

THE FORT WORTH HUMANIST QUARTERLY

A HUMANISTS OF FORT WORTH (HOFW) PUBLICATION

MARCH 31, 2016

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

Briefs

HoFW Cowtown Cleanup slated on Saturday, April 2

Once again, HoFW prepares to stretch out, feel the sunshine, listen to birds chirp, and do community service by cleaning up our Adopt-A-Street portion of Granbury Rd. for the Cowtown Great American Cleanup.

We meet Saturday, April 2 at 9 a.m. at 3750 S University Dr., Fort Worth to pick up some trash and make the city look a bit nicer.

Please RSVP on our calendar at the following Web link:

<http://www.meetup.com/Humanists-of-Fort-Worth/events/229277965/>

Fifth Annual Earth Party scheduled Sunday, April 3

Fort Worth will hold the fifth annual Earth Party at Magnolia Green Park, 1201 Lipscomb St., on Sunday, April 3 from noon until 4 p.m. Educational booths and exhibits will provide information about city and regional sustainability initiatives in the area. Music, activities, and games will be offered for all ages. Admission is free.

Many membership dues come up for renewal in April and May

April and May are key membership drive months because so many of our members' dues expire during these two months. We urge members to pay at the regular meeting April 13 at the door. Dues can be paid in advance online on Paypal at <http://www.hofw.org/> or in person by cash or check.

Many thanks to those who keep us going. HoFW relies on dues to be able to continue our unique educational programs about humanist topics of interest and to make community donations.

Inside this Issue

| | |
|---|------|
| Briefs | 1 |
| Studies of People Leaving Religions | 1, 4 |
| Spanish guitarist | 1, 5 |
| Breaking the Spell Book Review | 2 |
| Calendar: April - June | 2 |
| Letters to the Editor | 2 |
| Humanist Perspectives: Suzie Lotven's Story | 3 |

Three studies show qualitative link between exit from religions and social and family isolation, pressuring dissenters to conform

(This article is the first in a two-part series documenting results of a TCU professor's study of challenges faced by those who leave religions.)

By Wanda Foster

People—humanist, atheist, or not—who leave their religions, especially totalistic or consuming faiths, risk long-lasting or permanent loss of primary relationships through shunning or divorce. In addition, during the church separation process, family, religious friends, and clergy often do not allow the person exiting the church to voice or discuss their dissent, leaving the person isolated and suffering from



Amorette Hinderaker, TCU Assistant Professor

loss of confidence and self-esteem.

These are some overarching conclusions drawn as a result of three new qualitative, academic studies of the experiences of people leaving an array of religions. Amorette Hinderaker, Ph.D., assistant professor at Texas Christian University (TCU), conducted the three consecutive studies over a 5-year period beginning in 2011.

The first study defined the process of exit from the Church of Latter Day Saints, also known as the Mormon Church. It contains results of a series of interviews with 50 people who exited the Mormon Church and their first-hand responses to a written questionnaire used to record their experiences and reactions.

The study defined totalism as a consuming religion that takes up a considerable portion of a person's family and social life. At the lowest end of the scale are those churches where people attend only once a week, and at the highest end of the scale are religious organizations, such as communes, where people spend their entire lives wrapped up in a religion shared with others on a daily basis.

Mormonism scored high on the totalistic scale because of its emphasis on lifelong, day-to-day involvement, never-ending responsibilities, constant indoctrination at all stages of life, and marriage and family commitments that extends to the concept of an eternal family after death.

The second study compared the experiences of people leaving churches to the social and personal traumas police officers, firefighters, and soldiers experience when they try to leave their professions, which likewise are totalistic organizations requiring professional, family, and social commitments that consume their daily lives far beyond the requirements of other professions.

Hinderaker performed the first two studies as part of her dissertation, and they were published in academic journals. As an assistant professor, she teaches organizational communication, argumentation and debate, and negotiation, and she also is the TCU convenor of debates.

The third study was completed very recently in collaboration with her colleague Johny Garner, Ph.D., who also is an assistant professor at TCU and specializes in organizational communication. The final study has been submitted to an academic journal and is awaiting publication.

Humanists of Fort Worth first interacted with Hinderaker about 2 years ago when she was seeking people to participate in the final study according to established guidelines. Only one member participated, and everyone else fell outside the study requirements.

As a result, she agreed to speak to HoFW in March and presented a preview of her key findings at our regular

(continued on page 4)

Fort Worth Classic Guitar Society sponsors guitar gala

Spanish flamenco guitarist Vicente Amigo performs at Irving Arts Center

By Wanda Foster

As part of the Allegro Guitar Series, Fort Worth Classic Guitar Society for the 20th year continues to pour enthralling classical and flamenco guitarists into local venues for the listening pleasure of people across Fort Worth and Dallas.

