, short stories, and novels. He also hid a serious flaw. He fell in love with his secretary, Harriet Freeman, and kept their relation a secret. They wrote over 3000 letters to each other, the intimate parts in a shorthand code.



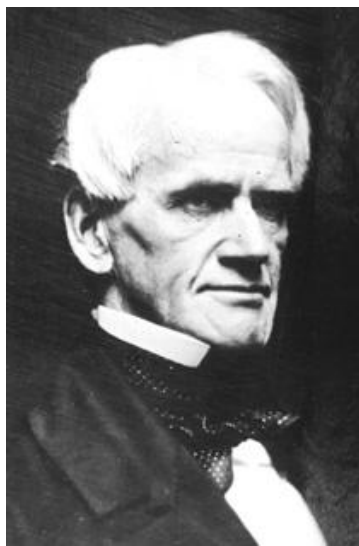
HENRY DAVID THOREAU AND CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) was born and died in Concord, Massachusetts. He succumbed to tuberculosis. His father manufactured pencils and young Thoreau went to Harvard but did not like college life. He tried teaching and that fizzled. He did like to write and Concord had many literary models for him. He improved the making of graphite pencils but did not stay committed to business. He wrote in Emerson's residence, serving as a tutor to Emerson's children and as a caretaker while Emerson was away on speaking tours. He then moved to Walden Pond and built his own cabin and cultivated beans, his chief staple for food, with occasional fish and edible fruits he collected in the forest. He was disillusioned with American expansionism and opposed the Mexican War, refusing to pay his poll taxes. He went to prison and wrote an essay on civil disobedience, arguing that non-violent confrontation was an important way to sway public opinion and change government policy. He also was an abolitionist and helped runaway slaves, leading them to safe houses. His book *Walden* was based on two years of diary entries. He showed how he communed with nature and learned what is important, describing his experience as "sucking all the marrow out of life." He preferred sauntering as a means to enjoy a nature walk rather than having a specific direction. Thoreau was raised in a Unitarian church that had recently rejected the Trinity and he assimilated Emerson's transcendentalism for his view of nature. He described his outlook this way: "I hear beyond the range of sound; I see beyond the verge of sight."



HORACE MANN AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Horace Mann (1796-1859) was born in Franklin, Massachusetts and raised as a Congregationalist but late in life became a Unitarian. He was largely self-educated, spending much of his youth reading library books. His father was a farmer. He went to Brown and became a lawyer and ran for state office and served in both chambers. He also served in Congress and opposed slavery. He was offered and took a position as director of the first Department of Education in the United States. He visited every school in Massachusetts. He found most were sectarian, subsidized by specific religions promoting that religion, that many poor children had little or no schooling and were functionally illiterate, that virtually none of the teachers had a formal training in how to teach, and that standards were virtually non-existent. He wrote proposals with specific recommendations including, universal education to age 16, non-sectarian status of the educational program (no one religion favored), tax-supported education for all students, ending corporal punishment, and establishment of normal schools (teachers colleges) for training school teachers. He argued that education was essential for informed citizenry and that education led to more opportunities for employment and higher income. Massachusetts adopted these reforms in 1853 establishing the first statewide public school system in the United States. The last years of his life he served as the founding President of Antioch College in Ohio and he urged graduating seniors “Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity”



JANE ADDAMS AND THE ROLE OF SETTLEMENT HOUSES

Jane Addams (1860-1935) was born in Cedarville, Illinois, where her father was a wealthy banker, factory owner, and agribusiness owner. He was also a friend of Abraham Lincoln. Addams mother died when Jane was 2 years old and her father remarried when Jane was 8. Jane was a sickly child with tuberculosis of the spine that caused severe scoliosis. Addams did her undergraduate work in Illinois but after her father died she and her sister went to medical school in Philadelphia. She dropped out to have surgery for her illness. She sought ways to find a satisfactory life and on a trip to England visited a settlement house. She thought this would be a great innovation for American immigrants. At Chicago she rented Hull House and began converting it into a settlement community which offered classes, lectures, public health programs, immigrant assistance, musical activity to give the poor a sense of culture, and outreach programs to help immigrants find work and housing. She was a Presbyterian in her youth but in Chicago she attended Unitarian services and for her Hull House she made secularism the rule because of the multiple faiths of the poor. She admired Teddy Roosevelt and campaigned for him when he ran for president. She also became a peace activist and fought hard for the League of Nations. In 1931 she won the Nobel Prize for Peace. She never married but had romantic relations with two women in her life.



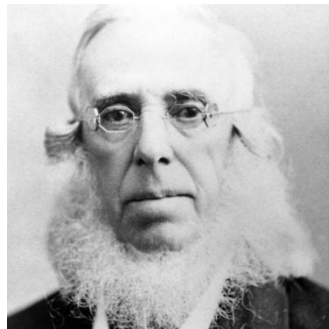
LYDIA JENKINS: FORERUNNER OR ACTUAL FIRST UNIVERSALIST FEMALE PREACHER?

Lydia Ann Moulton was born about 1824 in upstate New York in the Finger Lakes region. She died about 50 years later in 1874 still in upstate New York but having preached the Universalist faith for 20 years. There is a debate on whether she was formally ordained. She married Edmund Jenkins in 1846. He was an ordained Universalist minister. Lydia Jenkins grew up in Auburn, New York and shed her Calvinist upbringing for Universalism as a young woman. She became active in the feminist movement and wrote articles on the need for women to have civil rights including the right to vote. She also studied medicine and got an MD in homeopathic medicine. Her motivation for a medical career stemmed from a spinal injury she had since her youth that made her an invalid. This limited her opportunities to travel. Her initial preaching was as a co-minister with her husband and her gift in preparing and delivering sermons attracted notice and even won over her most fierce opponent in the Universalist hierarchy for ordination who heard her preach. She received in 1858 a “certificate of fellowship and formal license” to preach. She claimed to have been ordained in 1860 but the minutes of that meeting are missing so there is no official document showing she was ordained. For that reason Olympia Brown is given the status as the first ordained Universalist female preacher in 1863. If Lydia Jenkins is presumed to have been ordained as she and others of her generation claimed, then she is the first. In 1866 she and her husband left their church and ministry and opened a medical school in Binghamton, New York. Sadly it burned down two years later and they finished their lives practicing medicine in Auburn.



PETER COOPER AND FREE HIGHER EDUCATION

Peter Cooper (1791-1883) was born in New York City and raised as a Methodist. His father taught hard work (which Peter followed) and a fear of damnation by a furious God (which he did not accept). He only had about two years of formal schooling. His father was a tinkerer and Cooper learned early to improvise and invent to solve problems. He rivals Edison in the many different things he invented—gelatin (from animal skins), a clothes washer, a shearing machine for cutting cloth, the first steam locomotive, structural beams for use in building multistoried buildings, the first blast furnace, the Atlantic cable (with Cyrus Field). He established iron foundries and amassed a huge fortune. He married and had six children, only two of whom survived childhood. In 1831 he heard a Unitarian sermon and quickly converted and joined the Unitarian Church (now All Soul's) in New York. He found Unitarianism compatible with his belief in acquiring knowledge through science. He believed education should "be as free as water and air." To accomplish this he donated the money to construct a building for The Cooper Union which was dedicated in 1859 to the education of ambitious and intelligent men and women free of fees and tuition. He inspired other wealthy individuals to provide funds for education, including Carnegie and Rockefeller. Many others, however, thought he was corrupting youth by providing free education. His funeral attracted thousands who lined the streets of his Unitarian church to say goodbye to a person they loved.



