

**CFTI IN
2020**
RISING TO A NEW REALITY



Message from the CEO and President

It didn't take long after the coronavirus pandemic caused school closures in March 2020 for Bertha Vazquez to jump into action.

Vazquez, director of our Teacher Institute for Evolutionary Science and an award-winning middle school science teacher, instantly posted science lessons on evolution specifically designed for remote learning. Thousands of teachers across the country and around the world found those enriching lessons a lifeline for students stuck at home.

Here are just a few of the comments we received:

"You are SAVING me with these lessons on evolution! It's pretty much everything I already do- just in a way I can deliver to kids!!!" –Rebecca, Lancaster, PA

"I saw the posting for the remote instruction for evolution at the middle school level on Facebook. Evolution is my favorite topic, and we were just starting the unit when school shut down (sigh). You are a life-saver!!!!" –Holly, Pine Bush, NY

"I love the middle school evolution unit. I teach 8th grade science at the International School of Kenya." –Tish, Nairobi, Kenya

Vazquez also brought her renowned teacher training sessions—teaching teachers how to teach evolution—fully online and offered free webinars for teachers

and students on topics as varied as The Evolution of the Coronavirus, Unearthing Our Newest Human Relative, and Survival of the Friendliest.

This is just how one of our programs adjusted to the new normal.

As you'll see throughout this Progress Report, the Center for Inquiry (CFI) was exceptionally well positioned to provide essential information and advocacy as the nation and world battled COVID-19. CFI stood, as it always has, as a beacon of evidence-based truth over misinformation and science over pseudoscience.

The Coronavirus Resource Center, our website of relevant information about the pandemic and vaccinations, became a go-to website for people seeking accurate news. Web traffic shot up as people found our site to be "an inoculation against misinformation" as we dubbed it. Curated by William London, a professor of public health at California State University, we offered the public important warnings on dubious COVID-19 treatments and laid bare the scams that were taking advantage of people's legitimate fear of getting sick. We even helped expose the homeopathic garbage endorsed by Ben Carson, former Trump administration secretary of Housing and Urban Development. He promoted the homeopathic Oleander 4X as relief for his COVID-19 symptoms when there was no valid scientific evidence behind the claim.

Unlike any other year in living memory, this year told

the story of the importance of medical science—humankind's One True Savior—as opposed to some mythical god in heaven. All of us, except a disturbing subset of misguided people, were waiting for scientists to develop vaccines that would release us from isolation.

Unfortunately, the anti-vaxxer movement grew even as the need for universal vaccinations became an urgent public health imperative. CFI's advocacy work pushed back against the misinformation on vaccines, and we took our on-the-ground lobbying before state legislatures to ensure that this vital public health measure—getting everyone vaccinated who is medically qualified to do so—was not shot full of legal loopholes.

The webinar series Skeptical Inquirer Presents that CFI established thanks to the enterprising work of Barry Karr, executive director of the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry, included accessible lectures on such topics as the development of coronavirus vaccines by preeminent experts, including Dr. Paul Offit, who coinvented the rotavirus vaccine. The webinar series also focused on ways to combat the massive amount of dangerous misinformation flying around the internet and how to puncture the misinformation bubble surrounding believers in conspiracy theories, such as the bizarre and noxious QAnon myth.

During this year of medical science, we exponentially expanded our work exposing medical quackery. The

encyclopedic website Quackwatch that details and describes the workings of modern snake oil and its salesmen, from worthless ayurveda to the dangerous practice of cupping, is now part of CFI. In addition, the highly regarded Society for Science-Based Medicine is now under our umbrella.

And CFI's legal department, under Legal Director Nick Little, continues to fight the fraud of homeopathy in the courts, pursuing giant retail and online pharmacies for the way they fraudulently market homeopathic products alongside real medicine. We even added a staff counsel, Aaron Green, who will specialize in fighting medical quackery in court.

Due to the pandemic and toughened restrictions on refugees around the world, our Secular Rescue program had an extra-challenging year helping atheist activists at risk for rejecting religion. Yet we were able to help 120 people in places such as Bangladesh and Pakistan, with various forms of assistance, providing many with the resources to relocate or hire a lawyer

for their asylum claims.

This year as well we saw a distressing rise in religious privilege in law, where religiously affiliated organizations claimed the right to discriminate against people who didn't subscribe to their dogma and demanded the right to access tax money to do so. And we did all we could to raise the alarms and slow the progress of this dangerous new development.

Our chronology of the Trump administration's assault on science and secularism mapped out the ways that science was stymied and religion exalted through executive orders and new agency regulations. This detailed accounting provided the basis for a call to the new administration to reverse the damage.

This was the year that the message CFI has been "preaching" for generations, that the truth matters and that reason and science are essential to guide public policy, became a matter of life and death. If there was ever a tough object lesson in the need to

listen to expertise and reject conspiracy theories and other nonsense, it was learned in 2020.

CFI and its amazing staff, board of directors, and volunteer leaders met the challenges of 2020 through public information, education, litigation, and advocacy.

I hope you feel a common bond in these accomplishments. We represent your values: the Enlightenment values of reason, science, and secularism. But it is only due to your support that we were able to translate these transformational ideas into action.

With warmest regards,



Robyn Blumner

At A Glance



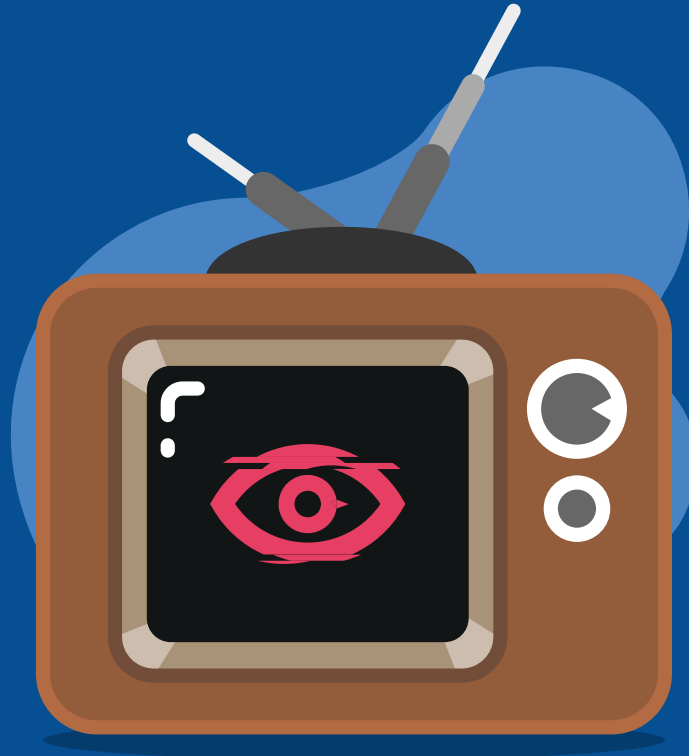
We led the war against misinformation.



We held the line against religious privilege.

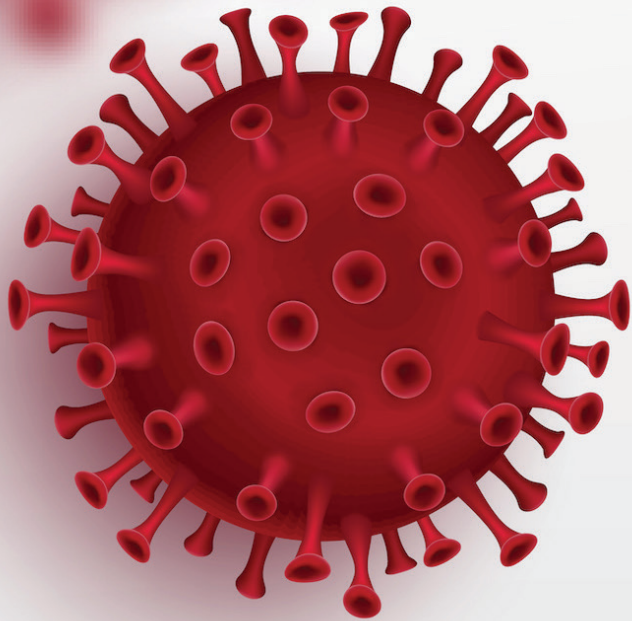


We forged new paths to progress.



