



The Utah Humanist

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HumanistsofUtah.org

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Humanists of Utah is a Chapter of the *American Humanist Association*. We are a nonprofit corporation organized to advocate and promote ethical, rational, and democratic humanism among our membership and the larger community.



Humanism is a rational philosophy informed by science, inspired by art, and motivated by compassion. It affirms the dignity of each human being and supports individual liberty consonant with social and planetary responsibility. Humanism advocates participatory democracy, the open society, human rights and social justice. Free of supernaturalism, it recognizes human beings as part of nature and holds that values—be they religious, ethical, social, or political—have their source in human nature, experience, and culture. Humanism thus derives the goals of life from human need and interest rather than from theological or ideological abstractions, and asserts that humanity must take responsibility for its own destiny.

—*The Humanist*,
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Humanist Association

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Socialism Evil, Wicked, Mean & Nasty?

The following is a reprint of an HoU meeting report from April 2009. Here is a [link to the original report](#).

Did you know that socialists have held public office even in Utah? This is just one of the juicy tidbits that history professor and historian John McCormick Ph.D., shared in his fascinating presentation at the March 2009 meeting of Humanists of Utah.

History is not only a study of the past McCormick began, but is a selective history since not everything can be included. War, diplomacy, politics, and stories of great people, that usually means men, usually white men, are the exclusive subjects.

A fun way to illustrate how narrow history is to ask students to list who they remember from their history classes. Typically, the list is 90% male, mostly white, many of them presidents, generals, and inventors. Few women and non-whites are mentioned.

McCormick has worked toward being more inclusive and expansive in his teaching and writing, particularly in showing how history is about many peoples, ideas, experiences, and cultural traditions. Thus, in looking at any event in history, he will explore a range of individuals and groups that might have been involved and affected an event. A group usually left out that McCormick has learned to appreciate centers on the ordinary person in everyday life—history isn't limited only to influential, great, and important people. For instance, what was the experience of women in the Civil War? What was the experience of an ordinary soldier or person at the battlefield or home front?

McCormick recounted a lecture he gave earlier that day. Given the current economic downturn, the subject chosen for him was the Great Depression. How did the Depression affect ordinary people in their everyday lives?

Nationwide the unemployment rate was about 25%. Utah had an average 26%, but in 1933, it soared to 36%. In 1940, ten years into the Depression, Utah still had 18%. There was widespread, growing unemployment and underemployment with lost homes and apartments.

Showing how the Depression affected ordinary people, McCormick shared the story of his family. In 1930, his grandfather at age 46 lost his job, never again to obtain a full-time, permanent job. He died thirteen years later.

Born and raised on a farm near Price, his mother, youngest of seven

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Humanists of Utah

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

LINDA MILNE

- 2018 AARP ANDRUS AWARD WINNER
- UTAH COMMISSION ON AGING
- S.A.F.E. NEIGHBORHOOD TASK FORCE

THURSDAY
MAR 12
7:30PM

ELLIOTT HALL
600 S. 1300 E.
Salt Lake City

All Humanists of Utah monthly meetings are free and open to the public. Donations are gratefully accepted although not required. Please bring interested friends and family!

President's Report

Preparing to Be Prepared

The Boy Scouts have had it right for over 100 years. Their famous motto “Be Prepared” has helped millions of boys and their families have the confidence and knowledge to proactively prepare for unknown incidents and situations in which they may find themselves throughout life. By learning, planning and executing on preparedness plans, one may weather future storms and mitigate disaster. As a former Eagle Scout, I have kept this at the forefront of many of my decisions in my past and current life and understand the strength in preparation.

We are living in a time of momentous social upheaval and natural change, one that has often left mankind struggling to keep up with—much less ahead of—the curve. The news is not always good. The COVID-19 virus has begun its exponential networking across the planet, natural disasters due to the climate crisis are ramping up in both frequency and strength, social unrest due to wealth inequality, racism,

nationalism and refugees continues to swell, and tensions between hegemonic global players remain strained. Though we may not know specifics until the very last moment, the ability to have a plan and support can alleviate a large part of any potential harm and give us a sense of direction and protection looking forward.