Sunday night, March 20, internationally acclaimed flamenco guitarist Vicente Amigo brought his original repertoire to the Irving Arts Center Carpenter Performance Hall. An estimated 550 people attended in an auditorium that seats slightly more than 700.

As a frequent user of front row tickets, my party sat front left near the center, but buyers beware the stage setup at this facility. While front row seats often make it possible to see the hands of the artist at work, that was barely the case on this stage, and the tickets were equally as expensive as any front row seats but without the best view. The stage almost obstructs the line of sight and seating came with a bottom view of the drums. Still, sufficient neck stretching made it possible to see most

of the stage and the artist at work. In hindsight, moving back three or four rows may have been the best choice.

Amigo, known as "the Sultan of Duen-de," which loosely translates into Sultan of Sprites or Sultan of Soul, was born under the name Vicente Amigo Girol. He says he started playing guitar because, as a 3-year-old, he watched famous Spanish guitarist Paco de Lucia play, and the memory stayed with him.

Officially, Amigo started playing at the age of 8 studying under guitar maestros, such as El Merengue (Rafael Rodríguez Fernández) and El Tomate (Juan Muñoz Expósito). At 15 he became an apprentice of the famous artist Manolo Sanlúcar and worked in his group for several years.

Amigo eventually met and befriended Paco de Lucia, and it is said that de Lucia also admired Amigo in return. De Lucia died in 2014 after many years of performing at the pinnacle of Spanish guitar.

Amigo says, "We became friends and shared many great times. For all fla-



Vicente Amigo, Acclaimed Composer and Guitarist from Andalusia, Spain

mencos, Paco is the greatest. He opened paths. He did so much for flamenco guitar that we are all indebted to him."

"Tierra," Amigo's seventh and most recent album release, features all of the music he has composed. He also arranged the album with the help of Dire Straits keyboardist Guy Fletcher.

(continued on page 5)

Book Review

Breaking the Spell by Daniel Dennett, philosopher and scientist

By Rick Satterfield

Daniel Dennett, a world-renowned Oxford doctor of philosophy, outlines his scholarly views of religion as a natural phenomenon in his 2006 book, *Breaking the Spell*. A member of the Secular Coalition for America Advisory Board, Dennett aptly posits that human inclination to invent, practice, and perpetuate religious concepts is an evolutionary feature that, more times than not, produces a net benefit.

This 11-chapter book contains three major parts: "Opening Pandora's

Box," "The Evolution of Religion," and "Religion Today." An exhaustive index is included for topic reference.

The first part explores why religion warrants heavier scientific scrutiny than it receives and any practical benefits that might result from such scrutiny. The following excerpt concisely summarizes the intent of the opening chapters: "Although there are risks and discomforts involved, we should brace ourselves and set aside out traditional reluctance to investigate religious phenomenon scientifically, so that we can come to understand how and why religions inspire such devotion, and figure out how we should deal with them all in the twenty-first century."

The second part dives deeply into evolutionary origins of religious behavior. Dennett explains how the stock, Latin legal phrase *cui bono*, meaning "Who benefits from this?" is a more central question for evolutionary biology than for law. In nearly all cases, evolution provides a benefit to at least one involved entity. He considers that the *cui bono* concept naturally applies to religious evolution as well. As humans transitioned from sporadic networks of small tribal bands into centralized agricultural societies, folk religions evolved into organized religions we see today. Regarding this transition, Dennett explores the question of *cui bono* and continues to do so throughout the remainder of the book when examining various aspects of religious

evolution. He also coins the term Good Trick, defined as "a move in design space that will be discovered again and again by blind evolutionary processes simply because so many different adaptive paths lead to it and thereby endorse it."

Examples of Good Tricks in human evolution include the invention of monetary systems, culture, art, music, and religion.

In the closing part of the book, Dennett summarizes his intent in previous chapters by stating, "My task was to demonstrate that there was enough reason to question the tradition of faith so that you could not in good conscience turn your back on the available or discoverable relevant facts." He closes with an earnest call to "break the traditional taboo against inquiring so openly and searchingly about religious affiliations and convictions."

The book offers much more than can be revealed in an abbreviated review. Dennett admirably maintains his scientific objectivity throughout the book. His in-depth analysis steers clear of cliché mainstream atheist, theist arguments that are frequently repeated. Without the distraction of an axe to grind, he seems genuinely interested in educating his readership about the role of religion in humanity from a cognitive research angle.

This book is for people who wish to understand the atheist perspective of a deep-thinking, old-school American



philosopher. Dennett received his Ph.D. from the University of Oxford in 1965 with a rare combination of expertise in biological evolution, philosophy, and cognitive science. Following are my three favorite quotes from *Breaking the Spell*:

"Those who are religious and believe religion is the best hope for humankind cannot reasonably expect those of us who are skeptical to refrain from expressing our doubts if they themselves are unwilling to put their convictions under the microscope."

