



# HUMANIST CANADA

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2021

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February 2021

Greetings!

Every February, people in Canada acknowledge and celebrate Black History Month to honour the legacy of Black Canadians and their communities.

Even as I write these words, I'm mindful of much larger narratives with no clear borders. As the new US Administration moves forward with replacing President Andrew Jackson, a slave owner on the \$20 bill, with Harriet Tubman, an American abolitionist who became a "conductor" on the underground railroad.

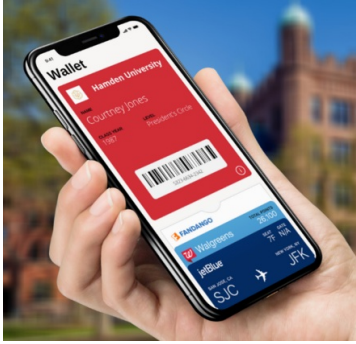
Harriet Tubman helped hundreds of slaves safely across the Canadian border, and for most of the decade before the Civil War, she made St. Catharines her home base to build a network of supporters in Canada.

Today will be part of tomorrow's history, so I'd like to give a shout-out to Humanist Canada's newest board member Kathleen Johnson of Calgary. Kathleen has established a Facebook Group called **Critical Black Thought Society**. It is a space for everyone in the Black diaspora from any background and orientation to come together over the issues that affect Black communities through the lens of Critical Thinking. Their main goal is to break down barriers to increase understanding and support for Black Atheists.

But back to Harriet Tubman and a confession. I was unaware of her St. Catharines connection until recently, so this Black History month, I'm making a personal commitment to make time and expand my awareness and knowledge of Canada's rich black heritage, of which I'm admittedly uninformed. How will you mark February's Black History month?

Warm regards,

*Humanist Canada*



## **Humanist Canada is going digital with Membership Cards!**

Last year we re-introduced paper membership cards in response to members, and this year we're going one step further in going digital.

Given virtually all of our members communicate with us through email, pay membership fees, donate through our website and receipts are issued electronically, it's the ideal time to switch to digital. Additional benefits to digital membership include reducing spending to be redirected to programming and reducing our environmental footprint.

Beyond savings, we'll be able to do more. We'll have your membership cards to you in a timelier fashion and provide more information on the cards, including event information. For Affiliates and Chapters, we'll be able to provide customized information.

It's as simple as downloading the digital membership card. It gets stored in your IOS or Android mobile wallet, and it takes up no more space than a single photograph.

All of this will be rolling out in early March, so look for updates as we make this transition.



## **Save the Date Sunday, March 28 at 2 -3:30 pm**

Join with Humanist Canada's board and other members for 90 minutes of large and small group discussion in a virtual meeting format.

It will be an opportunity to meet board members and staff, to discuss Humanist Canada's Strategic Plan. We want to hear from you, what you like, what you'd like to see change and anything in between.

It's our first time for a Town Hall Meeting. We've realized that we need to make time to hear from each other in-between Annual General Meeting's.

So please save the date. We'll have additional information and a registration link for you in the next few weeks.

## e-Petition



### Atheist Refugees Need Your Help!

#### Please sign this e-petition!

Support atheists threatened by religious extremists and fundamentalist governments in other countries. These atheists desperately need asylum in Canada because of the imminent threat of serious injury, imprisonment or death.

Canadian immigration has expedited asylum requests for religious persons under their Less Complex Claims process. Under this policy, certain refugee claims can be approved with a shortened hearing process. Atheists need to be included in this Less Complex Claims policy along with these religious claimants.

We have submitted an e-petition to the Canadian House of Commons calling upon the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship to include atheists in the Less Complex Claims policy.

To read more about the petition, [Click Here.](#)

#### And please share widely with your friends and network!

[Sign The Petition](#)

## February Webinars



### A One School System In Ontario

**February 21, 2021  
3:00 pm ET**

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario and the Ontario Secondary Schools Teachers' Federation have urged the Ontario government to end funding of the province's Catholic schools and move toward one secular

school system for each official language.

How would the transition to a single school system be implemented? How would it impact teachers and parents? What are the financial benefits of merging the public and catholic school boards across Ontario? Join us for a

conversation about the one school system initiative.