Author and ocean activist Peter Benchley shrewdly noted that “Fascination breeds preparedness, and preparedness, survival.” In order for something to take hold within us, we must first have interest, born of curiosity and access to information, and secondly, the ability to act on it. To anticipate. To be prepared. Humanists know well that optimism for the future is not enough, that there must be action taken upon principles in order to realize progress. We must DO once we KNOW. The old G.I. Joe public service announcements stated that “Knowing is half the battle” and in March, we present a way to increase your knowledge as well as finish the battle with preparation.

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President's Report

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This month's speaker is **Linda Milne**, 2018 AARP Andrus Award winner and member of S.A.F.E. Neighborhood Task Force. She will be presenting on "Emergency Preparedness", a timely discussion on strategies, tactics, and information on how to prepare for disasters of all kind—pandemics, civil uprisings, natural upheavals, etc. This information will be critical not only for knowing what to do in these situations but also in how to prepare for them beforehand. This is universal in its application and relevance. I invite you to join us for this free event and invite friends, family and neighbors to this community event. Now is the time to mitigate the effects of the unknown by thinking like a Boy Scout—and being prepared.

—Jeff Curtis
President, HoU

Debate

Is God Necessary for Ethics?

UofU Social and Behavioral Sciences Auditorium
Saturday, April 4 at 7:00 PM
Participants include Dr. Deen Chatterjee (who has spoken to HoU several times), our own Jared Anderson, and two local Christian Ministers.

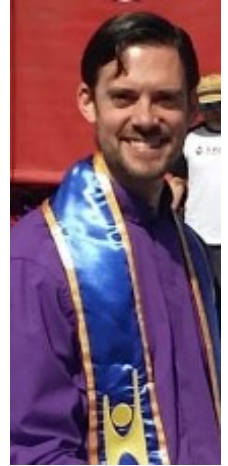
For more information call:
801.755.3013

Chaplain's Corner

Meet Your Chaplain

I had a column nearly finished about (non) afterlife, when I realized that for my first column should introduce myself! So, it is nice to meet you all (Watch for the oblivion post next month.)

I have had the privilege for the past three years of working as an openly Humanist Chaplain. In fact, I was very pleased that during my interview for a hospice position, my now-boss asked me, "How will you meet the needs of the non-religious?" I was thrilled to respond that the non-religious happen to be my specialty! I've been honored to present on humanist approaches to ministry at hospice conferences, prison conferences, and even a United Nations conference.



So first, what is a Chaplain? My favorite definition is a "professional decent human being." I enjoy stumping my World Religions students is to ask them, "If I want to become a professional good person...if I want to get a PhD in goodness...what career is that?" Unfortunately, our culture has mostly outsourced the question of goodness to religion. And we all know how well that has turned out. My second favorite description of a chaplain's work is "show up where life breaks open." Too often we get through life through distraction and avoidance. As a rule, we are as good as we are incentivized and empowered to be (I'll unpack that in another column.) We usually only come fully alive during tragedy. Or tragically, only come fully alive as we are about to die. One of the greatest benefits of my work is that I don't take that for granted, and I hope to pass that along to you.

I joke that I can reach pretty much anyone because I was raised Latter-day Saint (to this day I have a Sunday School podcast, without a single truth claim), I did PhD work in Biblical Studies, taught World Religions for seven years, and now I am a Humanist Minister.

I look forward to discussing important topics with you each month, and you can always feel free to email me to continue the conversation.

Jared Anderson (MA, BCC) is endorsed by the AHA Humanist Society as a Chaplain, Celebrant, and Lay Leader. He provides rituals across the life span for birth, coming of age, and divorce, as well as weddings and funerals. He specializes in designing personalized ceremonies that integrate ideas from art, history and popular culture. Contact him at jared@humanistsofutah.org



Socialism in the USA

(Continued from page 1)

children and the first of her siblings to graduate from high school, entered the University of Utah in 1929 intending to be a teacher. A month later, the stock market crashed, and she managed to stay at school for the rest of the year but was financially unable to complete her degree. So, she returned to Price where at least there was food and a place to live rent-free. That is, until her parents lost the farm because they couldn't pay the mortgage.

What was the impact of these circumstances for McCormick's parents? They delayed getting married until eight years after they'd met, which meant fewer children—only two—his sister and himself: money and age the determinants. Wanting security, his father stayed in a job he hated. Since it didn't pay well, his mother who had wanted to stay home and raise her family had to work. These events exacerbated the challenges in their marriage.

Noteworthy from the Depression is that our government, under Franklin Delano Roosevelt, changed in unprecedented ways that remains to this day.