We Got This

CFI Stands Up for Truth in a Post-Truth World



Leading the Fight Against COVID-19 Misinformation

From cold-hard facts to crooks and quacks, CFI had the COVID-19 crisis covered from every angle.

As soon as the coronavirus crisis emerged early in the year, we knew that CFI was uniquely positioned to address the coming avalanche of pseudoscience and misinformation. In March, we launched the CFI Coronavirus Resource Center, a one-stop shop on the internet for up-to-date, reality-based information about the pandemic from trusted, verified sources, convenient and easy to share with your social networks—particularly for those friends and relatives who might be confused by all the bad information they see.

To take on the plague of fake COVID-19 cures and treatments, we added a tool that specifically deals with quack products and snake oil, providing hard facts about a bevy of unsubstantiated claims. CFI has also produced timely original content across its many platforms separating pandemic fact from fiction: the website Quackwatch, the *Free Thinking* blog, *Skeptical Inquirer* magazine, the *Point of Inquiry* podcast, and the new *Skeptical Inquirer Presents* series of online events.



Source: YouTube

CFI to Plandemic Conspiracy Theorists: Put Up or Shut Up

The pseudo-documentary *Plandemic* garnered enormous attention for its wild, baseless claims about an evil conspiracy to intentionally infect Americans with the coronavirus to force vaccinations. So we contacted the filmmakers and offered them a chance to back up their claims by responding to questions from CFI's Benjamin Radford and renowned virologist Paul Offit. Much to our surprise, *Plandemic* director Mikki Willis expressed a willingness to participate, but ultimately went silent ... presumably because he knew he had no real answers.

TIES Brings Evolution Education Home (When We Needed It Most)

The Teacher Institute for Evolutionary Science (TIES) is a groundbreaking program of the Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason & Science that has been giving middle school teachers the tools they need to effectively teach evolution and answer its critics since 2015.

TIES crossed the fifty-state threshold for its free in-person teacher workshops in 2019 and then, with remarkable agility, fully embraced its new role as an essential online source for teachers, parents, and students in the coronavirus era of 2020.

In 2020 alone, TIES produced free six-hour guided lessons on evolution (for both middle and high school students), developed and released its first Spanish-language lessons in evolution, and held 18 webinars with free presentations from distinguished scientists and authors. You can check them out anytime.

As a sign of just how vital TIES has become to educators across the country, Miami-Dade County Public Schools—the fourth-largest school district in the United States with 345,000 students—and Winston-Salem Forsyth Schools, with 52,000 students, have adopted TIES’s virtual units into their core teacher training. Now thousands of teachers who never attend one of the program’s workshops or webinars will have the opportunity to be enlightened and inspired by TIES material.

TIES also deftly adapted its in-person workshops for teachers for the virtual world. In October, TIES Director Bertha Vazquez was elected to be a Fellow of the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry.

More Teachers Praise TIES

“This TIES unit is the best thing I have received from my school district this year. I can teach the students in front of me but the absent or quarantined students do not fall behind. Everything is explained to them. They do not miss a beat.”

—Maria C., Miami

“I can’t believe a teacher actually put this together for all of us. And it’s free!?! She has saved me so much time and effort. And I would have never found the time to find all of these great resources by myself.”

—Renee, Minnesota



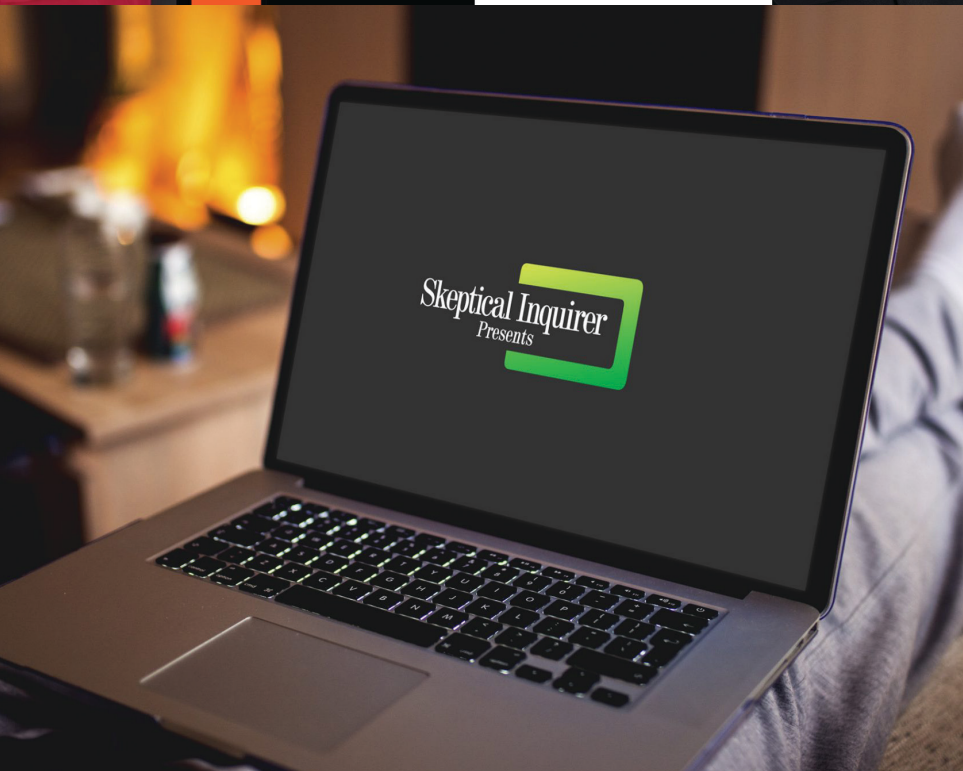


Skeptical Inquirer Presents: Live Online Events with Skepticism's Brightest Minds

The Center for Inquiry brought the leading lights of skepticism into the homes and onto the screens of thousands of viewers with Skeptical Inquirer Presents, a new series of free live online talks from a wide array of experts in science, investigation, medicine, media, communication, and advocacy—all devoted to the cause of advancing science over pseudoscience, media literacy over conspiracy theories, and critical thinking over magical thinking.

Throughout ten events in 2020, hosted by comedian Leighann Lord, distinguished presenters shared their expertise and insight on topics such as the fight against misinformation, rituals for nonbelievers, the plague of conspiracy theories, facts about COVID-19 and vaccines, bringing fraud psychics to justice, and so much more. Whether enjoyed on Zoom as they happen or any time later on the CFI website, Skeptical Inquirer Presents was able to bring big ideas to far more skeptical minds than would have been possible with any real-world, in-person conference.

And we're not done! Many more talks are slated for additional events throughout 2021.



Skeptical Inquirer Presents 2020 Events

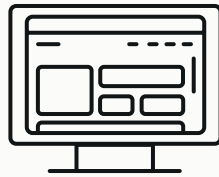
- Joseph Uscinski: Conspiracy Theories and COVID-19
- Paul Offit: Developing a SARS-CoV-2 Vaccine: Is Warp Speed Too Fast?
- Carol Tavris: The Role of Cognitive Dissonance in the Pandemic
- Seema Yasmin: Viral BS: Medical Myths and Why We Fall For Them
- Nathan Lents: Evolution Only Breaks Things: The Science Denial at the Heart of Intelligent Design
- Sasha Sagan: Rituals for Non-believers
- John Petrocelli: Persuasive Bullshitters and the Insidious Bullshit Hypothesis
- Bob Nygaard: Combating Fortune-telling Fraud
- Sean B. Carroll: A Series of Fortunate Events: Chance and the Making of the Planet, Life, and You
- Timothy Caulfield: The Infodemic: Debunking Works (Let's Get To It!)