"Accepting inferior status to an invisible god is a cunning stratagem, whether or not its cunning is consciously recognized by those who stumble upon it. Those who rely on it will thrive, wittingly or otherwise. As every subordinate knows, one's commands are more effective than they might otherwise be if one can accompany them with a threat to tell the bigger boss if disobedience ensues."

"Ignorance is nothing shameful; imposing ignorance is shameful. Most people are not to blame for their own ignorance, but if they willfully pass it on, they are to blame."

After break, Book Club hopes to resume in April

Recently the Humanist Book Club has been cancelled because the leader, Morris Meador, is deeply involved in helping Westside UU find a new minister, a difficult task for a 60-percent humanist congregation. In the interim, Rick Satterfield, a new HoFW member, has helped by providing a book review. He recently also told us about his work with the Peace Corps in Kenya. Our goal is to get the Book Club back on track the fourth Saturday of April at 3 p.m. The group meets at Westside UU Church, 901 Page Avenue, Fort Worth. The book will be *The Sacred Depths of Nature* by Ursula Goodenough, a Washington University cellular biologist and atheist.

| | April 2016 | May 2016 | June 2016 |
|------------------------|---|--|---|
| Key HoFW Events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cowtown Great American Cleanup, Saturday, April 2, 9 a.m. at 3750 S University Dr, Fort Worth to pick up trash on the HoFW portion of Granbury Road Regular Meeting, Separation of Church and State in Volney's <i>Ruins of Empires</i>, Wednesday, April 13, 7 p.m., 901 Page Avenue, Fort Worth, TX Regular Dinner Social to be announced. To get a seat, RSVP at http://www.meetup.com/Humanists-of-Fort-Worth/events HoFW Book Club, Saturday, April 23 from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., 901 Page Avenue, Fort Worth, TX; <i>The Sacred Depths of Nature</i> by Ursula Goodenough, a Washington University professor, a leading American cellular biologist, and atheist | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Meeting, Wednesday, May 11, 7 p.m., 901 Page Avenue, Fort Worth, TX Regular Dinner Social, Wednesday, May 25, 6:30 p.m. to be announced at http://www.meetup.com/Humanists-of-Fort-Worth/events HoFW Book Club, Saturday, May 28, 3 to 4:30 p.m., 901 Page Avenue, Fort Worth, TX | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Meeting, Wednesday, March 9, 7 p.m., 901 Page Avenue, Fort Worth, TX Regular Dinner Social, Wednesday, June 22, 6:30 p.m. to be announced at http://www.meetup.com/Humanists-of-Fort-Worth/events HoFW Book Club, Saturday, June 25, 3 to 4:30 p.m., 901 Page Avenue, Fort Worth, TX |
| Other Events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metroplex Atheists Social, J. Gilligan's Bar & Grill, 400 E Abram St., Arlington, TX, 6:30 p.m., April 6 Freethinkers of Fort Worth go to Amphibian Productions for "I'll Eat You Last: A Chat With Sue Mengers" by John Logan, 120 South Main Street, Fort Worth, TX, 8 p.m., April 6; no reservations necessary; admission first come, first served; Spanish Classical guitar with Michael Daily; La Perla Negra, Wednesday nights, 7 p.m., 910 Houston Street; reservations recommended | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freethinkers of Fort Worth, Dinners Across Fort Worth, held Friday nights two or three nights monthly to be announced at the following Web Link: http://www.meetup.com/FWFreethinkers/events/ Kimbell Art Museum, The Artist's Eye, discussing comparing the art of the past to the art of the present, moderated by Jennifer Casler Price, curator for Asian and non-Western art, Saturday, April 30, 11 a.m.; free | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kimbell Art Museum, free lecture inaugurating "The Brothers Le Nain: Painters of Seventeenth-Century France," presented by C. D. Dickerson, curator and head of sculpture and decorative arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Saturday, May 21, 2016 – 10:15 a.m. to 1 p.m. |

Letters to the Editor

All HoFW members and other readers who wish to write Letters to the Editor responding to articles that appear in this publication are invited to express their own views and provide feedback.

Our newsletter policy requires letters to reference a specific article that has appeared in one of the two most recent issues. We do not publish open letters or third-party letters.

Responders should limit their letters

to 150 or 175 words and provide the writer's email address. In addition, for those who require anonymity, please provide the name you would like published with the letter.

All letters should be exclusive to *The Fort Worth Humanist Quarterly* and should not be published in any other publication.

Anyone who would like to submit a letter can do so by e-

mailing the editor at the following address: vicechair@hofw.org.

Space is limited, so we make no guarantee that all letters will be published. Letters may be edited or shortened to fit the space.

