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The official newsletter of  
Fellowship of Reason, Inc.

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## Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>—Thoughts on Paris and Beyond

By Erik Bauer

What drives the threat of looming terror,  
That dark, malignant human error?  
How can we combat this destructive mutation  
That arose from the cradle of civilization?  
To eradicate a tumor, do you strike it at its core?  
Or will that induce offshoots to spread even more?  
Poison its roots, choke off its nutrition?  
Settle into a bleak, prolonged war of attrition?  
Radiate it with bombs raining down from the sky?  
Drive ourselves crazy with wondering why?

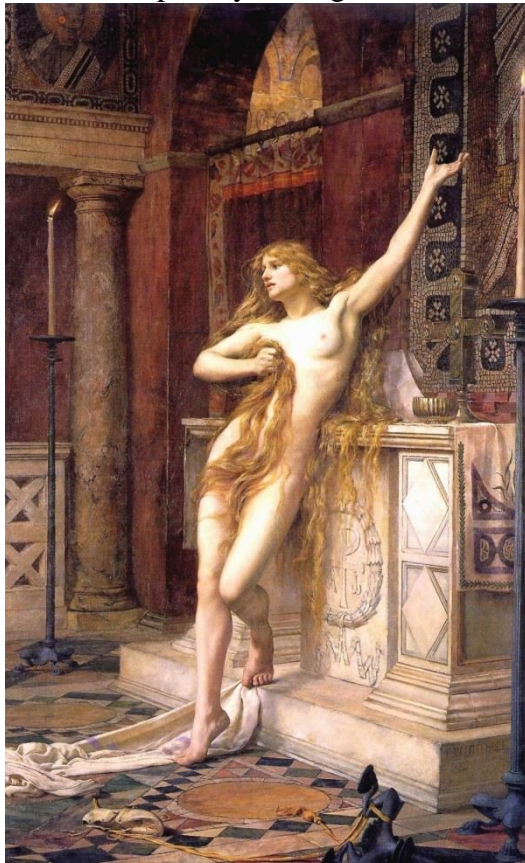
How could liberté, égalité, fraternité  
Incite the extremists to act in this way?  
Could committing sincerely to opposing injustice  
Make our enemies friends and persuade them to trust us?  
Or are some of them so irretrievably lost,  
That they must be demolished, no matter the cost?  
For those fleeing the beast, should we open our arms?  
Or could that expose us to still greater harms?  
As elusive as the cure for cancer;  
So many questions, not one solid answer.

## Hypatia of Alexandria

By Martin Cowen

Hypatia (AD 370-415) of Alexandria was a Greek mathematician, astronomer, and philosopher. She was born in Egypt during the fall of the Roman Empire. During her life, the breakup (395) of the Roman Empire into an Eastern Empire and a Western Empire was completed. Hypatia was world renowned in her time and since as a philosopher and teacher. She suffered a terrible fate. Hypatia was murdered by the Christian mob at age 45 before the altar of a church called Caesareum.

The following image is a painting of Hypatia by Charles William Mitchell (1864-1903), an English Pre-Raphaelite painter. Mitchell's painting hangs in the Laing Art Gallery in Newcastle upon Tyne, England.



Hypatia's father was Theon of Alexandria, a Greek scholar and mathematician. Theon is perhaps more famous than Hypatia because he edited Euclid's *Elements*. Until the discovery by François Peyrard in 1808 at the Vatican library of another manuscript, Theon's version of Euclid's *Elements* was the only known version. Being the only known version, it was studied by scholars for over 1,000 years. Comparison with the newly discovered version, shows that Theon, far from being a faithful copier of the work, enhanced some arguments where he deemed it appropriate, corrected some "errors", added commentary, and introduced errors of his own. Some scholars believe, but there is no way to know with certainty, that Hypatia contributed to her father's work. What is known is that Hypatia, after her father's death in 405, took over Theon's role as teacher of mathematics and philosophy in Alexandria.

### About the name "The Eudaimonist"

A eudaimonist (pronounced "yoo-DIE-mon-ist") is one who believes that the highest ethical goal is individual happiness and personal well-being. The term derives from the ancient Greek word eudaimonia, which means, roughly, "well-being."

### Disclaimer

The opinions expressed in the columns appearing in this newsletter are those of the author and not necessarily the views of the organization. The Fellowship of Reason, Inc speaks only through its Articles of Incorporation, the Bylaws, and the actions taken by the Board of Trustees as a board and recorded in the minutes of the corporation.

Fellowship of Reason, Inc.

**Mission Statement**

The Fellowship of Reason® is dedicated to the personal flourishing of our members through reason.

Fellowship of Reason, Inc. is a Georgia nonprofit corporation and a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) corporation

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## Hypatia of Alexandria

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The Classical Education, to which we are so attached, consisted of the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*. The *trivium* is logic, grammar, and rhetoric. The *quadrivium* is arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. Theon's version of Euclid's *Elements* was the source for the study of geometry for over a millennium.

