

**TAKE IT TO THE PARK!**

**BUGHOUSE  
SQUARE  
DEBATES**

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**SATURDAY, July 28, 1 pm – 4 pm**

Across from the Newberry in Washington Square Park

**Rick Kogan, *Master of Ceremonies***

 **THE NEWBERRY**

*Sponsored by the Newberry Library*

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## BUGHOUSE SQUARE DEBATES

12:45 pm — **MUSIC** by the Chris Madsen Quartet

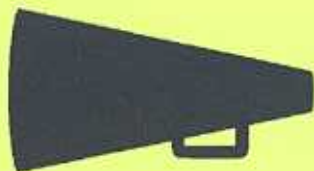
1:00 pm — **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO BUGHOUSE SQUARE** by Rick Kogan

1:15 pm — **PRESENTATION OF THE 2012 JOHN PETER ALTGELD FREEDOM OF SPEECH AWARD** to Laurie Jo Reynolds. David Spadafora, President of the Newbery Library, will present the award.

*Laurie Jo Reynolds is a Chicagoan who has dedicated herself to defending the rights of prisoners, reforming the prison system, and closing the Tamms Correctional Center. She launched Tamms Year Ten, a legislative and artistic initiative, to pressure officials to end the use of long-term isolation at the supermax facility. Ms. Reynolds' work on behalf of prisoners, and to stop prisoner abuse and torture in the state of Illinois, embodies the historic values of Bughouse Square and of Governor Altgeld.*

*The John Peter Altgeld Freedom of Speech Award is dedicated to the memory of the former Illinois Governor (1892-96) who pardoned the surviving Haymarket anarchists. The award is presented each year to an organization or person who has distinguished him or herself as a defender of free speech and ideas.*

1:30 pm — **SOAPBOX JUDGES INTRODUCED**  
— **SOAPBOX DEBATES OPENED**  
— **MUSIC** by the Chris Madsen Quartet  
(while people move to the Soapboxes)



## SOAPBOX DEBATES

Soapbox speeches run no longer than fifteen minutes; all four soapboxes run simultaneously. Speakers compete for the Dill Pickle Award for best soapbox speaker.

### SOAPBOX 1

1:45 pm — David Ratowitz, *Down and Dirty: Three Reasons Progressivism Has Made Chicago the Most Racially Segregated and Corrupt City in America*

2:00 pm — Elisa Shoenberger, as "Red Martha" Biegler, *On the Madness of Capitalism*

2:15 pm — Bill Bertshe, *Is It Arrogant to Say that Jesus Is the Only Way to Heaven?*

2:30 pm — Sam Singleton, Atheist Evangelist, *An Appreciation of Appreciation*

### SOAPBOX 2

1:45 pm — Beth Kregor, *Mobile Food in Chicago: Let Freedom Roll!*

2:00 pm — Tom Tresser, *Privatization Is the Symptom, Not the Cure, for What Ails America's Cities*

2:15 pm — Scott M. Priz as Robert Ingersoll, *About the Holy Bible*

2:30 pm — Russ Bruzek, *Citizenship Is a Daily Call to Arms!*

### SOAPBOX 3

1:45 pm — The Atheist at Large, *Why Is It Important to Debate Faith?*

2:00 pm — Mary Hallan FioRito, *Abortion in America—Does Legal Abortion Help or Hurt Our Country?*

2:15 pm — Jamie Albert, *Political Toxicity in Higher Education: The Analysts and the Solutionists in Decomposing America*

2:30 pm — Meghan McGrath as "Yellow Kid" Weil, *Doc Meriwether's Miracle Cure-All Elixir!*

### SOAPBOX 4

Open Mic  
Step up—one and all!

2:40 pm — **MUSIC** by the Chris Madsen Quartet  
(as the Soapbox Debates end and people move back to the central stage)

## MAIN DEBATE

2:50 pm **WHO'S TO BLAME FOR THE GREAT RECESSION, BIG GOVERNMENT OR BIG BUSINESS?**

Jon Anderson, Occupy Chicago  
v.  
Eric Kohn, Chicago Tea Party

*Questions and Answers with the audience will conclude the Main Debate.*

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3:30 pm — **SOAPBOX CHAMPION ANNOUNCED**  
— **DILL PICKLE AWARDED**

## SPEAKERS

**Jamie Albert** is a folk singer and union and protest song revivalist, who performs about labor, poverty, and other social justice related issues. Jamie is also a "wobbly," a.k.a. a member of the IWW.

**Jon Anderson** (main debate) is part of Occupy Chicago. A decorated Marine, he joined fellow veterans who relinquished their medals at the NATO summit in Chicago in May to protest the corporate profits made in Iraq and the huge amounts spent on military budgets today.