SPIRITUALITY, SPIRITUALISM, AND NINETEENTH CENTURY UNITARIAN AND UNIVERSALIST BELIEFS

Many issues in the history of the Unitarian and Universalist churches are recurrent. In the 1870s a movement of spiritualism swept the US and Great Britain. It led to séances with voices from the dead, writings dictated by the dead, table rapping, apparitions, and knocked over objects occurring in darkened rooms with séance participants. Many of these were outright fraudulent performances. About ten percent of the US population attended these sessions or were sympathetic to those who did. It was widely embraced by Universalists whose ministers followed Hosea Ballou's view that all souls are saved and souls evolve after death and perhaps communication with the dead could be a way of having a scientific study of the spiritual world. Universalists often became editors of spiritualist journals. Unitarians were less enthusiastic except for the Transcendentalist wing inspired by Emerson that sought a more emotional side to their religious experience (Unitarians were often considered emotionally "cold"). The rule for Unitarian ministers was "believe it if you want to, but don't preach it." As the twentieth century began, interest in spiritualism and spirituality diminished in both Universalist and Unitarian churches and an emphasis on rationalism and social involvement embraced concerns about women's rights, labor union rights, civil rights, and LGBT rights that dominated liberal churches for most of the twentieth century. The rise of New Age spirituality in the 1960s and 1970s began a return to spirituality (more tilted to Transcendental belief than to séances). Current UUs are as divided now as they were in the 1870s on the role of spirituality in their beliefs.



ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL, THE OTHER FIRST WOMAN MINISTER IN THE UNITED STATES

Antoinette (née Brown) Blackwell (1825-1921) was born in Henrietta, NY, to a Congregationalist family. Her father was a farmer. At age 8 she took an interest in becoming a minister and her mother encouraged her to pursue that attempt. First she became a school teacher and then studied literature and theology at Oberlin College, entering the theology program in 1847. She lectured and gave occasional guest sermons until 1852 when she became ordained in a Congregational church in S. Butler, NY. She left the church after it condemned two infants who died in infancy before they could be baptized and claimed she could not believe in a God who would take such a view. She went to New York and wrote articles for the *New York Tribune* on poverty in New York City and issues of women's rights and the need for abolition of slavery. She met Samuel Blackwell, who had a substantial income and they had seven children, five of whom survived infancy. She worked out with her husband the right of a mother to hold part-time work and for her husband to assist with the housework. She promoted this arrangement as part of her women's rights advocacy. In 1878 she and her husband became Unitarians and she resumed her preaching in New Jersey. At the age of 95 she voted for the first time. Blackwell was not related to Olympia Brown, but she met her many times and they sometimes preached together in their many efforts to promote women's rights to vote. Both Blackwell and Brown have a claim to being the first female ordained minister depending on the years of training, preaching, or being a settled minister.



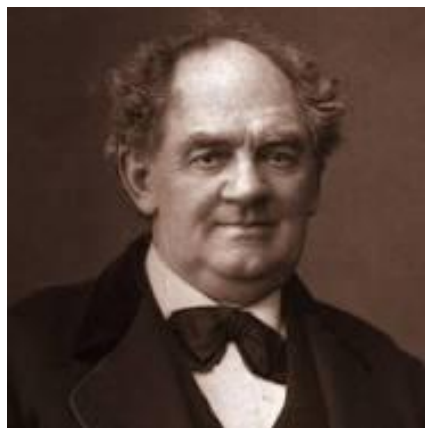
OLYMPIA BROWN AND THE ENTRY OF WOMEN AS MINISTERS IN THE UNITED STATES

At the age of 85, **Olympia Brown** (1835-1926) joined millions of women and cast her first vote in a national election. Brown was born on a prairie farm in Michigan and her mother inspired her by getting her neighbors to build a school house where she got her elementary education. She was sent to a women's school whose male teachers thought little of their intellect. She transferred to Antioch and competed with males and eventually attained a Divinity Degree. She chose the most liberal church to ordain her, the Universalist Church, and since she was the first female to do so, they held a special council and voted their approval. She was the first ordained female minister in the United States and she had settled ministries in Vermont, Connecticut, and Wisconsin. She was a foe of slavery and a champion of women's rights and after the Civil War she gave more than 300 speeches on the woman's right to vote. She realized late in the century that trying to get state legislatures to act was futile and she urged a Constitutional amendment instead. She organized women to picket the White House and President Wilson ordered them arrested. They were maltreated in prison and the publicity created sympathy for the women's suffrage movement. In 1920 the amendment was passed and ratified by the requisite states. She was married and had two children, both of whom became teachers.



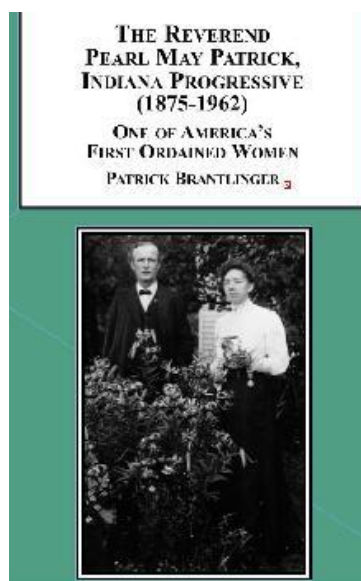
PHINEAS TAYLOR BARNUM – UNIVERSALIST PHILANTHROPIST

We know **P. T. Barnum** (1810—1891) as the first half of the Barnum and Bailey Circus. We also know him for a quote he never uttered (“There’s a sucker born every minute.”). He was born in Bethel, Connecticut and raised as a Congregationalist until his uncle “rescued” him and introduced him to Universalism. He edited a newspaper in Danbury that criticized the local government for its opposition to taverns and other places of entertainment. He was sued, by those he castigated, for libel and sentenced to 60 days in jail. He sold his home and left Connecticut in 1835 and went to New York City where he opened a museum of curiosities that had immense public appeal and made him a fortune. His museum was a predecessor of the American Museum of Natural History. Later, he built himself a home in Bridgeport, Connecticut to raise his family and he supported the local Universalist Church so it could hire its first female minister, Olympia Brown. He brought Swedish opera virtuoso Jenny Lind to the US for a multi-city tour and created a sensation with his publicity for her abilities. In 1870 he formed the Barnum and Bailey Circus which still continues to entertain families. He used a major portion of his estate to endow Tufts University which was founded by Universalists