We request that all content show a respectful tone, even when the viewpoints expressed differ from those of *The Fort Worth Humanist Quarterly* or any other party.

THE FORT WORTH HUMANIST QUARTERLY

Chair: Sam
 Editor and Vice Chair: Wanda Foster
 Assistant Editor: Adam
 Secretary: Reed Bilz
 Treasurer: Adam

<http://www.hofw.org/>

This publication has been published quarterly since 2014.

© 2016 by the Humanists of Fort Worth

Opinion

HoFW Humanist Perspectives

By Wanda Foster

Humanist Suzie Lotven at 79 years old is tall, agile, and well-exercised. Staying healthy in body and mind is important to her, so she works out at the gym three mornings and one afternoon each week, while participating in various local organizations, including HoFW and Westside Unitarian-Universalist (UU) Church. She volunteers for local aid groups and participates in politics as a progressive.

Suzie has built her life around key principles that motivate her—good friendships, education, and a deep sense of responsibility about building a strong community and a government ready to support to the best and the weakest among us. She draws no distinctions or boundaries regarding which humans she will support, believing that all humans are in this world together regardless of religious affiliation or lack of affiliation. She and her husband of 38 years, Jay Lotven, often volunteer together.

Born in El Paso, Suzie is a retired teacher. As a child, she excelled in all of her classes.

When she was 9 years old, her mother divorced her father, who was an alcoholic. Later, she married a sign painter and horse trader and moved to Las Cruces, NM.

Unfortunately, her brother, who was 3 years older than her, was unable to get along with the stepfather's eldest son, so the mother sent him back to El Paso to live with his father. Despite the separation, Suzie saw him often since El Paso is only 45 miles away.

She loved public school at Las Cruces Union High. While she did well across the board, she especially liked history and geometry, and she met a friend at school who is still her friend.

For 60 years after graduation, she went back to the school for class reunions once every 5 years.

"After 60 years, we dropped off," she said.

She also loved the town, which at the time was small. Today the school no longer exists. The population has grown, and three or four schools took its place.

During Suzie's interview, Jay quipped that "they have lights now. They have electricity and everything."

Like many nonbelievers, Suzie was very interested in religions, even though her family practiced little religion. As an infant, she was baptized into the Episcopal Church, but she and her brother never went to church as children. In high school she sometimes attended a Baptist church with friends, but she said she "wasn't really interested in the Baptist church."

After high school she attended college at Texas Western, which today is the University of Texas at El Paso. She had many academic interests and did not declare a major, although she considered psychology and business. After 2 years, she was married in the

Episcopal Church, and she and her new husband moved to Austin, TX. After 2 years they divorced, and she eventually married another man, an Episcopalian. They attended an Episcopal church together for several years and moved to Monahans, TX first and then to Odessa, TX, where she studied at Odessa College.

After graduation, she continued her education by commuting back and forth to El Paso, where she obtained a history degree from Texas Western and started substitute teaching.

Around 1968 or 1969, they moved to Fort Worth. She obtained a Master of Education degree and a teaching certificate from North Texas State University and then taught in Birdville Independent School District between 1968 and 1979.

Most of her time was spent at school working many extra hours, but she also socialized some with her husband's family in the Richland Hills area. (She was surprised at retirement to learn that, unlike teachers in many states, Texas teachers are forbidden from receiving both Social Security and their Texas teacher's pensions.) Somewhere during her time at Birdville, she divorced her second husband and by 1977 she and Jay were married. They went to Collinsville, IL for a while so Jay could pursue an education degree and then moved to San Francisco, where she taught for several years at inner city schools with large student bodies and big problems. She taught various grade levels over the years, including kindergarten, third, fourth, and fifth grades between 1980 and 1997, except for a 2-year stint in the Peace Corps between 1987 and 1988.

Inner-city children in San Francisco spoke many languages, and school enrollment was quite large. Her school had 1,200 students who spoke 16 different languages—different Chinese dialects, Cambodian, Laotian, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Most students were ill-prepared for class, she said, and had discipline problems. Her advice to teachers and schools in areas like these is to be firm with students and to recognize that "usually they have never had a story read to them, and they may not be prepared for school at all. Even their parents did not know what to do. They would just ask us 'what can we do?'"

Most of the children did not participate in head start. Bilingual classes were only available for Spanish, Cambodian, and Vietnamese speakers. So many of them understood very little of their classes at first. She taught Spanish and English as a second language classes.

"What you do is you speak the [English] language to them and start with easier subjects, like math, which is easier to transition into the language. Then you follow with art, music, and that sort of thing. Then as they get more English, you add more

English and other classes. You use pictures a lot," she said. The work was taxing.