Staying Connected



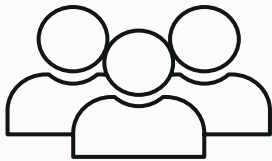
30

TIES workshops in 2020



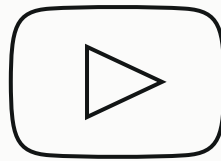
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TIES webinars in 2020



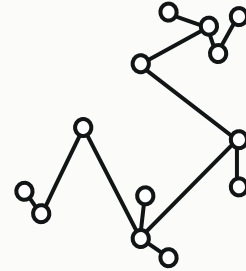
1,050

Skeptical Inquirer
Presents Most
Attendees
(Sasha Sagan)



23,775

Skeptical Inquirer
Presents total
YouTube views



19

CFI Branches in the
US and International



87,000+

CFI email
subscribers

25,000+

RDFRS email
subscribers

1,600

The Morning Heresy
subscribers
Up from about 300
in 2019



Exposing Pseudoscience

Fighting the Fraud of Homeopathy

Homeopathy is the silliest of all snake oils, the phoniest of all quackeries, and yet American consumers throw away billions of dollars every year on homeopathic products that do literally nothing. CFI is determined to expose the fraud behind this phony medicine and hold accountable those who profit off of it—which is all the more shameful in the midst of a global pandemic.

CFI's groundbreaking consumer protection lawsuits against retail giants Walmart and CVS, challenging their deceptive sale and marketing of homeopathic junk, were met with fierce resistance from these powerful corporations, who managed to roadblock our case with dubious legal maneuverings and a tinge of anti-atheist bias. While our appeals are underway, we are keeping up our campaign to counter the absurd claims of homeopathy.

In 2020, CFI urged the Food and Drug Administration to tighten regulations on homeopathy and stop presuming good faith on the part of its manufacturers. We also took supermarket chain Wegmans to task for pushing customers to purchase homeopathic treatments at the start of the pandemic lockdown, when consumers were at their most frightened and vulnerable.

“To promote and encourage the use of what can only be described as snake oil in this situation is one of the most irresponsible things I can imagine.”
– CFI's letter to Wegmans



The Story of Ben and His Fake Medicine

When Dr. Ben Carson—a neurosurgeon, cabinet secretary, and member of the White House Coronavirus Task Force—endorsed the use of homeopathy to treat COVID-19, we called upon health officials to disavow his statements and took the opportunity to educate our social media audience about why it's so dangerous for people like Dr. Carson to put their reputations behind fake medicine.



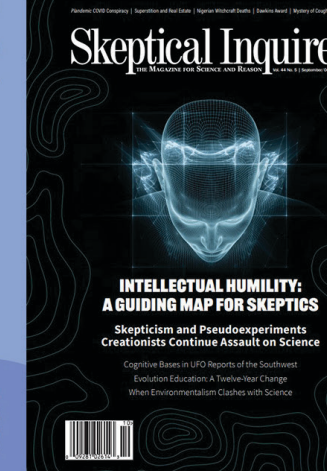
Skeptical Inquirer Magazine: More Vital Than Ever

The institution that would become the Center for Inquiry first planted the flag for reason and science more than forty years ago with the publication of *Skeptical Inquirer* magazine, heralding the birth of a professional, organized skeptic movement. Even without the benefit of paranormal psychic powers, *Skeptical Inquirer* was ready for 2020's onslaught of medical pseudoscience and conspiracy thinking.

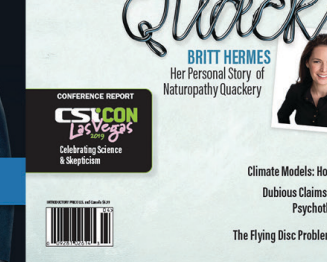
Highlights from *Skeptical Inquirer* in 2020:

- Cover features on COVID-19 conspiracy theories and quackery, the fictional vaccine-autism link, and the dangers of naturopathy and the industry behind it—as told from the perspective of Britt Hermes, a “former fake doctor.”
- A celebration of science communication with *Cosmos* cocreator Ann Druyan.
- A deeply researched argument for intellectual humility in a cover story led by psychologist and fellow of the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry, Scott O. Lillienfeld, who sadly died in September.
- Insights and investigations from the world-renowned authority on claims of the paranormal, Joe Nickell.

And of course, for its first issue of 2021, *Skeptical Inquirer* honored the life and legacy of the amazing James Randi.



25,800
Skeptical Inquirer in circulation (print + digital)



The Duck Stops Here

Firmly establishing CFI as the nation's premier institution in support of evidence-based medicine over pseudoscience, in 2020 Quackwatch became a part of the Center for Inquiry. Founded by Dr. Stephen Barrett, Quackwatch has for decades been an indispensable resource in the fight to expose the fraud of health-related pseudoscience and fake medicine, frequently cited by major news outlets.

Later in the year, the Society for Science-Based Medicine (SfSBM) joined the Center for Inquiry. SfSBM is a community of experts and advocates working to support evidence, science, and consumer safety in health care and to fight back against the creep of pseudoscience and quackery.

Boosting Vaccines in the States

In November, the D.C. Council voted to approve the Minor Consent for Vaccinations Amendment Act, which permits minors aged eleven years or older to consent to recommended vaccinations. This was a long-sought victory, as CFI Government Affairs Director Jason Lemieux testified before the council in favor of the bill all the way back in the summer of 2019 and has been working for its passage ever since.

CFI helped defeat a bill in Virginia that would have invented a religious exemption to potential emergency vaccination measures and celebrated a key victory with a Maine ballot initiative, defeating a measure that would have reinstated religious exemptions for mandatory vaccinations for schoolchildren and healthcare workers.

“Anti-vaccine conspiracy theorists wanted to make this referendum about ‘Big Pharma’ and ‘religious liberty,’ but the truth is that viruses simply don’t care about your politics or what religion you believe in.”

– Paul Fidalgo, CFI Communications Director



You Can Stop Worrying about 5G

Misinformation about 5G wireless service was almost as ubiquitous as its marketing hype. But as this new generation of wireless technology becomes more widely adopted, it's important that policies about its deployment are based on science and facts, not conspiracy theories and baseless pseudoscience.

CFI's Office of Public Policy put together an easy-to-understand fact sheet to quickly explain what 5G is really all about, so when you hear someone say that 5G is dangerous to your health (or that it spreads the coronavirus), you can show them that the preponderance of evidence makes clear that wireless technology is safe.



CFI Investigations Group Raises the Stakes

It's one thing to dismiss the extraordinary claims of those who purport to have paranormal abilities. It's another thing entirely to pay them to prove it.

For years, the CFI Investigations Group (CFIIG) has offered those who profess to have supernatural, paranormal, or occult abilities the opportunity to definitively prove their claims under mutually agreed upon testing conditions, with a prize of \$100,000 for anyone who passes. In 2020, the award was raised to \$250,000.

Eighty people applied to CFIIG to have their abilities tested in 2020. Of those who CFIIG called to demonstrate their supernatural abilities (one fellow claimed to be able to emit electricity from his hands, another claimed he could implant thoughts into other people's minds), none were able to prove their mystical mettle under scientific conditions. The world waits.



Skeptical Avengers Assemble!

As the “infodemic” of 2020 made startlingly clear, public skeptics—the activists and scholars leading the charge for science, reason, and critical thinking—have been proven to be indispensable. Ten such remarkable men and women, representing a wide range of fields and areas of expertise, were elected in 2020 to become Fellows of the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry for their meaningful contributions to the promotion of scientific inquiry, critical investigation, and the use of reason in examining controversial and extraordinary claims.

The new inductees joined a venerable group of distinguished scientists, scholars, activists, authors, and creators, that includes Richard Dawkins, Ann Druyan, Neil deGrasse Tyson, Jill Tarter, Elizabeth Loftus, Bill Nye, and Steven Pinker.