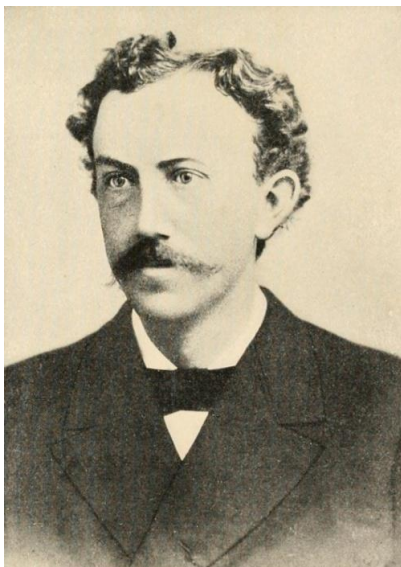
SOWING HOPE – REVEREND PEARL MAY PATRICK AND THE SOCIAL GOSPEL OF HOOSIER UNIVERSALISM

I enjoyed reading Patrick Brantlinger's biography of his grandmother **Pearl May Patrick** (1875-1962). She was born and raised on a farm near Peru, Indiana. Her father did not allow her to go beyond the 8th grade for education as was the custom then. She met David Asbury Patrick who was a Universalist minister and he encouraged Pearl to preach the social gospel that many Universalists adopted during the Progressive era. This included changing society to better the lives of working people. They supported unions, the Socialist Party (especially the Indiana branch centered on Eugene Debs), and the Universalist message that all souls matter and would be saved. Pearl received a license to preach in 1899 and in 1920 she became ordained after her husband's death. She was heavily involved in the suffrage movement and she was inspired by Jane Addams' social work in Chicago at Hull House. During the summers she participated in the Universalist meetings in Rome, Indiana where a Hoosier Chautauqua circuit was housed. Brantlinger describes Pearl's career and the circumstances of her era that made Indiana (and much of the Midwest) a haven for the Progressive movement that backed Theodore Roosevelt. Brantlinger provides a broad picture of religion in the Midwest, the spread of Universalism, and a kinder world that brought about social change we today take for granted. The book was published by the Edwin Mellen Press, Lewiston, NY (in ebook and paperback) and I am sure a copy will be placed in the Fuchs Library of the UUCB for you to enjoy.



DAVID STARR JORDAN AND THE SHIFTING STATUS OF FAME

I got my PhD doing research in H. J. Muller's laboratory in Jordan Hall at Indiana University. We are also familiar with Jordan Avenue which divides the IU campus into east and west sides. **David Starr Jordan** (1851-1931) was raised in upstate New York as a Universalist. His middle name was given by his mother for Thomas Starr King, a famed Unitarian minister. Jordan attended Lombard College (Universalist affiliated) and then attended Cornell. In the 1870s PhD degrees were still not common and he taught with a BA at Butler University in Indianapolis. He became well known as an evolutionary biologist and wrote numerous books and articles on the distribution and evolution of fishes of North and South America. He decided to get a MD at a one year school in Indianapolis. He was recruited to IU where he joined the faculty and became President of IU. He introduced the lower division liberal arts and upper division major with elective courses (it is still the model for undergraduate education) which got him national attention and he was named first president of Stanford University. He liked to popularize biology and apply it to society and he did so through the American Unitarian Press (later Beacon Press) writing 19 books for them. He denounced America's engagement in the Spanish American War as unnecessary imperialism. In his books he warned of the growing political power of the arms industry. He believed that behavior was shaped by heredity and he became an advocate for the eugenics movement founded by Francis Galton. At the beginning of the twentieth century eugenics was supported equally by liberal and conservative intellectuals but after World War II (20 years after his death) this damaged his reputation.



GEORGE RIPLEY AND THE UTOPIAN EXPERIMENT OF BROOK FARM

George Ripley (1802-1880) was born in Greenfield, Massachusetts where his father had a general store and tavern. He went to Harvard and became a Unitarian minister. In the 1830s he broke with the traditional Christian Unitarians and joined the Transcendentalists, establishing a club for their meetings. In 1840 he read of the French utopian experiments of Fourier, a forerunner of socialism. This impressed him and he bought land in West Roxbury to establish what he called Brook Farm. It required members to work the farm and then study at its school which ran from elementary education to college level learning. Nathaniel Hawthorne, William Channing, and Margaret Fuller were among the participants in this Utopian experiment. A fire burned the main building in 1847 and ended the program. Ripley left the ministry and Massachusetts and went to New York City to work as a journalist with Horace Greeley. Over the years he became known as a compelling essayist, thoughtful commentator on society, and a cultural dean among the elite of the Gilded Age. He edited a successful and financially rewarding 16 volume *New American Cyclopaedia*. Ripley was married twice. His first wife became disillusioned by both the Transcendental movement and the Brook Farm experiment. She converted to Roman Catholicism and this placed a strain on their marriage. She died in 1861 and he remarried after establishing his new career as a journalist.



HORATIO ALGER—SUCCESS AND FAILURE IN A UNITARIAN LIFE

Horatio Alger, Jr (1832-1899) was born in Bridgewater, Massachusetts where his father was a Unitarian minister. Young Alger was asthmatic, severely nearsighted, and tiny (as an adult he was 5 feet 2 inches). His father tutored him and eventually saved the money to send him to Harvard where he excelled and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. He liked to write but thought it would be more practical to be a minister like his father. During the Civil War he was rejected for military service because of his disabilities. He wrote essays about the soldiers and their battles. He also wrote novels but his adult novels did not sell while his boy's novels did well. He served as a Unitarian minister for one year and then abruptly resigned and left town. A scandal was hushed up. He was gay and attracted to teen age boys in his church. He never served as a minister again and went to NYC, lived in boarding houses, and wrote about the children growing up poor who found benevolent adults who helped them find their way to success in life. He wrote more than 100 of these novels of rags to riches. His novels did even better after he died when they became paperback "dime novels" that had enormous appeal during the Gilded Age. He only discussed his pathology for adolescent boys later in life with psychologist William James and in his will he requested his papers be burned by his family and they obliged.



CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN AND FEMINISM

Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935) was born in Connecticut and died in California. She is best known as the author of a feminist classic, the short story, *The Yellow Wallpaper* (1890), which was based on her own post-partum depression. She came from an unhappy home with her mother lacking affection and her father a distant visitor who left the home. She grew up in poverty with occasional help from more prominent relatives, like her aunt, Harriet Beecher Stowe. She was largely self taught and took an interest in writing. She became a feminist, poet, novelist, magazine publisher, and public speaker. She argued for a humanism that rejected patriarchy. She argued that “there is no female brain.... might as well speak of a female liver.” She was a Darwinist but felt he overstated male roles in evolution. She married twice and had one daughter. Her books on the oppression of women made her a leading feminist at the start of the twentieth century and her views won support among many Unitarian and Universalist women. *The Yellow Wallpaper* is still admired today for its revelation of how “the rest cure” was prescribed for so-called “hysterical” women like her. What she needed was stimulation and opportunity to explore her talents. What she was given was isolation and removal of all stimulation except for the yellow wallpaper that was driving her mad.