"I spent a lot of time after school," she said. "It was not a 9 to 5 job. I would spend hours at home working on grading papers and getting ready for the next day. I spent a ton of my own money buying supplies."

She and Jay decided to take a break in their careers to join the Peace Corps between 1987 and 1988 before Jay started his pet shops in San Francisco. This stint presented her with a clear view of the stark realities of education in poor Caribbean nations. They were sent to Belize to direct the school in a small village, but school and church politics prevented them from fulfilling that role. Those were difficult years.

"We lived in a very, very small village called Guinea Grass. We had no electricity and no running water, nothing," she recalls. The bathroom was an outhouse. She recalls it was "very challenging. The teachers were not interested in learning at all. They just liked the easy way."

Traditionally, Belizean children were taught by rote, repeatedly reciting aloud in unison. Students retained little. Each classroom had some 60 children, making teaching difficult. The school was Catholic, and 50 percent of class time was devoted to religion.

"I would jump in and try to model a teaching strategy, and they just wanted me to take over the class and not bother them," she said.

Language was an issue. While the official language was English, most locals spoke other languages. No teachers had attended college, and they wrote English sentences on the board which Suzie describes as nonsensical.

Anyone who had completed 8th grade was eligible to be a teacher. Only two of them were categorized as "educated" because they had two additional years of training beyond eighth grade. The appointed officer in charge of the project paid little attention. He visited the village only once for 30 minutes during their stay, she said. While she would have accepted a second Peace Corps project, she said she has no desire to return to a situation similar to that in Belize.

They were paid \$200 a month which was put aside for them in the U.S. when they returned to the country, which was fine, she said.

Suzie taught in San Francisco again until 1997 when they both retired and moved to a tiny Mexican village, La Chichilco, on Lake Chapala about an hour from Guadalajara.

"We had a very nice house with a pool and a big yard. We had orange trees, lemon trees, lime trees, mangos, and figs. We were on Lake Chapala, which is the largest lake in Mexico."

She loved expatriate social life with her American and Canadian neighbors. She joined the garden club and a writer's group, and she taught English to the locals, including doctors in

From the Editor:
Most HoFW members favor science and rationalism over religion, magic, and dogma. Within that realm, we remain very diverse, however, with different perspectives in a world often unfriendly to secular thought. This column presents our stories.

Chapala, as a volunteer. The expatriate community created a positive socioeconomic environment, she said.

Near the end of their 4 years there, Suzie became ill. A salivary gland became inflamed, and local doctors diagnosed the need for surgery to remove it. She was not yet eligible for Medicare and had no health insurance, so they moved to Jay's old home in Stillwater, OK, where she turned 65, received Medicare, and underwent a biopsy confirming she had cancer. Radiation and chemotherapy were administered, and for 6 months she was fed with a feeding tube. She underwent lymph node surgery to verify the cancer had been eradicated. Luckily, it had. She knew she was well when she painted the house and they moved back to Fort Worth in 2003.

They joined Westside UU Church and HoFW about 2007. She and Jay have long chipped in to help HoFW, and she helps Jay take food to the Samaritan House once each month. Like the vast majority of HoFW members she has no belief in a god, but she believes strongly in working with Christians and others helping the community.

"Actually I think we are more Christian than Christians. I think so often Christians do things for their own, while condemning outsiders, but we don't do that," she said.

Suzie and Jay are pleased to serve on the board of the South Central Alliance of Churches (SCAC), a Christian group that helps the needy in the community without proselytizing or imposing religious requirements.

SCAC provides aid to the needy in three zip codes—76104, 76109, and 76110—as long as they show need. The organization provides food, toiletries, clothing, rent, and utilities assistance. The organization also provides money, some \$1,000, to the school clinic near the South Central Church of Christ. Any school-age child with a need can go there for shots or emergency healthcare. HoFW makes a small donation to the SCAC annually.

She said she likes humanist ideas because "we know we need to take care of ourselves and others in the world. Humanists realize we have no one other than ourselves to solve our problems, so we are more motivated than others to participate in politics. Humanism aims to help everyone, not just a few," she said.

Christianity often relies on prayer and discriminates against or condemns or excludes others unlike them, she said.

"What I have always wondered about is when two people pray for the opposite thing, what happens? Who wins? Is it like football?" she asked. "One person wins, another loses?"

People exiting totalistic faiths face challenges similar to those of people leaving totalistic jobs, such as police officers, firefighters, and soldiers trying to find less consuming professions

(continued from page 1)

March meeting. At the time of the study, no one knew she was herself a former Mormon. Information from any participants she discussed is subject to confidentiality, so all names presented in the study were changed to protect privacy.

Hinderaker first became interested in exploring how people leave a religion after she left the Mormon Church herself. Her family was deeply rooted in the Mormon religion in Utah, where she grew up.

