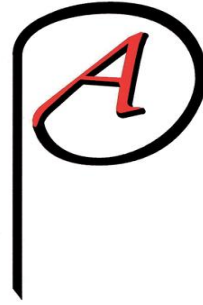


# Progressive Atheists Inc.

Est. 10 Jan 2010 Reg: A0054119U Member of AAI

*"Your participation is PA's future"*



## September 2015

*... we seek to go beyond divisive racial, religious, tribal, and sectarian constructs, and instead, contribute to a universal humanity.*

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### MEMBERSHIP

**Term 2015:** 1 July 2015 – 30 June 2016

**\*\*\* ONLY \$20 Annually \*\*\***

**Purchase Membership Online:**

<http://progressiveatheists.org/product-category/membership/>

### CONTACT PROGRESSIVE ATHEISTS INC.

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**Twitter:** [twitter.com/ProgAtheistsInc](http://twitter.com/ProgAtheistsInc)

# Progressive Atheist Inc. | Headlines

**Annual General Meeting: Progressive Atheists AGM**

Dear Progressive Atheists Members,

Another year has come and gone and we are again looking to have our Annual General Meeting.

At the meeting we will be electing a new committee to oversee the running of Progressive Atheists. We encourage your nominations for a position on the committee.

Please express your interest to be on the Term 2016 committee with a current committee member either via email or in person.

Contact details are on the website: <http://progressiveatheists.org/about-us/committee/>

**The AGM will be held on Tuesday, 29 September 2015**

La Notte Restaurant  
140-146 Lygon Street, Carlton

6.00 pm Dinner La Notte Restaurant  
7.30 pm Progressive Atheists Inc. AGM

You can join the Meetup event here:  
<http://www.meetup.com/Melbourne-Atheists/events/224711269/>

And the Facebook event here:  
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1456620651312097/>

Thanks and regards,  
Alice Carr  
President

More information can be found here:  
<http://progressiveatheists.org/events/calendar/annual-general-meeting-2015/>

## **Campaign: International Blasphemy Rights Day – Sept 30 2015**

Friday, September 30 is International Blasphemy Rights Day. It is a day to celebrate the right to speaking freely about ideas and things such as religions, gods, sacred books, and profanity. Unfortunately, not everyone has the right to say what they want about these things—some countries will punish you with fines, imprisonment, and death if you are found guilty of blasphemy.

Even in societies such as the United States where religious freedom is celebrated, the criticism and questioning of others' religious beliefs is frowned upon and often met with derision and hostility.

The right to blaspheme is where the rights of free speech and religious freedom intersect. In order to have a truly democratic and open society, all citizens must be able to speak openly and honestly about all things—even another's religion, lack of religion, beliefs, gods, and sacred books—and be able to take the name of supernatural entities in vain: Holy Zeus!

- See more at: <https://www.secular.org/blogs/amanda-knief/celebrate-international-blasphemy-rights-day-it%E2%80%99s-victimless-crime#sthash.BKVORf8Q.dpuf>

Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/blasphemyday?\\_mref=message](https://www.facebook.com/blasphemyday?_mref=message)



## **Report:**

### **Victorian Government changes to SRI**

The Andrews Labor Government will introduce respectful relationships education into the school curriculum from next year to support students to learn how to build healthy relationships, understand global cultures, ethics and traditions, and to prevent family violence.

Respectful relationships education will be included in the curriculum from 2016 in Prep through to Year 10. It will focus on challenging negative attitudes such as prejudice, discrimination and harassment that can lead to violence, often against women.

The Government is also recognising the importance of world histories, cultures, and ethics. As part of the new Victorian Curriculum, this new content will be delivered by qualified teachers in all government schools.

These changes will help ensure Victoria remains a successful multicultural society and strengthen our diversity, one of our state's greatest assets. The capacity of our young people to understand others, including other world views, and to act with tolerance and respect, is an essential skill.

As part of these changes, from the start of Term 1, 2016, Special Religious Instruction (SRI) will be moved to lunchtimes or before or after school, freeing up 30 minutes of valuable class time per week.

Currently, while up to 20 per cent of primary school students participate in SRI, other students are missing out on essential learning time. The move means that teachers and students will be able to focus on core curriculum, learning the lessons and skills they need to be their best.

<http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/new-curriculum-supports-students-to-build-healthy-relationships-and-understanding>

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/religious-instruction-scraped-from-curriculum-20150820-gj425e.html>



**Report:**  
**Personal Pathways**

Every Sunday I am posting a story from this page that Peter Veitch and I (Tina Farnworth) began three years ago, called Personal Pathways to Atheism. It is a page purely dedicated to those atheists who wished to share their own personal journey towards atheism, and each and every of the 60 or so stories are well worth a read! We now have almost 13,000 likes and if you haven't liked the page as yet, please do!!