FANNIE BARRIER WILLIAMS AND “THE NEW COLORED WOMAN”

Fannie (née Barrier) Williams (1855-1944) was born and raised in Brockport, New York. She was a descendant of freed slaves and her father was a barber and sold coal to local households. Her mother taught Fannie how to play piano and encouraged her career. She was the first African American to graduate from Brockport Normal School (now SUNY Brockport) and went to the Reconstruction South to teach and first learned the difficulties of segregation and bigotry. She returned to pursue a musical education in Boston and gave recitals. She also took up portrait painting in Washington, DC, where she met her husband, Samuel Liang Williams, an African American lawyer. They moved to Chicago where both got involved in civil rights for African Americans and women’s rights. Fannie became friends with Jane Addams and was introduced to white philanthropists. Meat packer Philip Armour provided funding for a hospital for African-Americans that she founded. At the 1893 Colombian Exhibition in Chicago Williams gave an address on the progress of African Americans since emancipation and a second address on the bigotry of White Christian churches that excluded blacks. Religion, she argued, “should unite and not separate men and women of different races.” The Williamses attended All Soul’s Unitarian church in Chicago. Later she supported both Booker T. Washington’s practical approach to Black employment and education and W. E. Dubois’s liberal arts approach to African American education. Often she concluded her speeches with a piano recital to remind her white audiences that the arts are universal. She had no children and in her old age as a widow she returned to Brockport to die.



ESSAY 4**FROM 1920 TO THE 21ST CENTURY**

From 1920 to 1962 the Unitarians and Universalists were small liberal denominations among the Protestant churches in America. The Unitarians continued to seek social justice and other good works as major activity for its members. The science of the twentieth century was liberating for Unitarians as they greeted Einstein's theories of relativity and the relation of energy to mass. The new science of genetics made many Unitarians and Universalists embrace eugenics as a way of producing human betterment. The Scopes trial in 1925 in Dayton, Tennessee pitted Clarence Darrow against William Jennings Bryan. Scopes had been accused of teaching evolution in public school, forbidden by Tennessee law. Unitarians sided with Darrow but many traditional Protestant denominations who, after 1910, called themselves Fundamentalists, supported Bryan. Universalists and Unitarians recognized they had a lot in common as dissident churches. But it was not until 1961 that they voted to join and become the Unitarian Universalist denomination in 1962.

The merger of the two denominations created a problem. Did the two traditions keep their past practices and beliefs or was there an effort to blend the two into a common program? If they were not blended by negotiation, how would the two traditions influence each other? Universalists tended to believe in God. They may have dropped the Trinity but not a belief there was a creator who was involved in human affairs and to whom one could pray. They may have dropped Hell but they did not drop Heaven and a belief in a loving God and universal salvation. Instead of a direct merger of beliefs, a tolerance or acceptance of diversity became the emphasis of the new UU denomination. A respect and appreciation for diversity was promoted. UUs could think of themselves as pantheists, Christians, theists, Deists, agnostics, atheists, Humanists, Wiccans (earth centered spirituality) or partial Jews, Mohammedans, Hindus, Buddhists, Catholics, or Protestants, depending on what traditions they found worthwhile from their past upbringing.

In the 21st century a worldwide change was taking place in religion. People were not interested in formal religion. Churches in England, Scandinavia, and many other countries were usually empty or sparsely attended on Sundays. Many people responded to the question of religious affiliation with the response: "none." Some of the "nones" considered themselves spiritual but not religious. Some considered they were atheists but usually did not proclaim this

for fear of being ostracized. Many had abandoned a religion of upbringing because they felt intellectually dishonest going to a church they did not like. The UUA has struggled with these trends. All religions in the United States are losing members. Formal religion is being replaced by secular interests. But many of the “nones” are seeking an outlet for the spirituality they hope to find. The UUA has tried to meet this with a “finding your own spirituality” approach. Larger congregations have reintroduced singing from hymnals and have stressed the beauty of music in choirs. The church service at larger UU congregations is similar to a Protestant service but there is no narrowly defined God or supernatural belief imposed by the ministers. The attempt to provide a spectrum or “big tent” for UU congregations allows them to have Humanist, Freethinker, Social Action groups, Spiritual groups, tai chi, yoga, or other groups for those interested in such practices or ideas. What holds the UU movement together is an appreciation that we differ and find different ways to construct our personal theologies and practices.

At the same time, UUs have remained active in social reforms, in outreach programs to feed the hungry, to find shelter for the homeless, to help prisoners who feel abandoned by society. They have accepted racial diversity and gender diversity as well as ‘green ecological’ efforts to protect the natural world and to reduce our contributions to climate change, global warming, poor land management, and pollution of our communities.

JEAN MAYER AND THE FIGHT TO ELIMINATE WORLD HUNGER

Jean Mayer (1920-1993) was born in Paris, France where his father was a physiologist. His mother was Jewish but she raised her children without a religion. Mayer attended the University of Paris and studied mathematics and biology. In 1939 he went to the United States to study at Harvard. WWII broke out and he returned to France but was captured by Germans at Dunkirk. He escaped from prison and joined the French underground and made his way back to the US. He married Elizabeth van Huysen, a Unitarian, and when the US entered the war, he served in the army and survived the torpedoing of a ship bringing him back to Europe. After the war he returned to the US and got his PhD at Yale in physiological chemistry. He became a world authority on nutrition and wrote numerous books. He argued that sieges rarely work because soldiers are fed while civilians go malnourished. He identified the regulation of hunger with glucose acting on the brain. He served as a consultant to the WHO to establish ways to reduce world hunger. He served the Nixon Administration to provide the first national standards of nutrition to be taught in schools and adopted by poverty programs. He was invited to be President of Tufts after 27 years of teaching at Harvard. He shifted Tufts from an undergraduate teaching college to an internationally known research university, establishing many new departments and programs, many of them in his fields of public health and nutrition. He condemned “starvation as a political tool.” He and his family were active UUs at their Sudbury church.



JOHN HAYNES HOLMES – A HERETIC’S HERETIC

One of the most controversial and influential Unitarian ministers in the twentieth century was **John Haynes Holmes** (1879-1964). He was born in Philadelphia and his grandfather was a friend of Theodore Parker. Holmes attended Harvard for his BA and divinity degrees. Parker became his idol and Holmes enjoyed debating, taking the side of unpopular issues and persons. He was a founding member of the NAACP and the American Civil Liberties Union. He believed socialism was the “gospel for the poor.” He was a pacifist and refused to acknowledge the concept of just wars. His criticism of US entry into WWI led to his being cut off from funding by the American Unitarian Association and he promptly resigned. He was “accused of many things during his life, but never of being moderate.” He changed the name of his New York Church to the Community Church as a condition for staying on as minister. He wrote a book praising Gandhi as a savior for our times and he promoted non-violent protest as a response to social injustice and as a substitute for war. In 1936 the American Unitarian Association acknowledged it had erred in 1918 and in WWII it supported Unitarian ministers or congregants who were conscientious objectors. Holmes enjoyed music and wrote 100 hymns. He also wrote a Broadway play on his theme of criticizing the government as a civic responsibility. Holmes eventually accepted restored membership in the Unitarian register of ministers. The Community Church in New York continues to revere his message of non-violence, tolerance, social justice, and service to others as hallmarks of UU identity.