Meet the new Fellows:

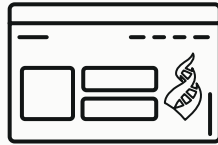
Jann Johnson Bellamy, Kenny Biddle, Timothy Caulfield, William M. London, Matthew C. Nisbet, Natalia Pasternak, James Underdown, Joseph Uscinski, Bertha Vazquez, Mick West

Web Stats



12,000,000+

CFI Websites 2020 Total
Pageviews
1,000,000+ Average
Monthly Pageviews



1,150,000+

Richard Dawkins Founda-
tion for Reason & Science
(RDRFS) Website 2020
Total Pageviews
95,500+ Average Monthly
Pageviews



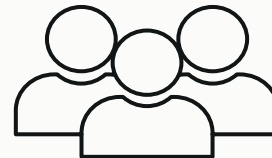
14,200,000+

Total Organization
Pageviews in 2020



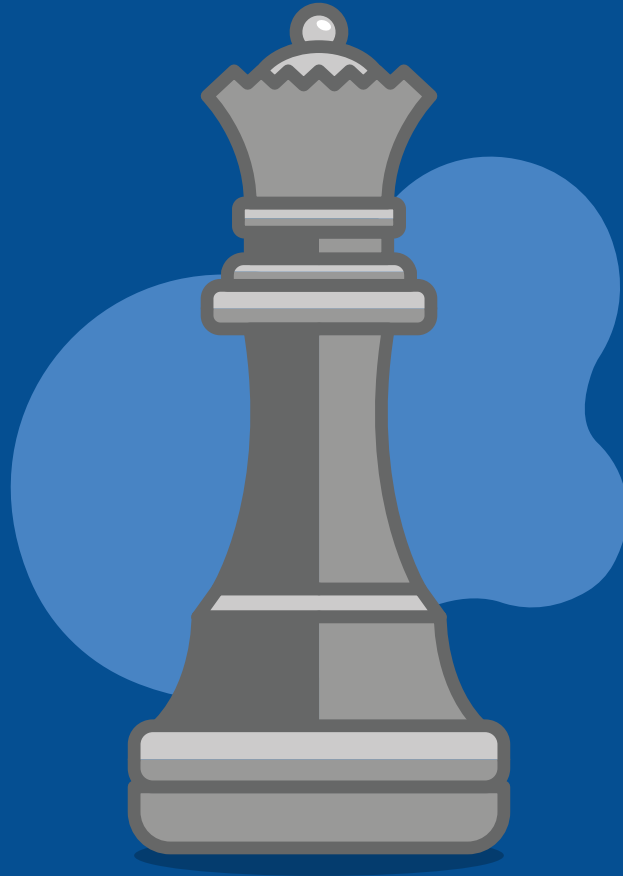
445

Online Articles
Published



28

Web
Contributors



**Championing
Secularism**

The Richard Dawkins Foundation Opens a World of Possibilities with the Translations Project

The Translations Project is a program of the Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason & Science that provides free, professionally translated editions of books by evolutionary biologist and CFI board member Richard Dawkins into Farsi, Urdu, Arabic, and Indonesian, intended for readers in Muslim-majority countries where quality resources on science and evolution can be prohibitively difficult to come by.

Under the direction of linguist and human rights activist Wafa Bahri, in 2020 the Translations Project worked with eleven individual professional translators and a professional translating agency, producing translations of Richard Dawkins's recent book *Outgrowing God*, as well as *The Four Horsemen*, the transcript of the foundational 2007 conversation between Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, Sam Harris, and Christopher Hitchens. The Translations Project has now produced eighteen translated editions of seven works of Richard Dawkins available for free download.

For 2021, the Translations Project is looking to expand its efforts into online video, offering translations of videos from the Richard Dawkins Foundation YouTube channel.

Translators, In Their Own Words

For the professional translators involved with the Translations Project, the work means as much to them as it does to those who read it.

“For me personally when I see people who read the work done on the Translations Project, spend time and let us know their feedback, it is very much inspiring. It feels like I’m not alone!”

– Ameer

“Translating secular literature is what I have always wanted to pursue. Working on *The Four Horsemen* with the Translations Project has been educational and fulfilling at the same time.”

– Mustaph

“It is an honor to edit books by Richard Dawkins. To serve as a mediator between the theory of evolution concepts and ideas, and my native language is an idiosyncratic level of fulfillment.”

– Hera

OUTGROWING GOD

RICHARD DAWKINS

Secular Rescue: Delivering Hope and Freedom

The lockdowns of the pandemic did nothing to stop the crackdowns on religious dissent around the world. Indeed, for many secular dissidents in oppressive countries, 2020 was particularly perilous. Since 2015, the Center for Inquiry's Secular Rescue program has been striving to provide emergency assistance to atheist writers, bloggers, publishers, and activists in countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Iraq who face threats due to their beliefs or expressions regarding religion.

This past year has been especially daunting for Secular Rescue as it fielded an overwhelming flood of requests for help. With more support, we can help many more people in danger—real people like those in these 2020 success stories.



Secular Rescue Success Stories

“Sadeen,” a young Jordanian atheist and lesbian who was forced to flee her country following years of physical and sexual abuse since childhood, only to be subjected to death threats, intimidation, familial harassment, and forced to endure conversion therapy and a forced marriage to a monster of a man, was provided living expenses assistance while she is in hiding in another country. Secular Rescue connected Sadeen to expert psychotherapy counseling sessions to help her cope with anxiety and depression while she regains her strength and self-love for the road to asylum and safety.

Mariam, an oft-harassed and threatened Nigerian rights activist facing blasphemy charges and a public advocate for the release of atheist Mubarak Bala from prison, got the assistance she needed from Secular Rescue, allowing her to relocate in-country, where she now works with a humanitarian organization that provides care for women and girls. She is also founder and executive director of the Learning Through Skills Acquisition Initiative.

“Bhaskor,” a young Bangladeshi ... *[Continued on next page]*



Secular Rescue Success Stories (Continued)

secular-humanist and rights activist, was attacked by Muslims extremists, beaten and stabbed (with resulting paralysis in one leg) and subjected to constant harassment and threats in his native Bangladesh. Secular Rescue helped him with financial and logistical aid to relocate to a safer country where he is getting medical treatment for his injuries, mental health counseling for his PTSD, and now on the road to recovery and looking to the future, with hope in his heart.

Secular Rescue stepped up in 2020 to provide vital aid to the family of a high-profile convicted blasphemer in Pakistan, who was sentenced to death for allegedly sharing blasphemous content on social media. His wife and kids have been left to fend for themselves while his case slogged through the courts. Aid from Secular Rescue helped the family survive the absence of the breadwinner by paying for the family's living expenses, food, and prison visitations. **"I'm in tears right now, you made my day!"** he told us. "Your support means a lot to my family. We can't thank you enough for all the support and help you have provided. Please accept our heartfelt thanks. We're overwhelmed by your generosity."

"Sometimes our mere presence, just being there and listening, is what some of our cases need. And we have been there for them. ... We do our best to respond to every message, claim, and request; to treat all comers with respect and compassion, no matter the circumstances."

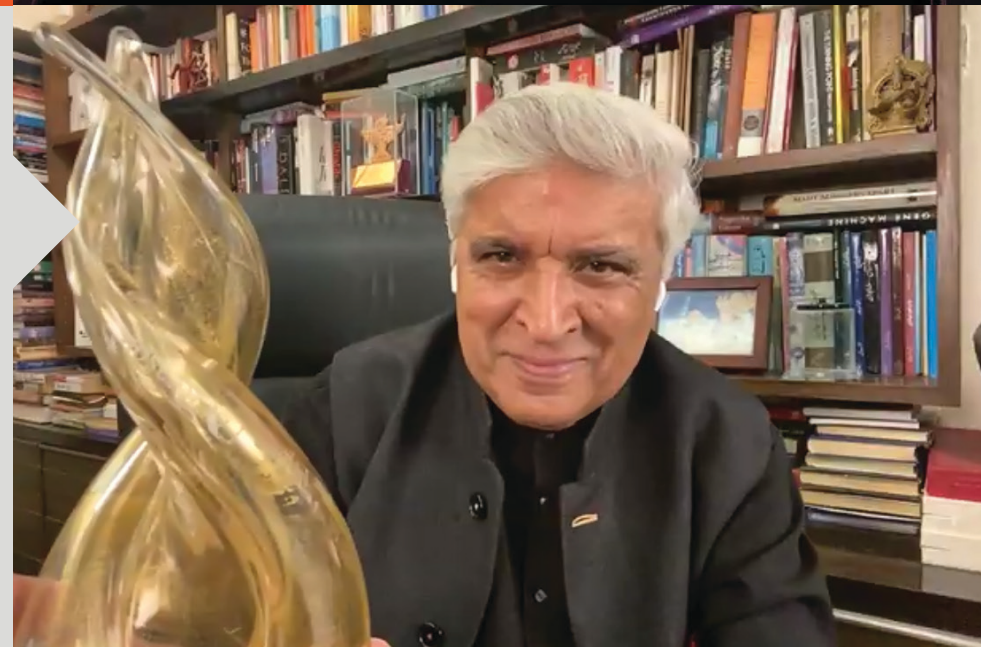
– Matthew Cravatta, Director of Secular Rescue



