

SECULAR COLORADO

Hub | HOC | BA | FFRF | SA | SVC | AU | SAC

Downing Street Cleanup Returns!



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Those Hub Sundays

Sundays at the Hub always feature "Coffee and Community", a very informal time starting at 10:00 AM and lasting until, you know, whenever. The Hub provides bottomless coffee for a buck, and people bring in some doughnuts or fruit. There will always be a conversation to your liking at some table, and if not, well, start one.

Once per month, typically on the first Sunday, the Hub offers a pancake breakfast for \$8.00, presented by one or another group each month. On March 6 it will be presented by the Sunday Assembly, the folks who put on their own monthly presentation later in the month. If you have not been to one of the Sunday Assembly meetings, your next opportunity will be March 20. Note that Sunday Assembly does not meet at the Hub, but rather at Swallow Hill Music.

Every other month or so, the first Sunday (or so) also features an easy volunteering opportunity. The Hub has adopted a mile or so of Downing Street, and we walk the street with plastic bags and garbage pickers. In good weather it's good exercise and makes a body feel a useful part of community. This Sunday, March 6th, marks the approximate second anniversary of this civic duty, for which the Hub has been recognized by our city (check out the plaques on the wall of the Hub).

Once per month or so the Hub hosts, on Sunday afternoons, "Party Games at the Hub". This month it will be March 13, at 1:00. Life is long, we have time to sit around a table and play games, don't let anybody tell you differently!

Also once per month or so, the Hub hosts a book discussion group sponsored by the Denver Atheists. This month it will take place on March 20, at 2:00 in the afternoon. For years, the Hub hosted another book discussion group sponsored by the Humanists of Colorado, but that is on hiatus.

Still, no end of Sunday fun at the Hub!



FFRF 'I'm Secular and I Vote Campaign' Q&A

Feb. 16, 2016

Why is FFRF announcing this campaign now?

We think the timing is perfect with the presidential primaries heading South and candidates pandering to Bible Belt voters. While the media focuses relentlessly on religious and minority voting groups, we need to inform them that secular voters are actually the largest-growing minority group in America.

Do you see secular voters lining up behind any particular candidate? And would they ever support a Republican?

Our recent survey of 8,000 secular voters shows that they are highly independent and would be open to any candidate who acknowledges them as a group and commits to keeping religion out of government. Seventy percent decline to affiliate themselves with one of the major political parties and more than 20 percent identify as independents.

While it's true that the largest group of seculars (36 percent) call themselves progressives or liberals, candidates from all sides of the political spectrum should be reaching out to this growing group of potential voters.

How do you reach secular voters since they aren't in churches or other easy-to-find places?

In today's digitally connected world, you don't need to go to a church to reach voters. Millions of secular voters are engaging on social media and we are reaching out to them through our campaign. We are also involving our 23,500 members and 20 chapters across the country and connecting with secular student groups on college campuses.

What do you recommend candidates do to reach these voters?

Secular voters are now the largest untapped voting demographic and candidates shouldn't be afraid to openly ask for our vote. The first thing would be to acknowledge our importance as a group, which no candidate has done yet.

Visiting college campuses provides a great opportunity for candidates to connect with thousands of young Millennial voters who are leading the drive away from religion in America. Candidates should regularly acknowledge that the nonreligious (who are a quarter of the adult U.S. population and a third of Millennials) are valued citizens and a part of the American fabric. They should be clear about their commitment to the separation of church and state. They should also talk about solutions to issues that these voters are concerned about, such as women's rights, contraceptive and abortion rights, marriage equality and climate change.

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FFRF 'I'm Secular and I Vote Campaign' Q&A

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Some say secular voters and organizations are too fractured in their efforts to have a big impact. What are you doing to get others to join you in these efforts?

Ninety-seven percent of the members of the Freedom From Religion Foundation are registered voters. They are politically engaged and should not be taken for granted. However, our movement certainly needs to do more to define the common issues of secular voters and to encourage secular candidates to run for political office.

But we also need to remind the mainstream media to cover our concerns. The message of our campaign is very positive and fits in with the goals that other secular groups are trying to accomplish leading up to and during the June 4, 2016 Reason Rally at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. This is all about voter engagement and education, and we will certainly be aligning our messages and efforts with the other groups as part of these efforts.