"I grew up sixth-generation Mormon," she said. "So I have a history in the Mormon Church that goes all the way back to 1830 to the founding of the church, and so when the first six Mormons were baptized by Joseph Smith himself, a Rolands was among them. That was my maiden name."

She recalls some of the difficulties of her own experience, although her own family continues to communicate and has not disowned her, as some people in the study experienced.

"When my husband and I got married, it was a Mormon bishop to whom we said our I dos and were married in Community Hall and not in the temple, because he was a non-Mormon, and I had already kind of started the process of exit at that point. We formally left after college, but we were kind of in again, out again, during our newlywed college years where I was attending more sporadically in a college town in South Dakota," she said. "Leaving that church and seeing others who have done the same and some of my extended family who wandered away from the church always intrigued me."

Study 1: Leaving the Mormon Faith

That intrigue led her to initiate the first study in which she interviewed 50 Mormons who had left the church and recorded their experiences. The first question she asked was how do people leave or exit a church, especially an organization like the Mormon Church that is totalistic in that it consumes large portions of a person's life and is handed down and indoctrinated in children from birth.

As a scholar of communications, she said she chose communicative methods for the study in which she conducted interviews, asked each person the same set of questions and then used their responses to produce a qualitative evaluation of the process of exiting, the experiences of people leaving, and the impact these decisions had on their lives.

She considered the Mormon Church first because she knew it and because she knew that it ranked high on the scale of totalistic organizations that consume more time from its members than a weekly church meeting. Mormon demands on the time of its members are high, and proving devotion to the faith and the family are viewed as eternal requirements, not just lifetime duties. Key principles of the church

are commitment to the eternal family, duty, and austerity, as they define it, including fulfilling church requirements, avoiding gluttony and excess, and giving a tithe. Mormons avoid alcohol and tobacco. They drink no tea or coffee and are required to adhere to chastity laws.

Families who fail to meet criteria of the church can be labeled as jack Mormons, who are people that fail to live up to requirements of the faith. These noncriterion Mormons may be prevented from participation in events in the main temple.

"There are all kinds of steps you have to go through in order to be able to enter a temple," she said. "So if the parents of a bride or groom are not criterion Mormons or temple-recommended, they cannot attend the wedding in that temple."

Lifelong requirements are set for people before they are born. Young men are required to go on Mormon missions around the world for 2 years around the age of 19, and young women prepare to raise a family in the church. Pregnant mothers wear t-shirts that say "Future Missionary," and one-piece pajamas for small boys have church symbols, such as ties and elder badges.

Women learn to cook, clean, sew, and bear as many children as they can. She said a piece of scripture tells women to "prepare the Tabernacles to bring the souls forth from heaven as many as you are able."

Everyone attends a weekly meeting on Sunday, including priesthood meetings for men, women's relief society meetings, children's primary meetings, and young men and young women's separate meetings.

"So they separate you based on age and gender, and you are in church 3 hours every Sunday," she said.

Beyond that some people teach classes, and the rest of the week other activities must be observed, including Wednesday meetings, Thursday relief society meetings for women, and family nights at home. Once a week the parents teach a lesson in the homes and do church-related activities. Once each month families are expected to entertain both visiting and local teachers in their homes.

The first question she asked was what the process of exiting from church was like for the interviewees.

"The core metaphor that came out of this was that almost all of the people in the study described it as a journey, a road, a path, a road out..." she said. "It wasn't just like severing the ties when you leave a job and that's it. Instead it was this long journey, this arduous process that they undertook."

The shortest process of exit was 5 years, and the longest took 28 years. Hinderaker said people quit one part of the faith at a time.

The initial pullout typically represented only an initiation of the journey.

Many of them had difficulty reconciling church doctrine with other knowledge gained outside the church.

A participant named Brenda in her narrative wrote, "I have a hard time reconciling Mormonism with rational thought. Why were certain things necessary? Why would god require certain things to get into heaven? Why would it matter to him whether someone did these little symbolic things like eat little pieces of bread and drink little shots of water? What was the point of being baptized by complete immersion instead of just sprinkling on the head? Why would it matter if their underwear was different? And if it did, was this really the kind of god that I wanted to hang out with?"

The underwear is a reference to Temple garments. Once you go into the Temple you wear Temple garments underneath your clothes for the rest of your life.

One participant, Sandy, wrote that when she was 20 she was manipulated and date raped by a man from the church who found her on a singles board in Salt Lake City. That sent her into a period of questioning and was her catalyst for leaving. Most exiters were found to have some form of catalyst that led to leaving.

Reading books often served as catalysts. While most people might think the book that caused doubt would be the Book of Mormon, 12 of the 50 cited other modern books, such as *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy and *The Da Vinci Code*, which Hinderaker said perplexed her for a while. The reason ended up being that if a person like Tolkien could create an entire world and language around elvish creatures, Joseph Smith could have created the religion. So they developed doubts about doctrine. Others read Native American books that seemed to overlap with Mormon teachings in a way that produced doubts.