Euclid of Alexandria flourished around 300 B.C. Euclid's *Elements* consists of thirteen books. Book One contains definitions such as this one: "A *diameter* of the circle is any straight line drawn through the center and terminated in both directions by the circumference of the circle, and such a straight line also bisects the circle."

Theon taught Hypatia everything he knew: astronomy, philosophy, and mathematics. Hypatia studied philosophy with her father and at Athens with Plutarch the Younger (350-433). Hypatia was a Neoplatonist. The Neoplatonists followed the teaching of Plotinus (204-270) who taught that everything emanates from the One.

The times of Hypatia were époque changing. In 313 the Edict of Milan during the reign (306-337) of Roman Emperor Constantine I (272-337) established tolerance for Christianity. In 380 the Edict of Thessalonica during the reign (379-392 Eastern Roman Empire and 379-395 Western Roman Empire) of Roman Emperor Theodosius (347-395) established Christianity as the sole authorized religion. The great Library at Alexandria was burned by Christian zealots in 391. The Roman Empire was permanently severed into a Western Empire and an Eastern Empire upon the death of Theodosius I in 395. Theodosius I divided the Empire between his sons, Honorius (384-423) in the West and Arcadius (377-408) in the East. Theodosius II (401-450) succeed his father, Arcadius, as Eastern Roman Emperor at the age of seven. In 410 Rome was sacked by the Visigoths, led by Alaric. The Western Roman Empire fell on September 4, 476 when Western Roman Emperor Romulus Augustus (461-476 or 507) was deposed by Flavius

## Hypatia of Alexandria

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Odoacer (433-493).

During Hypatia's life Christianity became the official Roman religion (380), the Library at Alexandria was destroyed (391), and Rome was sacked (410). Hypatia's bitter end (415), seen in this context, is certainly only one of many untold horrors during the Fall of the Roman Empire.

After Theon's death in 405 and until her death in 415 Hypatia was a world renowned teacher. Alexandria, among Rome and Constantinople, was one of the great cosmopolitan centers of learning and culture in the Roman world. Hypatia was Alexandria's most sought after and beloved teacher. After her death, scholars abandoned Alexandria.

Among her admirers was Orestes, the Governor of Alexandria. Orestes had political struggles with Cyril, the Archbishop of Alexandria (412 to 444). Cyril's headquarters was the aforementioned church, the Caesareum, site of the murder of Hypatia. The Caesareum was established by Queen Cleopatra (69-30 B.C.) in honor of her dead lover Julius Caesar (100-44 B.C.). The temple was converted into a Christian church by Cyril.



The death of Hypatia should be thought of as a continuation of the burning of the Library at Alexandria by the Christian mob in 391. Hypatia was a pagan, not a Christian. Her death was "necessary" to the early Christian church, as was the suppression of scientific knowledge generally. A Seventh Century Church historian, John of Nikiu (flourished 696) justifies the murder of Hypatia as follows:

*And, in those days, there appeared in Alexandria a female philosopher, a pagan named Hypatia, and she was devoted at all times to magic, astrolabes, and instruments of music, and she beguiled many people through Satanic wiles . . . A multitude of believers in God arose under the guidance of Peter the Magistrate . . . and they proceeded to seek for the pagan woman who had beguiled the people of the city and the Prefect through her enchantments. And when they learnt the place where she was,*



## Hypatia of Alexandria

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**Regular membership:**  
\$35 per year

**Contributing membership:**  
\$70 per Year

**Lifetime membership:**  
\$700

*they proceeded to her and found her . . . they dragged her along till they brought her to the great church, named Caesareum. Now this was in the days of the fast. And they tore off her clothing and dragged her . . . through the streets of the city till she died. And they carried her to a place named Cinaron, and they burned her body with fire.*

Hypatia's extraordinary powers and her horrific murder have sparked the imaginations of artists for centuries. Here is an 1837 painting by Arthur Hacker (1858-1919) of Hypatia's end.



Some of us know of Hypatia because she appears in Raphael's School of Athens. Here is the entire work.



### Contact Information

To talk to somebody about  
Fellowship of Reason call:

Martin at 770-471-9800  
Susan at 678-358-8415

## Hypatia of Alexandria

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Here is an excerpt from the School of Athens showing Hypatia.



Skylar Smythe, a playwright, describes her discovery of Hypatia while studying Raphael's School of Athens:

*She seemed to stare out at me, directly into my eyes. I could not help but look at her. Who was she? She seemed so out of place in the room full of scholars who were predominantly men. None of the other figures seemed to make eye contact, and the one figure who did was a woman. I knew that there was a story to be told in that, and I dug a little further, discovering the mysterious figure to be the mathematician, scientist and martyr Hypatia of Alexandria. As a thinking Christian woman, I was appalled at the circumstances of her violent murder, and felt compelled to share her story.*

## Hypatia of Alexandria

(continued from page 6)

A 2009 Spanish film entitled *Agora* starring Rachel Weiss tells the story of Hypatia.