What is your position on candidates who profess that belief in a higher deity is relevant or necessary to running for public office?

While FFRF is nonpartisan and doesn't endorse or oppose individual candidates, we can point out that statements like those could be very damaging to a candidate in the general election. The number of religiously unaffiliated adults in America has grown by nearly 20 million since the last time we had an open presidential seat. Secular voters now outnumber most traditional religious demographics and we could swing the election if we vote in big enough numbers.

Where will your ads run and how much are you planning on spending on the campaign?

We don't release our ad budgets. However, we can tell you that we have TV ads starting to run on MSNBC, some billboard messages going up this spring and around the time of the political conventions, and a paid digital media campaign to help make our "I'm Secular and I Vote" message go viral.

The Freedom From Religion Foundation, based in Madison, Wis., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational charity, is the nation's largest association of freethinkers (atheists, agnostics), and has been working since 1978 to keep religion and government separate.

BOULDER ATHEISTS



If you don't believe in supernatural entities or powers, if you are concerned about religious intolerance or religiously motivated violence, if you rely on human reasoning and science to guide your decisions and behavior, if you have a naturalistic view of the world, or you just don't believe in God or gods, you are not alone. The Boulder Atheists group provides presentations, meetings, and serves as a social community for Colorado atheists, agnostics, rationalists, secular humanists, Brights, and free thinkers in Boulder County, Broomfield County, the North Denver Metro area, and beyond.

Our Motto

**"No gods, no devils,
no heaven, no hell,
just the wonderful
universe around us."**

Boulder Atheists wish to promote the understanding and acceptance of atheism in Colorado and America with education, good deeds and public activities. Although we welcome those who wish to discuss the subject of atheism, our main goal is activism and community.

This Month's News

Boulder Atheists held their February Monthly Membership Meeting on Sunday, February 28th at the Main Boulder Public Library. Treasurer Russ Holsclaw officiated over a presentation on how to evaluate the worthiness and credibility of charitable organizations before making any contributions to such organizations. One of the easiest ways to obtain information on a charitable organization is with the website Charity Navigator, which rates listed charities with a star rating of 0 to 4 stars based on their Financial Score and Accountability & Transparency Score. The website can be found at www.charitynavigator.org.

President Jim Barron also stressed the importance of the March Membership Meeting which will be the nomination and voting for new Board Members for 2016. Jim announced that he will no longer run for the office of President and Russ expressed the possibility of not continuing his position as Treasurer. So, it is very important that as many registered, dues paying members as possible show up to support Boulder Atheists by either volunteering, nominating or voting for new Board Members. Board members meet once a month to help plan and organize upcoming Membership meetings and social and activism events such as the Boulder Creek Festival and the trash pick up of our adopted road at Baseline and 30th St. We would love to have anyone join us who has the time and ideas to help Boulder Atheists grow.

Don't forget to attend one or more of our regular social gatherings. Our weekly lunch social is every Thursday at Three Margaritas in Boulder at 28th & Iris, starting at 12:30 PM. From there we wander over to nearby Vic's coffee at 3305 30th St. for coffee and often stimulating and thought provoking conversation until closing at 6:00 PM. Also a monthly evening dinner in Lafayette on March 25th, check Meetup.com for location. Be sure to check in at MeetUp.com to see a schedule of upcoming events.

The Boulder Atheists FaceBook page has been slowly but surely growing in numbers since its inception with a total of 29 members. Feel free to explore the many contributions and posts by our members, but remember you must join in order to place a post yourself.

HUMANISTS OF COLORADO

Political Correctness is Incorrect

by Jerry Gilbert (Board Member, Humanists of Colorado)

The use of derogatory terms to refer to groups of people is as old as language. It is that part of human behavior that is motivated by a desire to be higher in the social hierarchy. Our history is full of examples. Individuals want to be higher or better than other individuals, and groups want to be higher or better than other groups. So, it seems inevitable that a society will divide into majority groups and minority groups, depending on who has the power along certain dimensions.