After trying to leave the first time, however, many people experienced difficulties.

After trying to leave, Jerry said he decided to go back and stay in the church another 5 years for his wife, because leaving would annul their eternal marriage. When he later he left the church his wife divorced him.

Janice reported fears that her family would reject her. Others said they stayed in the church for a while after experiencing deep personal self-doubt and trying to strengthen their faith.

Twenty-eight of the 50 people who left reported rejection by family and friends and discord in the family.

Laurie described what happened when she and her husband left the church.

"My mother, who was queen of the jack Mormons, wailed and shrieked and accused me of hating her. She hung up on me and covered her ears when we were face to face. I finally resorted to writing her a letter. My sisters were mortified and cried and wailed and spouted scripture and ac-

cused us of being selfish, bad, and uncaring parents. The three of them had banded together in solidarity so that the first six months or so I took the initiative to call them over and over again, but my calls were never returned and so I resorted to exchange pleasantries if confronted by them. I called my aging mother once a week, but she still didn't answer the phone."

Clergy often did not want to be bothered or could not be approached.

Study 2: Comparison to Police, Firefighter, and Soldier Organizations

This study showed similarities between the people leaving a totalistic church and people leaving a totalistic job, including those in professional careers as police officers, firefighters, and soldiers. Both police leaving their jobs and Mormons leaving their religions were interviewed in this study. The Mormons who participated in the second study were different than those in the first study, yet exhibited many of the same characteristics and themes as those in the first study.

She said police officer, firefighter, and soldier communities went through the same types of in-and-out exit processes, obstacles, and long arduous journeys as the people leaving the Mormon Church. In both cases, the people undergoing the separation, whether from their professions or their church, often suffered alone with no one to talk to because they could find no way to express dissent that would be acceptable to the larger group and no person to talk to about the issues.

People in these totalistic professions found much of their personal lives engrossed in their careers. Their primary friendships were with families of people they worked with, and they took an oath, much as people in totalistic religions profess their devotion or allegiance to the church. Their own choices and survival seemed inexorably joined to those of others.

Exit behaviors were similar. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) for police and firefighters often was an unvoiced catalyst for wanting to leave. Many underwent long internal struggles before leaving.

While exiting the church, Mormons often wore a "Mormon mask," an outer persona exhibiting faithfulness and belief even as they struggled internally. Likewise, people in totalistic jobs hid the actual problem and even avoided PTSD counseling because they were afraid of losing their jobs if they showed weakness to other members. They worried about the impacts on their coworkers if they left.

In either case, leaving the job or leaving the church, administrative problems and corruption were issues among the leadership. Mormons talked about excess authoritarianism and disinterested or unhelpful clergy who gave poor advice. The next issue will present additional findings of this study and of Study 3.

Amigo's style transports listeners to Andalusia, the birthplace of flamenco art forms



Vicente Amigo, center, and his accompanists and vocalist take a bow at the end of the night. (photo by George Foster)

(continued from page 1)

Some describe this work as more modern than that of his predecessors, true to deep traditions he learned as a child and loved by countless Spanish guitar fans. He won a Latin Grammy in 2001 for Best Flamenco Album for the debut of his popular work, "City of Ideas," which reflects the growing body of modern flamenco composition and performance at its best.

During this tour he made several other U.S. appearances, one at Carnegie Hall in early March. In Irving, Amigo opened with a solo in the soleares por bulerías style, which is often considered a hybrid blending the slower soleares form with the somewhat faster, bolder pace and form of the bulerías.

Effortlessly, under a single spotlight, Amigo opened with a sound that softly transported me back to a lazy, bright afternoon in Granada sitting in a sunny sidewalk café beneath the

hills of the Alhambra, or perhaps we really were in Amigo's native town of Guadalcanal, Seville, a small autonomous community of Andalusia, the Spanish province considered by many to be the birthplace of the flamenco art form. Today he lives in Córdoba in North Central Andalusia.

While the music had the depth of sound of a soleares, the rhythm was light and airy with moments of intensity and lively tension. Throughout many of his songs, he appeared to be pensive and almost asleep, while performing athletic movements without awakening from his mood. His long, slender fingers made one listener describe his hands as rubber bands with double joints, but his fingers glided rather than bounced anywhere they wanted to go across the frets.

Three of Amigo's compositions followed, including: "Mensaje," a fandango, which is a lively dance tune; "Tangos Del Arco Bajo," a tango; and

"Autorretrato," a bulerías.