MAY SARTON -- UNITARIAN POET

May Sarton (1912-1995) is best known as an author of 50 books of poetry, novels, memoirs, and journals. She was born in Belgium in 1912 and two years later her parents fled the invading Germans as World War I erupted. Her mother was a fabric designer and furniture maker. Her father was a scholar and founder of the academic field of the history of science. May was their only child. Her parents did not believe Jesus was a god and did not attend church. But at age 10 a friend of May asked her to come to a Unitarian church with her. She resonated to this experience and thought of herself as a Unitarian. She quickly developed skills in writing. At 18 she had her first poems published in *Poetry*. She decided not to go to college and wanted a career as an actress. She performed in and directed plays in small theatres but realized her talents were in writing books. As an adolescent and young woman she was bisexual but by middle age she considered herself a lesbian. She did not want to be known as a lesbian writer. Her novels dealt with heterosexual themes as well as homosexual ones. She wanted her themes to be of “universal interest.” She enjoyed solitude because it gave her a chance to study things intensely. It was not to meditate or find an inner self. She believed all things in the universe reveal something that relates to us when we study them intensely, without distractions, and that was why she celebrated solitude in her memoirs and journals. She felt poetry was particularly suited for that experience and claimed “when we are able to write a poem we become for a few hours a part of Creation itself.”



HOWARD ZINN AND THE PEOPLE'S HISTORY

Howard Zinn (1922-2010) was born in Brooklyn of immigrant Jewish parents. His father was a laborer from what is now Ukraine and his mother was from Siberia. Zinn attended Thomas Jefferson High School (where I attended some ten years later). His father encouraged his desire to read by buying the works of Charles Dickens a month at a time from a newspaper promotion. He worked in the shipyards until the war was declared and became a bombardier. He went to NYU after the war and to Columbia University for his PhD in history. His dissertation was on LaGuardia as a Congressman and he showed that LaGuardia foreshadowed the New Deal. He visited the places he bombed, including Royan in France and Pilsner in Czechoslovakia and learned that he had killed 1000 civilians in France and several hundred in Pilsner. Official accounts differed from US declassified war documents and local accounts. It turned him into an anti-war activist with a lifelong distrust of government statements. He taught 7 years at Spellman College (an all black college) and was active in the Civil Rights Movement. He wrote *A People's History of the United States* and spent the next 24 years at Boston University. Zinn was harassed for his views but claimed "truth has a power greater than a hundred lies." He was a witness for Daniel Ellsberg and showed that our government marked many papers secret not for their national security value but for their prevention of embarrassment for failed policies and lies. UU President John Buehrens said his own history of the UU Church was inspired by Zinn's *A People's History of the United States*. Zinn's memoir, *You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train* is available at our book table.



LINUS PAULING: A UNITARIAN SCIENTIST WITH A SOCIAL CONSCIENCE

Linus Pauling (1901-1994) was born in Portland, Oregon and died in Big Sur, California. His father owned a drugstore but died when Linus was 9 years old. At an early age Pauling loved chemistry and with friends scavenged materials to do their own chemistry experiments. He went to Oregon State University for a chemical engineering degree and then to Caltech for his PhD in physical chemistry. He used physical tools to study chemical reactions and structure and revolutionized chemistry by working out the nature of chemical bonds. He also applied physical chemistry to the structure of hemoglobin and recognized sickle cell anemia as the first example of “molecular disease.” His contributions in science were vast, touching on biology, evolution, anesthesiology, and crystallography. His wife Ava was a pacifist and she got Linus interested in social issues. They became Unitarians although Linus was theologically an atheist and they became involved in numerous issues in Pasadena and nationally. Pauling won his first Nobel Prize for his work on the chemical bond. He won his second for Peace, because he organized scientists around the world to lobby their governments against nuclear weapons testing and the atomic arms race. Nedra and I had the pleasure of hosting Pauling and his wife for 5 days when I taught at UCLA and we had them to dinner at our home because none of the senior faculty wanted to sponsor a dinner and risk being listed by the FBI as subversive! Pauling gave five talks in five days on the UCLA campus, each on a different topic.



IDA MAUD CANNON AND THE ORIGINS OF HOSPITAL SOCIAL WORK

Ida Maud Cannon (1877-1960) was born in Wisconsin to a Calvinist father who was a railroad executive and to her mother who was a teacher. Ida was four years old when her mother died of tuberculosis. Her father believed his children should read widely and use their reasoning to arrive at their beliefs. Their home was filled with books. He also took them on numerous trips using his free railroad pass. Her father quit business and became a physician. This led Ida to take up nursing. While her family moved to Minnesota she served as a nurse for severely retarded children and adults and this made her aware of the poor conditions in which they were housed as well as the equally disturbing home lives they had experienced. She was inspired by Jane Addams' Hull House and began a program of listening to her patients and finding housing, jobs, and support groups to help the impoverished, the tubercular, those with sexually transmitted diseases, and those with work related injuries. She wrote textbooks on social services for the physically and mentally ill and was recruited by Massachusetts General Hospital to organize and train medical social workers, a field in which she pioneered. Her brother Walter B. Cannon also entered a medical field and became a world renowned physiologist teaching at Harvard. It was her brother, who became a Unitarian, who convinced his sister to go Unitarian services with him and she too abandoned her childhood Calvinism.



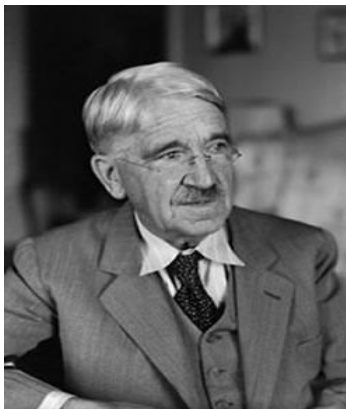
WALTER B. CANNON AND “THE WISDOM OF THE BODY.”

When I was a graduate student at Indiana University taking William Breneman’s course on endocrinology, I had first heard the name **Walter B. Cannon** (1871-1945). He coined the term homeostasis and applied it to the capacity of the body to maintain a steady state condition. It used regulators such as temperature, hormones, nerve cell transmitters, and other means to regulate cell and organ activity. His book, *The Wisdom of the Body* became a best seller. He was born in Wisconsin to a RR executive father and school teacher mother. Raised as a Calvinist with a Huguenot ancestry, he broke with their rejection of science and he became a Unitarian. At Harvard medical school where he got his MD and studied and taught physiology, he used x-rays in 1896 (the year after Roentgen discovered rays) and applied them to study how animals swallow. He also devised the “barium meal” to increase contrast between the organs and surrounding tissue. He studied how animals went into shock from wounds and identified hormones associated with the “flight or fight” response to stress. Later in life he championed scientific integrity by helping scientists purged in Nazi Germany and he supported medical efforts to help the Spanish government in its war against Franco’s fascist army. He was nominated several times for a Nobel Prize but did not receive that honor. In his time he was considered the leading physiologist in the United States.