Many individuals are confused and irritated trying to figure out what to call certain people—usually members of minority groups—when they are motivated to **avoid** using derogatory terms. Their reaction goes something like this: “Black people want to be called African-Americans; adult females want to be called women, not girls, and Ms. not Miss or Mrs.; American Indians are now Native Americans; we say gay or lesbian, rather than homosexuals; instead of ‘retarded’ and ‘handicapped’ we say ‘mentally and physically challenged’; instead of ‘lower class’ we say ‘middle or working class’; instead of ‘ignorant’ we say ‘low-information’ person. As if that weren’t enough, now there are ‘brown people’—and I can’t tell who they are. There are so many people who get mad at you if you call them by the wrong name, you can’t win anymore.”

Unfortunately, the term “political correctness (or PC)” has made things **worse**; and many people who use that term, do so in a mocking way, as if being called out for using bad grammar. PC is not about politics, social approval, or being correct. It is far more basic and reasonable than that. It is all about **RESPECT**. And **RESPECT** is at the very core of Humanism.

What you call a person or group, or how you refer to them, has to do with respecting them as they define respect. It has to do with a person’s or group’s **IDENTITY** as they define it. Being sensitive to people’s identity is important because people are sensitive about their identity. Identity is how people “own” themselves, rather than have someone else “own” them by using unfair, insensitive, or derogatory terminology and by mistreating them. Owning one’s identity is self-empowerment.

In addition, many people are genuinely confused when they learn that a group has begun to protest against certain words which refer to them that have been commonly used for many decades, even centuries. Their reaction is: “Since when is that wrong? I don’t remember anyone complaining about that before.” An example is Native Americans criticizing the use of terms such as Indians, Redskins, and Braves for sports teams.

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HUMANISTS OF COLORADO

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It is true that it has taken some individuals and groups a long time to overcome fear of backlash and to feel assertive enough to finally express their long-hidden resentment. And, when one "minority" group is successful in persuading the majority to change their language, other groups feel more confident in pursuing similar change. But, again, the issue is not political, not about avoiding criticism, and not about grammatical correctness. It is about RESPECT.

Trying to feel superior by treating others as inferior may be a pattern as old as human beings and deeply ingrained, but there is ample evidence that people can change their attitudes and behavior toward others if they are receptive and effectively influenced. It is primarily a matter of providing them with a larger context for understanding the need for change in thinking and behavior. The first step is making people aware that what they say about individuals and groups is unacceptable; and promoting this awareness has to be assertive and continuous. The next step is to identify what language is preferred. Such change must be initiated by the group who feels offended—change from the "bottom up," rather than from the "top down."

Adding to some people's confusion is the fact that not all members of a group that has been the target of disrespectful language prefer the same terminology. For example, some people who used to be called Negroes, and a lot worse, prefer to be called Black People; others would rather be referred to as African-Americans. If you intend to refer respectfully to people by using labels, do your homework—find out what is acceptable to them. When in doubt, think of them as people first; and you can show respect by how you say it as well as what you say.

Another question often asked or implied is, "What's the big deal about a word? What's the difference between saying she's a woman or a girl? No harm was meant. No one gets hurt." It is difficult for many people to understand how others can feel offended by what seem like trivial matters, simple words. But language can have a powerful emotional impact, and the terms we use can play a role in maintaining disrespect for others. What is trivial to me may not be trivial to someone else.

So, rather than wonder about being "politically correct," ask yourself "Am I treating or talking about this human being or group in a respectful manner? In a manner they want to be treated? In a manner I would want to be treated?" Sounds like the golden...whatever, doesn't it?

SECULAR COLORADO

Events

Details in [Online Calendar](#)

Saturday, March 5

9:30 AM (Hub) Freethinkers in AA

11:00 AM (Hub) Recovering From Religion Monthly Meeting

Sunday, March 6

10:00 AM (Hub) Coffee and Community, Pancake Breakfast Edition. Breakfast presented by Sunday Assembly

11:45 AM (Hub) Adopt-A-Street Volunteer!! - Help clean Downing Street from the Hub down to 20th.