At some point during that set, he was joined by other performers, including second guitarist Antonio "Anil" Fernandez, whose music was mixed well to the back throughout the evening. Francisco "Paquito" Gonzalez played the cajon (box drum) and other drums, primarily using light cymbals for brushing or soft tapping. Tapping, finger snapping, clapping, and *canté*, or song, were used with aplomb, as any flamenco enthusiast would wish.

Rafael de Utrera provided a powerful mix of emotions with his vocal strength interjected at intervals. Although the accompanists and vocalist moved onstage and off stage periodically, even when they were there, they did an excellent job of serving as an interesting backdrop for Amigo center. The only thing missing was a flamenco dancer since the music was actually created for dance. In fact, U.S. audiences in other cities, including Miami, New York, Boston, Washington, D.C., Santa Cruz, and San Francisco all saw special guest dancer Antonio Molina, also known as "El Choro" at their performances. Perhaps the smaller venue made his participation impossible, but he was missed.

At times during the performance, the artists experienced sound-mixing challenges, although the sound was strong throughout. Hand signals from the stage periodically gave subtle encouragement to the Art Center crew overlooking the auditorium to step back Amigo's microphone. Presumably more of the accompaniment could have been heard by the audience if the crew had been a bit more responsive to requests of the performers.

The playlist for the middle of the show—although flamenco guitarists often tend to veer away from such a list—included "Estacion Primavera," "Tierra," "Bolero A Los Padres," "Campos De San Gregorio," "Rio de la Seda," and "Azules Y Corintos" all from his new album.

After the introduction, the rhythm built to a higher pitch with traditional upbeat sounds. The vocalist sang a brief, rather soulful *canté* during the second series of songs as the rhythm picked up.

Later, bass player Ewen Vernal entered stage right, organized his bass, and began adding a light beat that bounced the stage softly at intervals with the sound well back, despite our

closeness to the left center stage.

Amigo opened his eyes and periodically appeared to enjoy interplay with the drums, the second guitarist, and the vocalist. Words of flamenco songs were sung in Spanish, but sometimes songs are sung using words that not even the guitarists understand.

The vocalist added emotion to the scene, sometimes sorrow, sometimes anger, and dramatic interest. These were conveyed to the audience only through the music of the voice, the accompanists, and the strength, sharpness, or softness of sound and the many rhythms of clapping, finger snapping, and the cajon. All of the rhythms rose to higher pitches as the song concluded in momentary silence.

The next song was quieter as Amigo played beautifully in solo, and then with the return of light bass. The rhythm then sped up with added vibrato and built to a close with drums.

While Amigo's sound was solid and spirited throughout the performance, his solo shortly after the mid-way point of the performance delivered everything that demonstrates his power as a musician and the reason for his international acclaim. The sound was pure and unflinching with strength of technical execution.

Near the final song, we saw a return of the bass and the drums, which for the first time were heard in full in the bulerías style.

A final solo closed the show as it had started with a Amigo performing alone and the spotlight softly narrowing around him, as he presented a title known as "Roma." In Europe, the word Roma often refers to Romani or Central European communities, also called gypsies, who entertain in flamenco style across Andalusia and other parts of Spain.

The audience loved it. Many olés and bravos were heard, and the audience clapped for an encore. The title of the song is unknown, but some attendees said it might be part of a new repertoire under construction. Flamenco songs often are strung together over time rather than simply created and left alone.

Internationally, Amigo has earned "a shelf full of awards," among them the Medalla de Oro al Mérito en las Bellas Artes, Spain's equivalent of the National Medal of Arts, in December 2015. The show was convincing.

Several Fort Worth Classic Guitar Society programs scheduled in Fort Worth in the spring and summer

The Fort Worth Classic Guitar Society has planned several new programs, including a performance by Grammy winner Jason Vieaux, a classical guitarist described by National Public Radio as "perhaps the most precise and soulful classical guitarist of his generation."

The show will be held at the Kimbell Art Museum in the Renzo Piano Pavilion Recital Hall Thursday, April 7, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets can be purchased

at the following link:

<http://guitarsociety.org/>



Jason Vieaux, Classical Guitarist

The Fort Worth Classic Guitar Society, which is a 501(c)(3) organization, also will hold a benefit and a brief concert by international classical guitarist Christopher McGuire at Paigebrooke Farm in Westlake, TX on May 15.

Entitled "An Evening in Seville," the event will include a tour of the historic Bradley home built in 1938 for Ted Dealey, former publisher of the *Dallas Morning News*. The home

was designed by architect Charles Stevens Dilbeck.

Wednesday nights through April and May, accomplished local classical guitarist Michael Daily, a well-known officer in the Fort Worth Classic Guitar Society, will continue to perform at La Perla Negra, 910 Houston Street during the dinner hour.

While the event is casual with no cover, dinner reservations are recommended to ensure a seat.