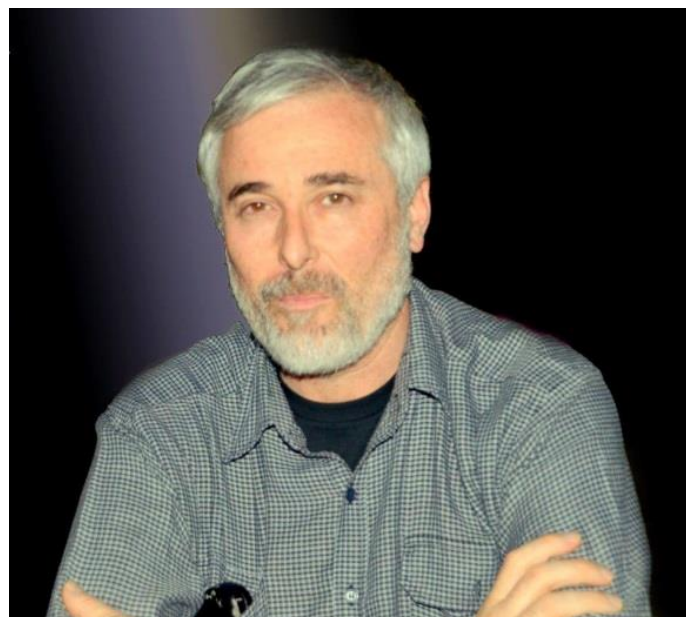
I am posting them in the order in which I received them (I proof read every single one and so know them very well). This one is by my amazing co-founder, Peter Veitch. I call him amazing because I admire him so much in the way he has gone about breaking away from the Seventh-day Adventist Church and in the way he has never given up in search of the truth. He has shown such tenacity in reading as much as he possibly can about many subjects relating to faith and atheism, as well as many, many other subjects relating to science and the universe and life, and five years later he is in a place where he feels he has reached a place of full understanding about his prior faith and his current position as an atheist (humanist actually, a term I prefer also).

The key was his desire to question everything. He speaks out with confidence, has a blog which I will ask him to tell you about and I have been fortunate to meet him twice now and admire and respect him greatly. A very intelligent man indeed! Please do read his story, especially his five year update at the end. Next week will be Bernie "Flash" Kellish's story.

**To continue your read:**

[https://www.facebook.com/PPTAPAGE/posts/985939864769364:0?\\_mref=message\\_bubble](https://www.facebook.com/PPTAPAGE/posts/985939864769364:0?_mref=message_bubble)

**And here:** <https://www.facebook.com/PPTAPAGE>



## **Campaign:** **Help Taslima Nasrin**

Secular activist, author, and SPI Fellow **Taslima Nasrin** has just received death threats from Islamic radicals linked to al-Qaida. Due to the death threats, Nasrin has left India and is currently in the United States for an indefinite period of time.

SPI Coalition Member **Center for Inquiry** is trying to help Nasrin, as she has no job and no home in the United States. (<https://secularpolicyinstitute.net/center-for-inquiry-help-taslima-nasrin/>)

Find out how you, too, can donate and help Nasrin secure a place to live here:  
<https://secure.centerforinquiry.net/emailviewonwebpage.aspx?erid=376216&trid=2a4e0e6c-63f7-433e-941b-5af8f9b52b56>

Read her story here:  
[http://www.centerforinquiry.net/newsroom/amid\\_death\\_threats\\_from\\_islamists\\_cfi\\_bri\\_ngs\\_secular\\_activist\\_taslima\\_nasri/](http://www.centerforinquiry.net/newsroom/amid_death_threats_from_islamists_cfi_bri_ngs_secular_activist_taslima_nasri/)

## **Campaign: Combating Religious Persecution** **Who Is Afraid of Mauritanian Mohamed Cheikh? It Is About Slavery Not the Prophet!**



You probably did not hear about his case. And if you did, his fate may not have mattered much to you.

His name is difficult any way! Mohamed Cheikh Ould Mkhaitir. How do you pronounce such a name?

And his country? Mauritania! Among the poorest in the Middle East and North Africa. So remote, so poor, so far away.

His charge? Apostasy! Blasphemy. Again.

He was sentenced in December 2014 to death for writing an article that was construed as 'critical of Mohammed', the Prophet of Islam. Today, he awaits his execution.

Read more: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/elham-manea/who-is-afraid-of-mauritanian-mohamed\\_b\\_8026724.html?ir=Australia](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/elham-manea/who-is-afraid-of-mauritanian-mohamed_b_8026724.html?ir=Australia)



**Update:**  
**Marriage Equality**

THOUSANDS of people have rallied in Melbourne to demand the introduction of same sex marriage laws.

With the Coalition government pledging to put the issue to the people in a plebiscite or conscience vote, protesters made their voices heard outside the State Library calling for immediate marriage equality.

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/victoria/equal-love-hundreds-rally-in-melbourne-in-support-of-marriage-equality/story-fni0fit3-1227484845618>

The time has come for marriage equality, yet we're still waiting.

While we wait, we will do everything we can to keep our message of equality before the broadest possible audience and win the 25 additional MPs' votes required to make marriage equality a reality.

To stop waiting, start here. Your action today could make history.

<http://www.australianmarriageequality.org/werewaiting/>

See photos of Equal Love Mass Rally for Marriage Equality August 2015 here:

<http://www.equallove.info/index.php>



**The Progressive Atheists' organisation and some of its members are actively involved in global campaigns to help and free the victims.**

There is a lot more that we can do but we need your help.

Want to assist with this campaign? Email Progressive Atheists at [campaigns@progressiveatheists.org](mailto:campaigns@progressiveatheists.org)

To make a donation for a banner to be used outside the Saudi Embassy, please donate on the Progressive Atheists website:

<http://progressiveatheists.org/products/donations/raif-badawi-campaign/>