Monday, March 7

6:30 PM (Hub) Freethinkers in AA

Tuesday, March 8

10:00 AM (Hub) Work/Study at the Hub

5:30 PM (Hub) Newbie Night at the Hub

Thursday, March 10

12:30 PM (BA) Lunch at 3 Margaritas, 28th and Iris, Boulder

4:00 PM (BA) Afternoon Coffee at Vic's Coffee, 30th Street, Boulder

6:30 PM (Hub) Movie Night: "delicatessen" at 7 on the big screen at the Hub

More Events

Details in [Online Calendar](#)

Friday, March 11

7:30 PM (Hub) Hub Jam!

Saturday, March 12

9:00 AM (DA) Dawson Butte Hike

9:30 AM (Hub) Freethinkers in AA

Sunday, March 13

10:00 AM (Hub) Coffee and Community

1:00 PM (Hub) Party Games at the Hub

Monday, March 14

6:30 PM (Hub) Freethinkers in AA

Tuesday, March 15

10:00 AM (Hub) Work/Study at the Hub

Wednesday, March 16

7:00 PM (Hub) Biweekly Meditation Meetup

Thursday, March 17

12:30 PM (BA) Lunch at 3 Margaritas, 28th and Iris, Boulder

4:00 PM (BA) Afternoon Coffee at Vic's Coffee, 30th Street, Boulder

6:30 PM (Hub) Movie Night: "Glengarry Glen Ross" at 7 on the big screen at the Hub

SECULAR COLORADO

Yet More Events

[Details in Online Calendar](#)

Saturday, March 19

7:00 AM (DA) Planned Parenthood Rally

9:30 AM (Hub) Freethinkers in AA

Sunday, March 20

10:00 AM (Hub) Coffee and Community

12:00 PM (SA) Sunday Assembly at Swallow Hill Music

2:00 PM (DA) Book Club

Monday, March 21

6:30 PM (Hub) Freethinkers in AA

Tuesday, March 22

10:00 AM (Hub) Work/Study at the Hub

Thursday, March 24

12:30 PM (BA) Lunch at 3 Margaritas, 28th and Iris, Boulder

4:00 PM (BA) Afternoon Coffee at Vic's Coffee, 30th Street, Boulder

6:30 PM (Hub) Movie Night: "Equilibrium" at 7 on the big screen at the Hub

Friday, March 25

7:00 PM (BA) Dinner in Lafayette

Yet More Events

[Details in Online Calendar](#)

Saturday, March 26

9:30 AM (Hub) Freethinkers in AA

Sunday, March 27

10:00 AM (Hub) Coffee and Community

2:15 PM (BA) Lunch at the Med on Walnut

Monday, March 28

5:30 PM (Hub) Social Hour Southeast, at Darcy's Bistro and Pub

6:30 PM (Hub) Freethinkers in AA

Tuesday, March 29

10:00 AM (Hub) Work/Study at the Hub

Wednesday, March 30

7:00 PM (Hub) Biweekly Meditation Meetup

Thursday, March 31

12:30 PM (BA) Lunch at 3 Margaritas, 28th and Iris, Boulder

4:00 PM (BA) Afternoon Coffee at Vic's Coffee, 30th Street, Boulder

6:30 PM (Hub) Movie Night: TBD at 7 on the big screen at the Hub

SECULAR CONTACTS

This permanent page will contain contact information for all groups included in this newsletter. It is a work in progress as of this issue, however!

Secular Hub

Website: <http://www.secularhub.org>

Meetup: <http://www.meetup.com/SecularHub/>

Humanists of Colorado

Website: <http://humanistsofcolorado.org>

Meetup: <http://www.meetup.com/humanism-160>

Boulder Atheists

Website: <http://www.boulderatheists.org>

Meetup: <http://www.meetup.com/Boulder-Atheists/>

Freedom From Religion Foundation

Meetup: <http://www.meetup.com/FFRF-Denver/>

Sunday Assembly

Meetup: <http://www.meetup.com/Sunday-Assembly-Denver/>

Secular Volunteer Corps

(Organized by the Secular Hub)

Americans United

Meetup: <http://www.meetup.com/Americans-United-for-Separation-of-Church-State-Colorado/>

Secular Adventure Crew

Meetup: <http://www.meetup.com/SecularAdventureCrew/>