Richard Dawkins Award Honors India's Cultural Giant

Hundreds of enthusiasts for science and secularism from countries around the world tuned in on October 24 as Richard Dawkins honored India's Javed Akhtar with the 2020 Richard Dawkins Award in a live online event, hosted by CFI CEO Robyn Blumner. Though unfamiliar to American audiences, Javed Akhtar is a major cultural figure in India, renowned for his groundbreaking work as a screenwriter, lyricist, poet, and social critic. An outspoken atheist and champion of secularism, he is a fearless advocate for the rejection of religious fundamentalism and superstition. The recorded video of the event has now been watched almost 9,000 times.

"I have received many, many awards in my life," Akhtar told Dawkins, "but this is the ultimate."



Solemnly Supporting Secular Celebrants

Nonreligious Americans deserve the right to have their life milestones officiated by someone who shares their secular life stance and humanist values. In recent years, CFI has won landmark legal victories allowing CFI-trained and certified Secular Celebrants to solemnize marriages in Indiana and Illinois and laid the groundwork for Secular Celebrant legislation enacted in Oregon.

A new state was added to the map in 2020 when the state attorney general of Michigan declared that existing marriage law included the right of couples to have their marriages solemnized by Secular Celebrants, thereby ending CFI's lawsuit in the state.



Confronting the Backlash against Blasphemy

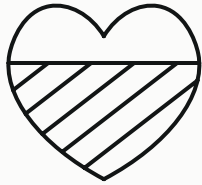
The right to criticize, question, and satirize religious ideas is deeply embedded in CFI's humanist values. 2020 saw a new level of ferocity in the persecution of secularists in countries such as Nigeria and Pakistan, while Islamic extremist violence returned to Paris for the trial of those who perpetrated the massacre of the staff of the satire magazine *Charlie Hebdo* in 2015—a crime grounded in anti-blasphemy zealotry.

In March, CFI's UN Advocate Andreas Kyriacou spoke out against the persecution of nonbelievers in countries such as Iran, Uganda, and Poland. Working in concert with allies around the world, CFI supported efforts to free Mubarak Bala, president of the Humanist Association of Nigeria, held in detention for most of 2020 over blasphemy-related charges. We also worked with human rights champion Leo Igwe to shine a spotlight on the ongoing violence against those accused of witchcraft in Nigeria.

As 2020 neared its close, the U.S. Congress took an important symbolic step for which CFI has long advocated, with the near-unanimous passage of a resolution calling for an end to all blasphemy, heresy, and apostasy laws worldwide. CFI's words were enshrined in this effort, as our statement in support of the resolution was entered into the Congressional Record by its chief sponsor, Rep. Jamie Raskin.

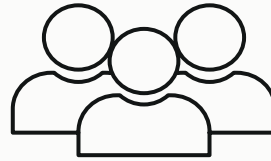


Touching Hearts & Minds



120

People helped by
Secular Rescue in 2020



12

Translations
Project translators



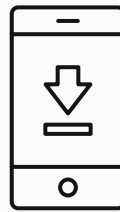
18

Books Translated



445

Online Articles
Published



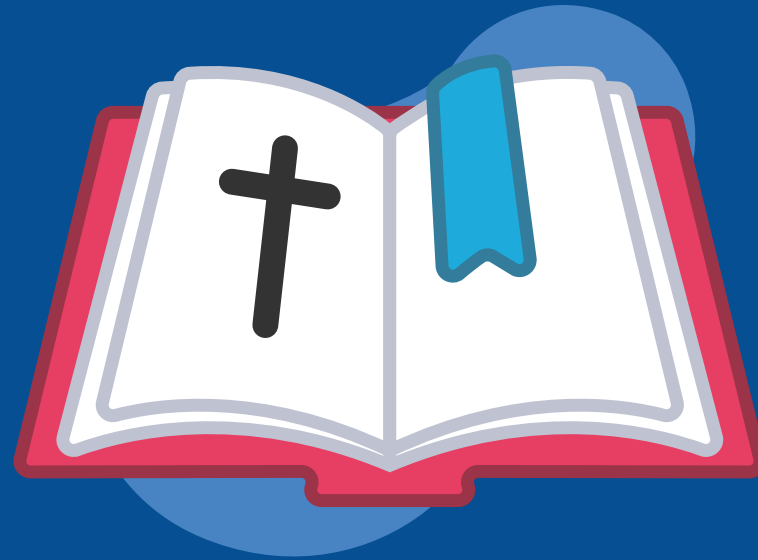
5,678

Downloads of
The God Delusion



17,155

Books downloaded from
the Translations Project



Resisting Religious Privilege

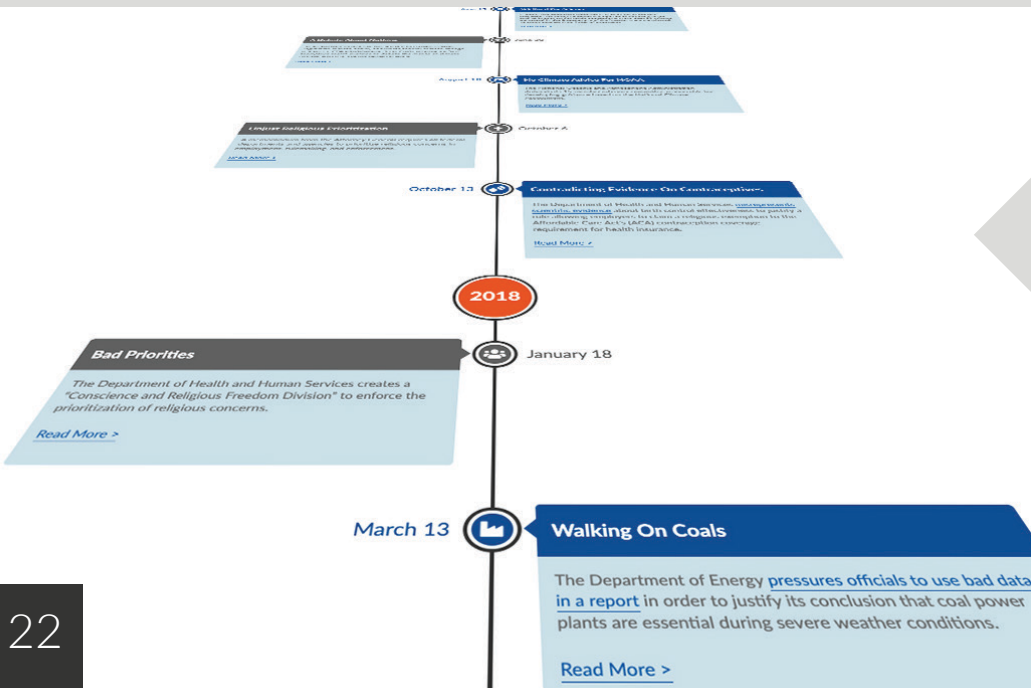
The Uphill Fight for Secular Federal Policy

With an administration overtly hostile to secularism and science, CFI's national lobbying efforts were focused on loosening the grip of Christian Nationalism and destructive religious privilege. CFI rallied the reality-based community by producing dozens of calls to action and making it as easy as possible for supporters to express their values to their elected representatives.