**The Atheist at Large** is a vocal Atheist trying to show people that when it comes to their god belief, they are not thinking rationally. He had a chat room on Stickam.com, called "Debate Faith."

**Rev. Dr. William Bertshe** has been an assistant pastor at the Moody Church since 1994 and currently works with more than 80 ministry partners of the church all over the world.

**Russ Bruzek** is a Chicago native, an actor, and a writer.

**Mary Hallan FioRito** is the Executive Assistant to the Archbishop at the Archdiocese of Chicago. A graduate of Loyola University School of Law, she has spent more than 20 years working in the pro-life movement.

**Eric Kohn** (main debate) is a liberty evangelist and has been committing politics professionally since 2002. He is active with the Chicago Tea Party and program director for America's Future Foundation—Chicago, an all-volunteer organization developing the next generation of liberty leaders in Chicago.

**Beth Kregor** is the Director of the Institute for Justice Clinic on Entrepreneurship at the University of Chicago Law School.

**Meghan McGrath**, formerly of COTC-DCASE, is a Senior Poetry Editor at *Narrative Magazine*. She will speak as Joseph "Yellow Kid" Weil, who got his start peddling snake oil for Doc Meriwether (its chief ingredient was rainwater).

**Scott M. Priz** is a performer and historical re-enactor in Chicago. He is speaking as Robert Ingersoll, the Great Agnostic, who, in the late nineteenth century, toured the country on the topic of free thinking.

## SPEAKERS (CONT.)

**David Ratowitz** campaigned for US Congress from Illinois' 5th District in 2010. He is the Republican Committeeman for the 47th Ward and a libertarian.

**Elisa Shoenberger** is a renegade historian. She works in the nonprofit world by day, is an MBA student by night, and is an historical re-enactor in all the times in between. Today she is the Marxist-feminist "Red Martha" Biegler.

**Sam Singleton Atheist Evangelist** is the fictional character created and played by Roger Scott Jackson. Brother Sam's "evangelism" is ironic, humorous, and thought-provoking.

**Tom Tresser** has been an educator, activist and champion of democracy for over 20 years. His latest nonprofit enterprise in civic engagement is CivicLab (<http://www.civiclub.us/>)

## SOAPBOX JUDGES

**Ted Cox**, *Chicago Reader*

**Robert K. Elder**, journalist and Managing Editor, *DNAinfo.com Chicago*

**D. L. Hopkins**, *Time Out Chicago*

## MUSICIANS

The Chris Madsen Quartet is one of Chicago's most in-demand jazz groups. The ensemble has performed at many venues in Chicago as well as New York City including Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola, Andy's Jazz Club, and the Jazz Showcase. Today the group features Dan Effland on guitar, Joe Policastro on bass, and Mikel Avery on drums.

## ABOUT BUGHOUSE SQUARE

*Bughouse Square* ("bughouse" is slang for a mental health facility), the popular name for Washington Square Park, was the city's most popular, boisterous, and radical free-speech space from the 1910s through the 1930s. Orators mounted soapboxes and spoke to responsive, vocal crowds. Bohemians, poets, atheists, and religionists of all persuasions entertained bystanders. The Square's core contributors, however, came from the ranks of

*the Wobblies, men and women of the Industrial Workers of the World, whose radical views, wit, and humor made them champion soapboxers and perennial crowd favorites. World War II and a post-war crackdown against socialists and communists, however, led to Bughouse Square's decline and by the mid-1960s it had all but ceased to exist. The Newberry Library revived the Park's free speech legacy with the Bughouse Square Debates in 1986.*

## ABOUT THE DILL PICKLE AWARD

*The Dill Pickle Award is presented to honor the best soapbox orator. The Dill Pickle Club was founded by labor activist and Bughouse soapboxer Jack Jones in 1915 to provide an indoor forum for free expression. By 1917 the Dill Pickle had located just around the corner from Bughouse Square and the Newberry, at 22 Tooker Place. Picklers attended lectures, plays, dances, concerts, and of course, had plenty of talk. Carl Sandburg, Clarence Darrow, Maxwell Bodenheim, Lucy Parsons, Ben Hecht, Charles MacArthur, Sherwood Anderson, and Ben Reitman were just a few of the literary, political, and social luminaries who regularly attended. The Club closed around 1934.*

The Newberry Library thanks **THE BUGHOUSE SQUARE DEBATES COMMITTEE** who created this event: Rachel Bohlmann, Paul Durica, Vince Firpo, Molly Fletcher, Shawn Healy, Kelly McGrath, and Gwendolyn Rugg.

## HECKLING

*Responding to speakers is a Bughouse Square tradition and interaction is part of the fun. Please keep it civil and friendly.*