To learn more, [Click Here.](#)

[Click here to Register](#)



## **Black History: Achievement, Purpose, Progress Ancient Africa to 2021**

**February 28, 2021  
3:00 pm ET**

A Historical Account of Black history from Africa to the Trans Atlantic and Arabic Slave Trades, to the Civil Rights Movement up to today with Canadian Content from the West Coast to the Maritimes. Focus on key figures of those time periods and addressing the role of religion in framing the Black experience.

### **Kathleen Johnson, Presenter & Board Member**

Kathleen Johnson is a mother of 5 children and 2 fur babies, born in Calgary, AB, with parents from Grenada, W.I., who immigrated to Canada in 1965.

Her father Neville Wells, was the first officer of colour on the Calgary Police force, and her mother pioneered the Congress of Black Women Alberta Chapter.



Kathleen is a Diversity and Inclusion Specialist with her firm KMJ Coaching and Consulting. Her goal is to educate and facilitate meaningful Inclusion in Companies, Organizations, and Schools for BIPOC, LGBTQ, Women, and Neurodiverse populations.

To read Kathleen's full bio, [Click Here.](#)

[Click here to Register](#)

## **Critically Thinking about Covid-19**

**Dealing with Anxiety by Battling  
Misinformation**

**Dr.Christopher DiCarlo**



## Philosopher, Educator, Author

Emotionally, the pandemic has taken its toll on us. It is difficult to say at this point, how long after the world returns to normal will we need to deal with issues of anxiety and PTSD. As many face pandemic fatigue and are simply tired of having their lives affected by such a pathogen, we must remain vigilant in following rigorous physical distancing protocols, mask-wearing, hand-washing, testing, tracking and tracing, and patience in waiting for our turn to get the vaccine. We can best deal with anxiety when we start with trustworthy, reliable, and responsibly-attained information.

We will get through this. And we will all be the better for it. For it is in such times of crisis that we discover the value and the virtue of the human condition.

To read the full article, [Click Here.](#)

## Save the Date



### Critical Thinking Course coming in April!

In this course, you will learn how to analyze and critically reflect on beliefs and arguments held by others and yourself. You will learn how to critically reflect on hot-button issues and topics, like health and nutrition, politics and law, science and technology, and various philosophical/religious beliefs concerning metaphysics, ethics, and other knowledge.

You will walk away from this course being able to better organize personal thoughts about such topics by learning a series of tools called the critical thinking skillset.

It really is possible to have intelligent discussions, disagree entirely, and still be able to get along. Learn what it means to embody diplomacy and fairness when having intelligent discussions and dialogue about important issues.

**Schedule: April 7- May 26, Weds. 4.00 – 6.00 pm**  
**\$150.00 for members & \$250.00 for non-members**

## Survey Request

### Sexual and Reproductive Health - Artificial Womb Technology

Exploring Canadians' knowledge and perspectives on artificial womb technology: A qualitative multi-methods study

Researchers at the University of Ottawa, Canada are conducting an online survey dedicated to Canadians' knowledge and perceptions of assisted human reproduction.

You are eligible to participate if you are age 18 or older, a Canadian citizen,



and sufficiently fluent in English or French to complete the survey.

\* Participation is both voluntary and confidential \*

The survey should take no more than 45 minutes to complete. Participants will be eligible for a CAD50 gift certificate at [amazon.ca](https://amazon.ca).

[Click here to take the Survey](#)



**Tell us what you'd like to see in the Newsletter.**

To ensure the newsletter is relevant we invite your response to a few short questions. Having feedback from across the country is our goal. [Click here!](#)

### *Why membership in Humanist Canada is important!*

We simply can't do it without you. We are entirely funded through memberships and donations. Your involvement is incredibly significant and goes a long way to support lasting change for a better society and a tolerant world where rational thinking and kindness prevail.

Humanist Canada has just launched a new member system that will allow you to update your own information. Click on the button below, and you will be prompted to set up your login information.

[Already a member](#)

[Join Humanist Canada](#)

If you have any questions about renewing, please contact the National Office at [members@humanistcanada.ca](mailto:members@humanistcanada.ca) or 1-877-486-2671.