CFI led a coalition of major freethought organizations to push back against the unconstitutional use of federal pandemic relief funding to enrich religious schools and special exemptions for churches from abiding by common-sense COVID-19 prevention measures.

CFI's community reached out to their representatives in Congress to urge them to join the Congressional Freethought Caucus, which has grown from four members of the U.S. House in 2018 to fourteen members in 2020. CFI was a key part of the *Washington Post's* coverage of this burgeoning movement for science and secularism in the Capitol.

CFI staff also held meetings with administration officials, making the case for keeping taxpayer dollars from funding sectarian organizations and maintaining federal protections against anti-LGBTQ discrimination.



A Timeline of the Damage Done to Science and Secularism

The runup to Election Day 2020 presented an opportunity to survey the damage done to church-state separation and science-based policy by the Trump administration over the past four years. CFI produced a major report detailing the administration's systematic attacks on these pillars of CFI's mission in the form of a timeline, revealing at a glance how four years of rules and executive orders served to entrench theocracy and pseudoscience within the federal government.

Persevering in a Perilous Legal Landscape

Of all of 2020's many challenges, it is the titanic shift in the legal landscape toward religious privilege that may well prove to be the most consequential and enduring. With the U.S. Supreme Court now dominated by hard-right religious conservatives and the rest of the federal court system now heavily populated by Trump-appointed judges, advancing science and secularism through the courts will be more fraught than ever before.

While clearly recognizing this precarious situation, the Center for Inquiry remained undaunted, producing and collaborating on amicus briefs to the Supreme Court, planning legal strategy for a hostile terrain, and offering clear-eyed, expert analysis of the legal landscape throughout our platforms. In 2020, CFI also welcomed a new member of its legal department, staff attorney Aaron Green.



A Year in the Trenches with the Supreme Court:

Little Sisters of the Poor v. Pennsylvania and Trump v. Pennsylvania: “The federal government has bent over backwards to acquiesce to the demands of religious groups that refuse to accept that not everyone shares their medieval views about contraception.”

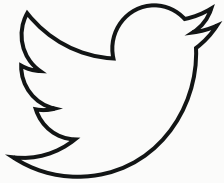
Our Lady of Guadalupe School v. Morrissey-Berru and St. James School v. Biel: “A sweeping ecclesiastical immunity [gives religious organizations] the right to ignore the rules that Congress has put in place to defend the fundamental constitutional value of equality.”

Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue: “This case is not about discrimination; it is about government-compelled support of religion. The right to be free from that compulsion is religious liberty.”

“We atheists will tell people that while there is no individual life after death, society’s memory of someone may be everlasting if we never forget their contributions to making the world a better place.”

– CFI Chair Eddie Tabash on the loss of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

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107,300

CFI & Skeptical Inquirer
Twitter Followers

103,800

RDFRS
Twitter Followers

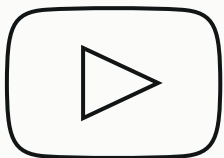


209,400

CFI & Skeptical Inquirer
Facebook Followers

1,500,000

RDFRS
Facebook Followers



52,600+

CFI Youtube Subscribers

353,000+

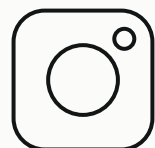
RDFRS Youtube Subscribers

3,400,000+

CFI Youtube channel views

3,800,000+

RDFRS Youtube channel views



48,600

RDFRS Instagram Followers



**Insight, Inquiry,
and Inspiration**

So It Is Written! 2020's Wealth of Reality-Based Commentary

Throughout 2020, CFI's blogs and columns were a vital resource for timely analysis of critical issues, a necessary dose of realism within an informational environment beset by confusion and conspiracy theories. Some of the year's most active columns and contributors included:

The Morning Heresy: A daily roundup of news and links relevant to the skeptic and secular community, all delivered in quick bites of information and generous dollops of bad jokes from CFI Communications Director Paul Fidalgo. *The Morning Heresy* published its 2000th post in late 2020.

The Legal Mind of Nick Little: When he's not shouldering the burden of advancing secular jurisprudence, CFI's Legal Director Nick Little provides insightful, accessible, and sharp-witted commentary and analysis on the major legal issues central to our movement.

But What Do I Know: Ada McVean offers a lighthearted exploration of all the things you've taken for granted, questioning what you've never thought to question and bust the myths you never even knew were myths.

Guerrilla Skepticism: The driving force behind Guerrilla Skeptics on Wikipedia, Susan Gerbic, chronicles her dogged efforts to expose tricks and machinations of celebrity psychics and mediums, or as she calls them "grief vampires."

A Skeptic Reads the Newspaper: *Skeptical Inquirer* Deputy Editor Benjamin Radford brings his expertise in folklore and media criticism to bear on issues including pandemic conspiracy theories, social media misinformation, and the paranormal in popular culture.

Behavior & Belief: Psychologist Stuart Vyse, an expert on irrational behavior, addresses a wide range of issues in science and skepticism, with a particular focus on the impact and origins of superstitious beliefs.

A Closer Look: Kenny Biddle is the skeptic community's unofficial chief inspector of gadgets, investigating how technology is used to make claims about detection of ghosts, cryptids, UFOs, and other paranormal experiences.

Searching for Better Angels: Brand new columnist Angel Eduardo brings a fresh, counterintuitive perspective to moral and ethical issues, asking us to think from different angles and outside our comfort zones.



The Podcast for Inquiring Ears: *Point of Inquiry*

Point of Inquiry is the Center for Inquiry's flagship podcast, where hosts Leighann Lord and Jim Underdown engage innovative thinkers, authors, and experts in deep conversation about the really big questions in science, religion, politics, and culture.

Highlights from *Point of Inquiry* in 2020:

- *Fantasyland* author Kurt Andersen on the predicament of America's magical thinking
- Elizabeth Loftus on her groundbreaking discoveries in false memory
- CFI Chair Eddie Tabash on the threats to secularism posed by a religious-conservative Supreme Court
- Humanist professor Anthony Pinn on the role nontheists must play in the struggle for racial justice
- J.R. Becker, author of the *Annabelle & Aiden* children's books, on introducing skeptical thinking to kids
- Skeptic comedian Ian Harris on using comedy to inspire critical thinking
- Cocreator and writer of the *Bill & Ted* movies, Chris Matheson, on what makes religion funny



Free Inquiry: Secular Humanism's Definitive Publication

While the excesses of Christian Nationalism fueled so much of the chaos of 2020, the untold story of the year was the undeniable ascendance of those who profess no religion at all, the so-called nones. *Free Inquiry* magazine, the foundational publication of secular humanist thought, delved deeply into this growing social force and exposed the fictions and fallacies that drive the religious Right.

Highlights from *Free Inquiry* in 2020:

- An encouraging exploration of the increasing influence of atheists and agnostics among the nones.
- A celebration of the centennial of woman's suffrage and the crucial role of freethought activists in the struggle for equality.
- A dismantling of the claim that America is a "Christian nation."
- An eye-opening collection of readers' "pivot points" away from religion, in their own words.

11,500
Free Inquiry circulation
(print, digital, and newstand)

Freethought's History Virtualized

The Freethought Trail is, yes, a trail; a real-life collection of historical locations throughout west central New York state that celebrates the region's singular role as an incubator of nineteenth-century radical reform movements, anchored by the Robert Green Ingersoll Birthplace Museum in Dresden.

But of course, there wasn't much real-life traveling going on in 2020, but the Freethought Trail carried on with its educational mission. Its deeply researched website told even more new stories about this remarkable era, and forty new sites were incorporated into the trail, which now boasts 176 locations.

In particular, the Freethought Trail shined a spotlight on the world-changing woman's suffrage movement, much of which was rooted in west central New York state, marking the centennial of the Nineteenth Amendment, giving women in the United States the right to vote.