JOHN DEWEY AND CHILD-CENTERED EDUCATION

John Dewey (1860-1952) grew up in Vermont and was raised by his mother, a Calvinist. He excelled in school and chose psychology and philosophy as his major interests, getting a PhD at Johns Hopkins University. He adopted pragmatism as his philosophic outlook, but called it instrumentalism. He rejected dualism, Platonism, and political tyranny and believed that love, beauty, friendship, peace, and freedom are ours to make as effective as possible but can never achieve to perfection. He took an interest in children's education because he believed we learn by experience not by revelation or innate knowledge and that children should be taught not by rote but by teachers and a curriculum that fosters learning by doing. His movement became known as progressive education, which was anathema to conservatives but enthusiastically supported by liberals. Dewey also believed that democracy was a moral ideal for which we should strive and that if we believed in God that concept should denote "the unity of ideal ends arousing us to desire and actions." He considered himself a humanist and claimed humanism expands the meaning of our lives. He liked speaking at Unitarian churches but he did not wish to join any formal religious organization. As he approached death he asked his wife to contact Donald Harrington, the Unitarian minister of the Community Church of New York and his funeral service was conducted there.



BILL BREEDON AND THE SOCIAL ACTIVISM OF THE UU CHURCH

Bill Breedon was born in 1949 in southern Indiana in Davis County. He was an identical twin and with brother Darrell joined seven other siblings. As children they called each other “8” and “9.” Their parents were Nazarenes, a Methodist evangelical denomination with lots of singing which Bill’s father enjoyed. Bill’s father was a farmer and self-taught engineer who worked for the local gypsum mines. In 1967 Bill and Darrell were encouraged by their mother to study for the ministry because three of her sons were already in the military and she hoped her youngest sons would be spared conflict. Bill studied in Tennessee and supported himself in a supermarket and while throwing out over-dated foods, he encountered a black woman who changed his life. She begged him to let her sort through the discarded food so she could feed her children and herself. Up to that time Bill did not know there was poverty in America. While serving as a pastor for two years, Bill saw a sign that the Berrigan Brothers would be speaking in Kansas City. He hitch-hiked his way and ended up speaking with Phil Berrigan for six hours and soon went to Washington DC to pray for peace in the Capitol rotunda. It was his first arrest for protests. He later lived with his wife Glenda in a tepee in Monroe County and met UUs through their children’s playmates. He was recruited in 1994 by Rev. Mary Ann Macklin as a co-minister of the UUCB. He said “It was a place where I could say what I believe without being fired for it.” After 20 years at UUCB he has retired to explore a new career in writing.



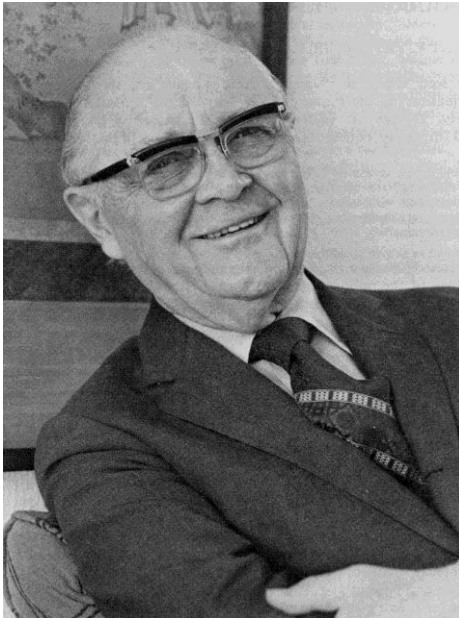
SOPHIA FAHS AND THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF UU CHILDREN

Sophia (née Lyon) Fahs (1876-1978) was born in China, the child of missionary parents. They returned to Ohio where she was raised in a conservative Christian environment. From an early age she felt committed to being a missionary like her parents. She attended Wooster College in Massachusetts and then went to the University of Chicago against the advice of some of her religious advisors who felt it was a hotbed of liberalism. They were right. She was attracted to the ideas of John Dewey and his ideas of progressive education. She thought teaching Sunday school using the Bible as a text was not effective because children were being indoctrinated rather than discovering their religious beliefs. She felt they should be exposed to moral narratives and examples and learn what different people believed before they began assimilating bible stories and their significance. She also liked the new scholarship on the way the books of the bible were written and assembled into a canon. She wrote articles and books to express her ideas and continued her education at Columbia University's Teachers College which was Dewey's next center of influence. Despite her Methodist identification she was hired by Beacon Press and became their editor for books on religious education. She also was ordained as a Unitarian minister in 1945. In her long life (101 years) she wrote numerous books for children and religious education for children. Most of her ideas became part of religious education thinking for the UU training programs.



JAMES LUTHER ADAMS HELPED SHAPE UNITARIANISM IN THE 20TH CENTURY

James Luther Adams (1901-1994) grew up in Ritzville, east Washington State, where his father was minister of a fundamentalist Plymouth Brethren church and young Adams was saturated with Judgment Day pessimistic assessments of his soul. As soon as he went to college at the University of Minnesota he became an atheist but after attending a men's club for Unitarians, he shifted his views and decided to enter the ministry. At Harvard Divinity School he was put off by the mysticism many of his teachers embraced. He said he didn't like mysticism "that begins in mist and ends in schism." He married Margaret Young, a pianist, and they had three daughters. As a Unitarian minister in Massachusetts he became a voice for the oppressed, especially minorities and organized labor. In 1935 he was on a fellowship in Germany and he saw first-hand how the Nazi Party used government to crush all dissent. He returned as a professor at Meadville-Lombard Divinity School and taught there for seven years warning liberal churches of their lack of commitment to justice. In 1957 he joined Harvard's Divinity School and used his knowledge of German to translate and make theologian Paul Tillich's writings known to American seminary students. He emphasized that the newly formed UU church in 1961 required diversity and a commitment to social change.



ROBERT MILLIKAN AND THE SHAPING OF THE AMERICAN MODEL OF ACADEMIC SCIENCE

Robert Millikan (1868-1953) was born in Morrison, Illinois. His father was a Congregational minister and his mother a school administrator. Millikan attended Oberlin College and enjoyed physical science and learned advanced physics on his own. He attended Columbia University and the University of Chicago, getting a PhD in 1895. He then went to Europe and got excited by the new studies of the atom. He was appointed to the University of Chicago Physics Department. He taught introductory physics, writing a bestselling text (over one million copies sold). In 1907 he devised experiments to measure the charge of an electron and showed it had a unit charge or multiples of that charge which helped to characterize the planetary model of electrons circling the nuclear atom. His work was published in 1913. Some ten years later he received the Nobel Prize for this work. He also tested properties of light, expecting evidence for waves and instead he confirmed Einstein's interpretation that light consisted of photons. He came to Caltech in 1921 and made its physics department world-class. He organized a petition drive for scientists to support Darwinian evolution during the anti-evolution trial of Tennessee in 1925. He was conservative, Republican in his politics, and he shifted science to serve government especially its military needs. He believed in "self-sufficiency" in achieving one's goals and fell out of favor during the Roosevelt years and the Great Depression. He was active as a Unitarian with his wife and family and served as president of the Neighborhood Church in Pasadena. Except for his Nobel work, his reputation has faded.