A Christian contemporary of Hypatia, Socrates Scholasticus (380-439), writes critically of the murder of Hypatia:

*Hypatia, daughter of the philosopher Theon, who made such attainments in literature and science, as to far surpass all the philosophers of her own time...For all men on account of her extraordinary dignity and virtue admired her the more. Yet even she fell a victim to the political jealousy which at that time prevailed. For as she had frequent interviews with Orestes, it was calumniously reported among the Christian populace, that it was she who prevented Orestes from being reconciled to the bishop. Some of them therefore, hurried away by a fierce and bigoted zeal, whose ringleader was a reader named Peter, waylaid her returning home, and dragging her from her carriage, they took her to the church called Caesareum, where they completely stripped her, and then murdered her with tiles. After tearing her body in pieces, they took her mangled limbs to a place called Cinaron, and there burnt them. This affair brought not the least opprobrium, not only upon Cyril, but also upon the whole Alexandrian church. And surely nothing can be farther from the spirit of Christianity than the allowance of massacres, fights, and transactions of that sort. This happened in the month of March during Lent, in the fourth year of Cyril's episcopate, under the tenth consulate of Honorius, and the sixth of Theodosius.*



## Hypatia of Alexandria

(continued from page 7)

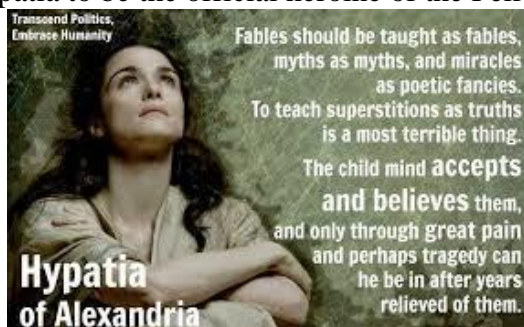


We mentioned above that the glorious painting of Hypatia by Charles William Mitchell hangs in the Laing Art Gallery. Also hanging in the Laing Art Gallery is the painting by the English Romantic painter John Martin (1789-1854) entitled *The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah* (1852).



Is it unkind to hope that the Christians who tore Hypatia apart with pottery shards and seashells find themselves today in the Fire depicted in this awesome painting?

I nominate Hypatia to be the official heroine of the Fellowship of Reason®.





## Events

For detailed info on all upcoming events, visit  
<http://www.meetup.com/fellowshipofreason>

**Adult Sunday school at FORum:** 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday 10 a.m.

Members and friends of FOR are invited to attend Adult Sunday School before FORum on the first Sunday of every month at 10 a.m. at the Atlanta Freethought Hall, located at 4775 N. Church Lane, Smyrna, GA 30080.

Martin Cowen coordinator: 678-641-9321

**FORum: A Celebration of Human Achievement:** First Sunday 11 a.m.

FOR's premier event. Meet and greet at 10:30 a.m. The program starts at 11 a.m. Presided over by FOR's President, members give presentations such as Celebration of Freedom and Celebration of Talent. A 15 to 20 minute Oratory on an ethical subject highlights the program. A short conversation called FORum during which audience members share their thoughts concludes the program at 12 noon sharp. We enjoy post-program conversation at local restaurant for further fellowship.

Martin Cowen director: 678-641-9321.

**FOR Runners:** Sunday 8 a.m.

We meet every Sunday morning at 8 a.m., except FORum Sundays, near Candler Park at the Flying Biscuit, 1655 McLendon Avenue Northeast, Atlanta. Breakfast at the Flying Biscuit follows at 9:15 a.m. Breakfast lovers, walkers, and joggers welcome! Martin Cowen: 678-641-9321

**Taped Lectures/Discussion Group:** 1<sup>st</sup> / 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays 7:30 p.m.

A small group of friends listens to taped lectures in a private home on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month. Free.

Sally Hull coordinator: 404-257-0454

**Fiction Book Club:** 2nd Tuesday 7:30 p.m.

Fifteen members and friends of FOR meet on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at an undisclosed location.

Sally Hull coordinator: 404-257-0454

**Poetry Club:** 4th Saturday, 3:00 p.m.

Members and friends of FOR like to meet on the 4th Saturday of every month at a local coffee shop to share their enjoyment of poetry.

Trent Watkins, coordinator

**Join us for our  
next monthly  
FORum:**

**4775 N. Church  
Lane, S.E., Smyrna,  
GA 30080**

**April 3, 2015  
Sunday 11 a.m.**

(Meet, Greet at 10:30 a.m.)

**Adult Sunday school**  
10 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.

## Birthdays

March 4	Scott Carper
March 22	Toni Brookner
March 25	Claire Gloeckner

April 9	Kathleen Allen
April 9	Erik Bauer
April 9	Kate Miller
April 13	Beth Rivera
April 24	Peter Brookner
April 24	Susan Menich

## Celebratory Announcements

Do yourself a favor and remember a good thing that happened to you this month:

Please, write it down: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

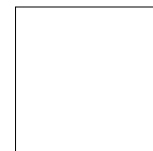
Now do the membership of FOR, Inc. a favor by relating this fact during FORum next month!



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A Reason-Based Moral  
Community

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