Buffalo



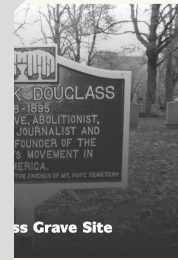
First Presbyterian Church



Fitzhugh Hall



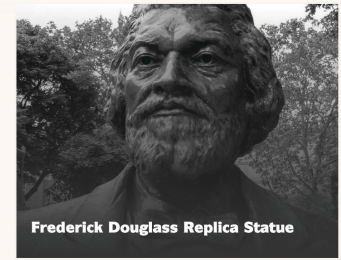
Fossenvue



Douglass Grave Site



Frederick Douglass Newspaper Office



Frederick Douglass Replica Statue



Frederick Douglass



A Rich Archive of Secularism and Skepticism

The Center for Inquiry Libraries, located across from the North Campus of the University of Buffalo in Amherst, New York, houses books, periodicals, archives, microfilm, databases, and other materials relevant to humanism, freethought, and skepticism—some of which are centuries old. In 2020, the CFI Libraries website got a fresh redesign with a fully searchable catalog. Tim Binga, CFI's director of libraries, posts updates on new acquisitions and other observations at his CFI *Free Thinking* column, "Access Points."





**Fostering a
Rational Community**

Your Friendly Neighborhood Centers for Inquiry

CFI has a vibrant community of local branches across the country, run by both professional staff and dedicated volunteers. The pandemic took away these branches' ability to serve one of their primary functions, bringing members of our community together in person, but it by no means stopped them from keeping their members engaged and active, even at a distance. Cafe social meetups became group video chats, lectures and workshops became webinars, and all of the CFI community, whether or not they lived near a physical branch, were able to come together for CFI Insider online events. When it was safe to do so, branches volunteered and donated food to local food banks.

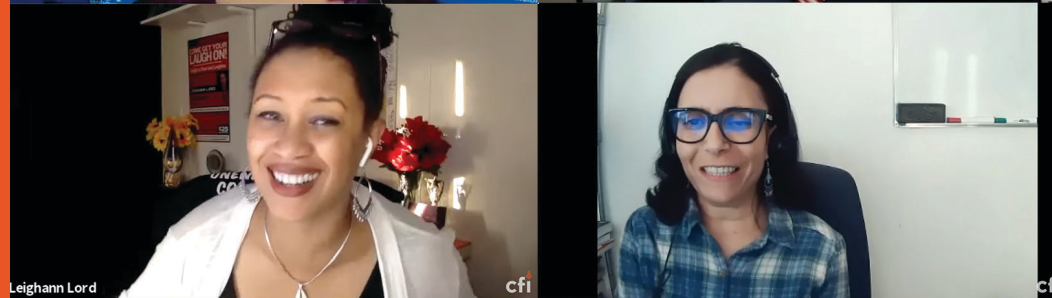
When we finally emerge from the COVID-19 era, you can bet that major branch events such as civic days, summer retreats, and commemorative events such as Darwin Day, Carl Sagan Day, and solstice celebrations will be back in full force.



CFI Insider: Keeping Our Community Connected

The pandemic also prevented CFI's active community of local branches from meeting in person, so branch leaders quickly pivoted to holding meetings and events online. At the national level, the Center for Inquiry launched CFI Insider, a live online series of events for our members, volunteers, supporters, and others, providing a look behind the scenes and a chance to meet the people who make everything we do at CFI happen.

Hosted by CFI Field Organizer Melissa Myers, guests included CFI Board Chair Eddie Tabash, *Free Inquiry* Editor Tom Flynn, and CFI Michigan's Jennifer Beahan in a special conversation with therapist Julia Henshaw on surviving the holidays while secular.



CFI Kenya Brings Hope and Healing

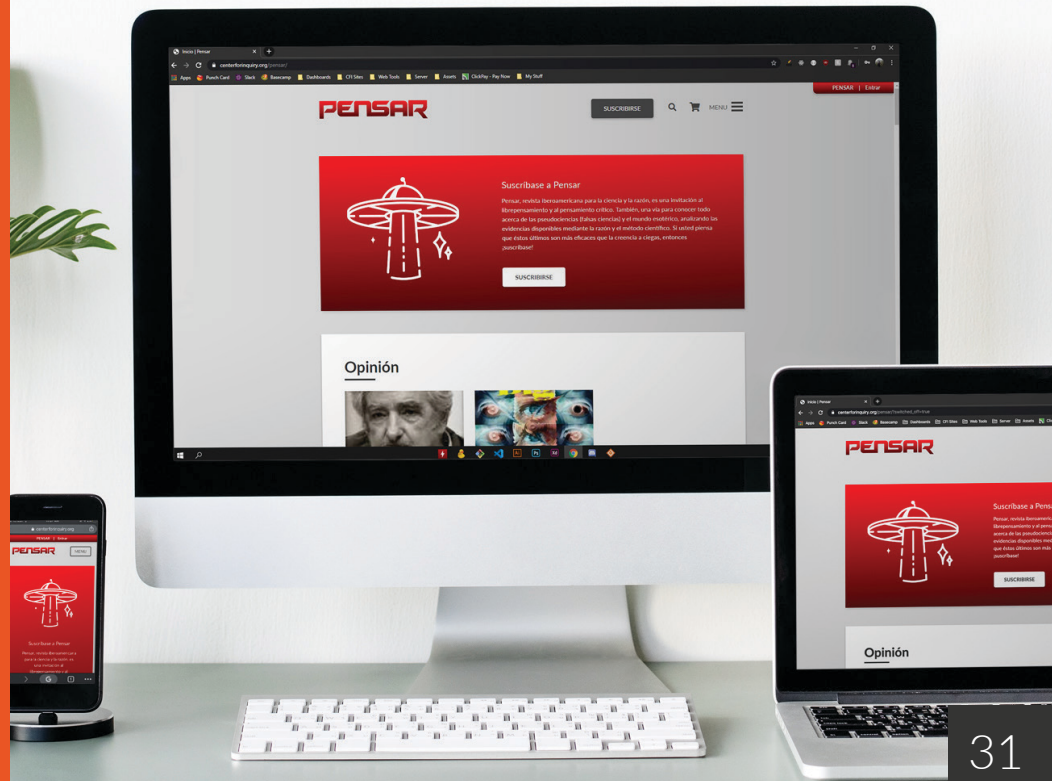
For years, CFI Kenya has been a beacon of inspiration, not only by promoting reason and secularism in a country with communities riddled with dangerous superstition, but by actively delivering services and support to people in need. The COVID-19 pandemic made their essential work far more difficult, so CFI headquarters doubled its funding for CFI Kenya. Already deeply engaged in providing educational services and a safe home for displaced children with its Humanist Orphans Project, CFI Kenya was able to directly take on the challenges presented by the pandemic, supplying food, soap, sanitizers, masks, and other necessities to the children in their care.



We Call It CFI Transnational for a Reason

Here's more examples of the great work being done by CFI branches and affiliates outside the United States:

- CFI Argentina relaunched *Pensar* magazine, first published from 2004 to 2009, the first Spanish-language publication for the skeptic movement.
- CFI China hosted an active CFI community on WeChat, where they have published 208 articles in 2020 alone, as well as producing training workshops in scientific thinking for primary and secondary school students.
- CFI Poland is active in its advocacy for free expression and against blasphemy laws, garnering mainstream media attention, producing new podcasts and videos, and publishing its own quarterly periodical *Racje*.
- CFI Peru publishes the periodicals *Eupraxophia* and the *Peruvian Journal of Applied Philosophy*.
- CFI Spain organized five conferences in Bilbao on a skeptical look at the search for alien life, from the existence of extrasolar planets to possible radio emissions.