RALPH FUCHS AND THE FOUNDING OF THE UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP IN BLOOMINGTON

Ralph Follen Fuchs (1899-1985) was born in St. Louis and died in Bloomington, Indiana. He received his BA and JD degrees at Washington University in St. Louis. He added a PhD in economics at the Brookings Institute and took an interest in administrative law. He was with the faculty at Washington University in St. Louis when WWII broke out and served with the Civil Service legal division and the Solicitor General's office. When the war ended he joined the IU faculty in the school of law in 1946. He organized with several families the Unitarian Fellowship of Bloomington in 1948. He helped integrate the IU campus and brought the NAACP to the state of Indiana and served as its president. He organized an Indiana chapter of the ACLU. He defended membership in the Communist Party and claimed that this was not a valid reason for firing a tenured Professor during the McCarthy era of attacks on liberal thinking. It was the "do-nothingism" of the Association of American University Professors that motivated Fuchs to serve eventually as their President. He promoted an aggressive response to schools violating academic freedom with a censure list published in the AAUP Bulletin. Fuchs and his wife Annetta were active members of the Unitarian Fellowship at Bloomington and steered it to church status and fostered its growth. On a national level, Fuchs served as a Trustee of the UU Meadville School of Theology.



BELA BARTOK AND HUNGARIAN UNITARIANISM

Bela Bartok (1881-1945) was born in Great Saint Nicholas, then in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and now in Romania. His father died when he was 7 and his mother, a piano teacher, recognized his early musical aptitude. He began composing when he was 9. His mother moved a lot looking for teachers who could enhance his talent. He adored Dohnanyi when they moved to Budapest. He became a concert pianist. In 1904 he heard a woman singing folk songs and this started his passion for collecting folk music throughout the Empire. Although raised Roman Catholic, Bartok described it as “a fairy tale” and he became an atheist. He said “If I ever cross myself it would signify ‘in the name of Nature, Art, and Science.’” He taught at the conservatory in Budapest and inspired his colleague Kodaly to collect and use folk music in his compositions. He married twice and had a son with each marriage. He first encountered Unitarianism in 1907 while visiting Transylvania and became a Unitarian in 1916. He switched from being a concert performer to a composer and became a major figure in the history of 20th century music. He abhorred fascism and refused to perform in Germany or Italy. He came to the US in 1940, as an exile. He supported himself with commissions including some of his most admired works. His son Peter, who joined him, enlisted in the Air Force. His other son, Bela, Jr, remained in Budapest active with the Unitarian church. In 1943 Bartok developed leukemia and he died in New York City in 1945. After the Cold War, Bela, Jr had his body returned to Budapest.



HUMANISM AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH THE UUA

Two major movements have used the term “humanism.” It was applied to the Renaissance in Europe with the stress on learning, printing, translating classics, scholarship, and an enjoyment of human activities in the arts, humanities, and sciences. The term also has been applied to a philosophic movement that emerged during the Enlightenment, exemplified by Thomas Paine’s book *The Age of Reason* in which Paine rejected supernatural religious beliefs as “incoherent Levantine folktales.” It was absorbed in the Colonies by many of the leaders of the American Revolution. In this outlook, governments were founded by and for humans and not by and for Gods. Many humanists were agnostics, some were atheists, and some were Deists. In the 20th century Charles Francis Potter, a Unitarian minister founded the first Humanist Society in the US in New York with board members Julian Huxley, John Dewey, Albert Einstein, and Thomas Mann. In 1933 Potter and 15 Unitarians joined other scholars in preparing the first Humanist Manifesto. In 1941 the American Humanist Association was formed to promote and bring together humanist groups in North America. Humanists have championed reason over revelation, science over the supernatural, and ethical behavior based on reason and tested experience.



CHARLES FRANCIS POTTER -- BAPTIST, UNITARIAN, UNIVERSALIST, HUMANIST, AND THE SHORT LIFE OF FAME

Charles Francis Potter (1885-1962) was born in Marlboro, Massachusetts. His father was a factory worker making shoes and he was raised Baptist. He attended Newton Theological School and earned a BD in theology. He continued at Bucknell and got a MA. He was ordained as a Baptist at the age of 17 but as he read the criticisms of the bible by German scholars he shifted his views and resigned in 1925 converting to Unitarianism. He served as a Professor of comparative religion at Antioch and then was called to be Unitarian Minister on the West Side of Manhattan. He debated a fundamentalist minister on radio and with a live audience at Carnegie Hall and defended Thomas Scopes and Darwinian evolution. In 1925 he became an advisor to Clarence Darrow for the Scopes trial in Tennessee. He wrote numerous books on religion and in 1929 founded the first Humanist Society, in New York City. He helped draft the Humanist Manifesto and popularized the movement with his book *Humanism: A New Religion* that he wrote with his wife, Clara Cook Potter. His reputation faded after 1930. Not only did Christians ignore him, so did his fellow Humanists because of his interests in promoting yoga and the study of extra sensory perception, which most Humanists dismissed as pseudoscience. He continued to write, but he had resigned from the American Unitarian Association, and Humanism was of less interest during the Depression. He died of stomach cancer at the age of 77.



H. J. MULLER, A SCIENTIST WITH A CONCERN FOR HUMANITY

Hermann Joseph Muller (1890-1967) was a third generation American raised in New York City. He was raised Unitarian but his paternal ancestors were Catholic and his maternal ancestors were mixed Anglican and Sephardic Jewish. He won a scholarship to Columbia University and took an interest in the emerging field of genetics. With Alfred Sturtevant and Calvin Bridges he joined Thomas Hunt Morgan to form the fly lab and they launched classical genetics in the United States. Muller went on to Texas (Rice and then the University of Texas) where he studied mutation and the gene, developing the genetic tools to prove that x-rays induced gene mutations for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1946. I had the privilege of being a student of Muller's at IU for my PhD in 1953-1958. Muller believed strongly in radiation protection of the public. He lived an adventurous and hectic life in Berlin 1932 on a Guggenheim Fellowship, narrowly escaping arrest by the Gestapo, then spending 5 years in the USSR (debating Lysenko and calling his attack on genetics the work of a charlatan), volunteering to fight in the Spanish Civil War, spending two years in Edinburgh, and finally during the war years back in the United States, joining the IU faculty in 1945. He was a Humanist of the Year in 1957 and believed in "ideals to live by."



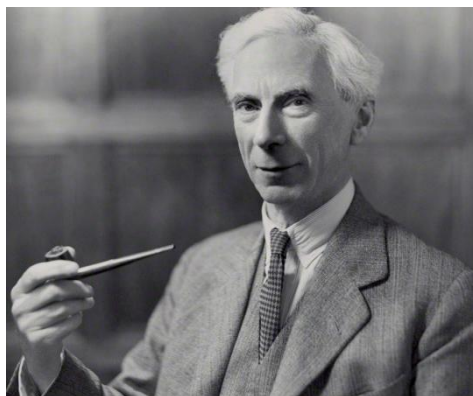
EDWIN BURDETTE BACKUS AND THE FOUNDING OF THE UUCB

Edwin Burdette Backus (1888-1955) was born in Ohio of Universalist minister parents. His father later switched to Unitarianism. Backus went to Meadville for his BD in 1912 and then took coursework in Europe, going to Oxford, Berlin, and Jena. He did not complete his DD until 1940 at Meadville. He served many churches and established a radio ministry to spread Unitarian and Humanist views. He was one of 16 Unitarian ministers who signed the first *Humanist Manifesto* in 1933. In 1938 he became minister at All Soul's Unitarian Church in Indianapolis. He was also an activist and involved in the ACLU and mental health programs. During the McCarthy era of the early 1950s the more conservative wing of his church opposed his involvement in the ACLU calling it communistic and fearing "black infiltration" of the church. Backus survived this attempted removal from his congregation but he retired in 1953. He believed Humanistic Unitarianism would "make human life on our earth-home as rich and satisfying as possible." He was asked to serve as interim minister for the transition period between the Unitarian Fellowship of Bloomington as it became the Unitarian Church of Bloomington.



BERTRAND RUSSELL “THE ENVY AND DESPAIR OF OTHER PHILOSOPHERS.”

Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) came from a family heavily involved in politics and the elite of Great Britain. His grandfather was a Prime Minister and his grandmother a Unitarian. He was raised in that faith by his grandparents from the age of 3 after his parents died. At age 15 he became an agnostic, assessing that “the chances of God existing is very small.” Russell took an interest in both mathematics and logic. He believed that mathematics could be reduced to logic, a view he held until 1931 when Gödel proved that all axiomatic mathematics was incomplete or contradictory and hence could not be reduced to logic. Despite that setback, his work *Principia Mathematica* spawned hundreds of papers and books on this topic. Russell was also a moralist and pacifist. His resistance to Great Britain’s involvement in WWII led to his imprisonment. In 1961 he was imprisoned again, for his protests against the nuclear arms race. In 1940 he was fired from CCNY for advocating “open marriage,” arguing that occasional infidelity was not a sufficient cause for ending a marriage although he himself had been married four times, the first three ending in divorce. I first became acquainted with Russell’s work when I read his essay, “A Free Man’s Worship,” which I resonated to not only for its humanistic outlook and poetic style but for its sympathy for creating a world that is indifferent to our existence. Russell received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1950 for his extensive writings in philosophy. His daughter, who adored him, described him as “a passionate moralist.”



JAMES REEB UU MARTYR FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

James Reeb (1927-1965) was born in Wichita, Kansas, but was raised in Wyoming. He served in the army during WWII and used the GI Bill to attend college and seminary, being ordained a Presbyterian Minister. He quickly took an interest in social work as the primary function of his ministry but felt it was too limited in his Presbyterian program. He shifted to become a Unitarian Universalist in 1962 and worked in Washington, DC, especially helping impoverished black neighborhoods. He was ordained a UU minister and moved north to Dorchester, Massachusetts. He was married and had four children. After the attacks on black protestors in Selma, Alabama, he heeded the call of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr and went to Selma to protest. After the protest march he went to dinner and was recognized, beaten and clubbed by four white men. His skull was cracked and he was refused hospital treatment and had to be transported by a black funeral limousine to Birmingham where he died two days later. He was 38. Rev. King gave the eulogy at his funeral and both President Johnson and Congress were galvanized by his death to get the Civil Rights Act passed by Congress, ending legal segregation and poll taxes in the South. Three of his attackers were tried and acquitted by an all white male jury in Alabama and the fourth left the state and was never prosecuted.



ESSAY 5**TAKING STOCK: THE FUTURE TRENDS OF THE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST MOVEMENT**

This book is a tribute to Joseph Priestley because he was the first to use a time-line as a teaching device for history. What surprised me, as I re-read these short historical pieces arranged in a roughly chronological order, was that the evolution of the UU movement emerges. No one person or no one time describes what goes into a contemporary UU fellowship, congregation, or church. Some ideas are reinvented. Some are modified. Some are dropped. What seems typical, however, is the unpredictable human personality and motivation that leads to any one attribute of belief. Some are inspired by their upbringing. Some are traumatized by that upbringing. Some are fortunate being born in middle class or wealthy circumstances. Some struggled to achieve literacy or escape from humble origins.

While we cannot predict the future evolution of the UU movement we can imagine many of the issues that are challenging us. Virtually all religions are facing a loss of membership. This comes from loss of relevance to contemporary living. Science has replaced pseudoscience (astrology, alchemy, numerology, shamanism, quackery) as a response to interpreting the physical universe, the way things work, how a life cycle operates, and why illnesses occur. We humans learned to travel to the moon, to release the energy in atoms, to sequence our genes, and to fly in the air from coast to coast in six hours. We learned how to eat fresh fruits and vegetables all year round and not wait until the late spring for the first harvests. When we are sick we go to a physician and not a minister or prayer meeting unless our illness is untreatable. We look to our government agencies to handle crises and no longer is the burden seen as a charitable job for our churches. We prefer social security to poor houses. We prefer family social services to orphanages. We prefer Medicare and Medicaid to look after our aging bodies than to look upon the discomforts of old age as the job of pastoral care. Whatever our religious beliefs we prefer the benefits of science and governments that look after our survival.

The challenge for UUs is finding relevance of religion in our lives. For UUs there is a long tradition that social problems can be changed more effectively by governments than by private charity. For pre Civil War liberal religion it was Abolition that stirred the consciences of congregations, For late nineteenth century liberal religion it was women's right to vote and the status of women in society. For the twentieth century it was the right to organize, doing away

with child labor, preventing wars, civil rights for ethnic and racial minorities, acceptance of a range of gender differences in society, and a deep concern over the damage our industrial civilization has inflicted on the natural environment.

There will be debates by our present generation over these social problems. They will be resolved by major changes in government priorities and the services enacted and funded by governments. Ironically, the more successful UUs are in getting governments to address social failure, the less there will be of major issues for UUs to do. What cannot be addressed by governments will remain a major concern of religion. How do I find ideals to live by? Why do I feel that material satisfaction is not enough? How do I cope with my own personality flaws? The unanswered questions may never be answered and exploring and sharing our responses may be the enduring benefit of the UU experience.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Elof Carlson (born 1931) writes in his study at 1034 Azalea Lane, Bloomington, Indiana. Carlson is a geneticist, a historian of science, and a retired professor. He became a Unitarian in 1961. He grew up as an atheist and combines Epicureanism, Humanism, and the spirit of the Enlightenment. He lives by the credo "Virtue is its own reward." Carlson and his wife Nedra (a Hoosier from Fulton County) are members, since 2009, of the UU Church of Bloomington, Indiana. They were active in the UU Fellowship of Westwood (California) 1961-1968 and the UU Fellowship of Stony Brook (New York) 1968-2009. Carlson got his BA at NYU (1953) and PhD at Indiana University (1958). He taught at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada (1958-60); at UCLA (1960-1968); and at Stony Brook University, NY (1968-2001). He and his wife moved to Bloomington in 2009. They raised five children and have 12 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He is the author of 12 published books. *Photo by Helen Muller.*