Our Team

CFI Board of Directors

Vinod Bhardwaj: Inventor, entrepreneur

David Cowan: Venture capitalist

Richard Dawkins: Evolutionary biologist

Brian Engler: Operations research analyst, nonprofit executive

Kendrick Frazier: Editor, *Skeptical Inquirer*

Barry Kosmin: Director of the Institute for the Study of Secularism in Society and Culture, Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut

Bill Maxwell: Columnist, University Professor, Screenwriter

Y. Sherry Sheng: Nonprofit executive, educator

Julia Sweeney: Comedian, actress

Eddie Tabash (Chair, Board of Directors): Attorney, activist

J. Anderson Thomson (Vice Chair, Board of Directors): Psychiatrist

Leonard Tramiel: Physicist, educator

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Stephen Barrett, MD: Consultant, Quackwatch

Jennifer Beahan: Branch Director, CFI Michigan

Timothy Binga: Director, CFI Libraries & IT

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Alejandro Borgo: Director, CFI Argentina & *Pensar* Editor

Roderick Bradford: Videographer, Freethought Trail

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Melissa Braun: Administrative Assistant

Kenneth Coogan: Assistant Director, Teacher Institute for Evolutionary Science

Matt Cravatta: Manager, Print and Direct Mail Operations & Secular Rescue Coordinator

Andrzej Dominiczak: Director, CFI Poland

Frances Emerson: Docent, Robert Green Ingersoll Birthplace Museum

Paul Fidalgo: Communications Director

Chris Fix: Art Director until *09/05/2020

Tom Flynn: Editor, *Free Inquiry*, Executive Director, Council for Secular Humanism

Kendrick Frazier: Editor, *Skeptical Inquirer* Magazine

Rosemarie Giambone: Development Assistant

Aaron Green: Staff Counsel

Rachel Harger: Assistant Director, CFI Austin

Cody Hashman: System Administrator

Jack Huttig: Coordinator, CFI Portland

*CFI is deeply saddened to announce that our long-time Art Director, Chris Fix, died on March 6, 2021, after a year-long battle with pancreatic cancer. Chris joined CFI in 2002 as a member of our production staff and was promoted to Art Director in 2008. Chris was talented, unflappable and loved by all. He will be greatly missed.

Barry Karr: Chief Financial Officer, Executive Director, Committee for Skeptical Inquiry

Amy Frushour Kelly: Coordinator, CFI Long Island

Marc Kreidler: Director of Digital Products & Strategy

Andreas Kyriacou: United Nations Advocate

Julia Lavarney: Managing Editor, *Skeptical Inquirer*, Permissions & Assistant Editor, *Free Inquiry*

Jason Lemieux: Director of Government Affairs

Nicholas Little: Legal Director, General Counsel, Corporate Secretary

William London: Consultant, Coronavirus Resource Center

Leighann Lord: Cohost, *Point of Inquiry* Podcast, Host, Skeptical Inquirer Presents

Jacalyn Mohr: Subscription Database Manager

Melissa Myers: National Field Organizer

Alexander Nicaise: Art Director

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Vance Vigrass: Building & Mailroom Manager

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Angel Eduardo

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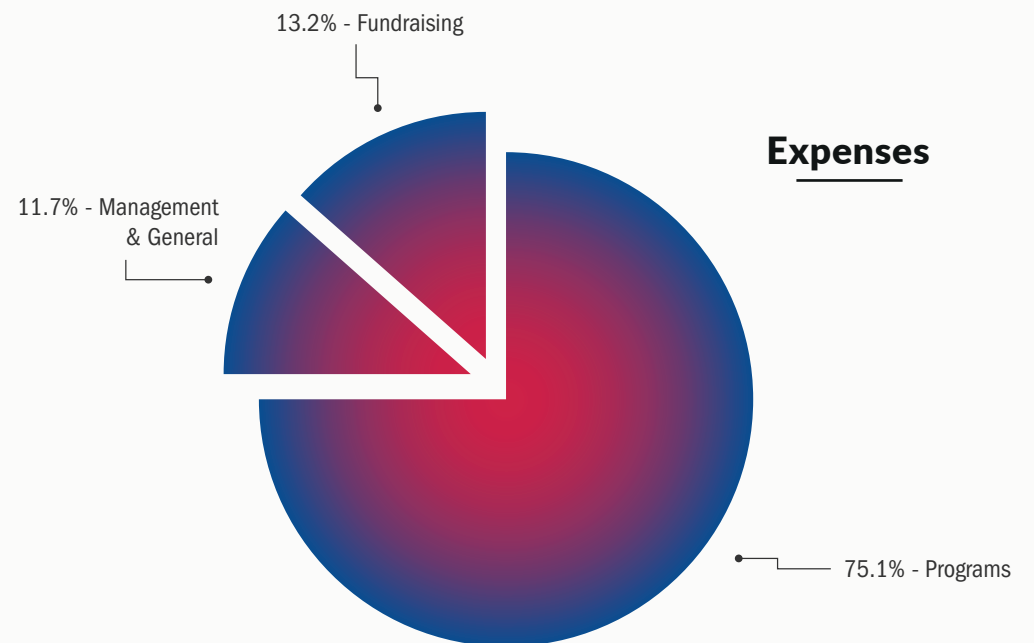
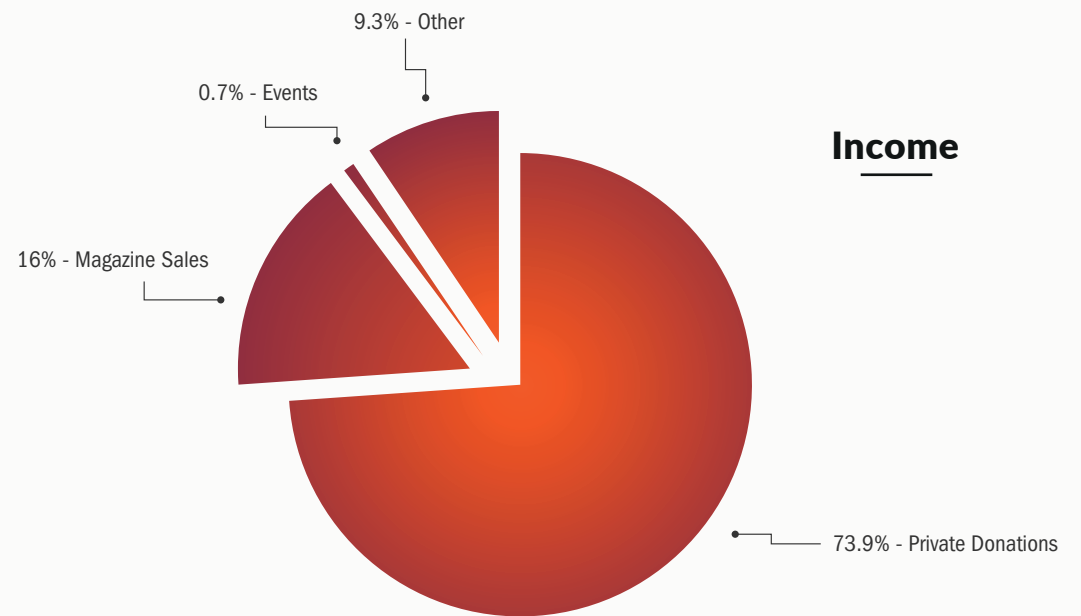
Where Your Money Goes

When you give to the Center for Inquiry and its programs, you want your donation to be stewarded with care and attention to the mission. That's why we report our revenue and expense ratios here. In addition, our Form 990 is available on our website.

In 2020, we generated \$5,276,836 in revenues. Seventy-four percent came from private donations, and the balance came from magazine sales, events, and other sources of income.

We are keenly aware of the responsibility we have to our donors when it comes to expenditures. This commitment is reflected in our expense breakdown.

These figures do not include bequests or support for the CFI Development Fund. Please note that these are not final, audited figures. We save costs by having our audit done later in the year. If you would like to see final, audited figures, please contact the Development Department at development@centerforinquiry.org in August.



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Susan Jacoby: Journalist

Advisory Board of RDFRS

Woody Kaplan: Political activist

Baris Karadogan: Venture capitalist

Norman Lear: Television writer and activist

Bill Nye: Science communicator

Carolyn Porco: Planetary scientist

Andrés Roemer: Diplomat

Todd Stiefel: Freethought activist

Greg Stikeleather: Serial entrepreneur

Julia Sweeney: Actor and playwright

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