In addition to exploring how ordinary people affect history, McCormick also explores the radical tradition, radical people, radical movements. After all, this country originated from an act of revolution.

McCormick defines radicalism as a fundamental restructuring or changes in the way society is arranged or organized—not mere adjustments. He is particularly interested in radical changes that involve inclusion rather than exclusion: inclusion expands rights and opportunities. e.g. Ku Klux Klan is a radical group, and is interested in fundamental changes, but they restrict opportunities and rights.

Here McCormick referred to a relevant book: *The Radical Reader: A Documentary History Of The American Radical Tradition*. It is a collection of 155 primary sources of those people who changed history through what then was considered radical. It includes notables like Jefferson, Paine, Thoreau, Friedan, Ginsberg, Carson, etc.

Referring back to Utah's 36% unemployment, McCormick related an incident of radicalism—possibly Salt Lake City's first protest—how ordinary people in everyday life reacted.

In February 1933, a number of houses and farms

were to be auctioned off at Salt Lake City and County Building. A group of 200-300 Salt Lake City citizens disrupted the auction, saying that people shouldn't lose their homes through no fault of their own (sound familiar?). They refused to allow this sale to go on. In desperation, the sheriff called the Fire Department, which turned hoses onto the group, flooding the basement of the County Building; police turned tear gas onto the crowd. Fifteen were actually convicted of unlawful behavior and served time in jail. After the crowd dispersed, most of them reassembled and marched up State Street to the Capitol where the State Legislature was in session. There they held a rally with signs e.g. organizers starve, we want milk for our children, moratorium on mortgages.

What was going on here? McCormick wondered. Why and how is it that in Salt Lake City where the majority is conservative that such an event took place?

Interestingly McCormick discovered that a communist candidate in Utah got 15% of votes who ran 4th out of seven; another radical act.

He also discovered that in 1911, Murray City voted in a Socialist mayor and city council and re-elected them in 1913 so that for four years, Murray had a Socialist administration. What happened here, he wondered. How could that have happened?

Of course, he knew that during this period, the US had its only significant socialist movement, which was a viable part of American history. Between 1900 and 1912, two Socialists were elected to Congress, there were over 1500 Socialist mayors and city commissioners, they had a significant presence in the labor movement, and there were 300-400 socialist publications then, one with a circulation of 750,000.

With further study, McCormick discovered that between 1900 and 1923, Utah had over 100 Socialists in public office with Eureka electing the most: 35. For three years, the Utah State Federation of Labor officially endorsed the Socialist Party.

McCormick said he finds these historical events extremely interesting, partly because some of it is relatively unknown, but more importantly, history of this type is critical because of its potential to fundamentally change our way of thinking about the past, since the way we think about our past affects the way we think about the present and about the future.

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Humanists of Utah meetings are open to the public and free of any admission charge. A discussion and light refreshments follow the speaker's presentation. Come join us and **bring a friend!**

Disclaimer: The views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of Humanists of Utah nor the American Humanist Association. Reprinting of articles is permitted for humanist groups promoting the interests of humanism if attribution is properly stated.

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>> Put Your Name Here <<
>> Write an Article! <<

Socialism in the USA

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There is not just one way to think about our past.

Concluding with a quote from one of his books, *The Gathering Place: an Illustrated History Of Salt Lake City*, he asserted that we need to look at the study of history in a new way because the old way is inadequate. Rather than exclusionary and narrow as it has been, we need to move toward a history that is more inclusive, more expansive, more accurately taking into account the diverse society that Utah really is and has been. We need to resist rather than uphold monolithic, one-dimensional, stereotypical representation. A new way of looking at our past could help us overcome longstanding, narrow, restrictive, crippling definitions of ourselves and of our society.

—Sarah Smith

FDR proposed a “Second Bill of Rights” in his State of the Union Address. Here are a couple of links:

[Wikipedia summary](#)
[YouTube](#)

Membership/Renewal Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

- \$50 Regular Annual Membership and subscription to the *Utah Humanist*
 - \$90 Regular 2-year Membership and subscription to the *Utah Humanist*
 - \$35 Regular Annual Membership with email delivery of the *Utah Humanist*
 - \$65 Regular 2-year Membership with email delivery of the *Utah Humanist*
 - \$20 *Student* Annual Membership and subscription to the *Utah Humanist*
 - \$20 Annual subscription to the *Utah Humanist* (I do not want to be listed as a member of **Humanists of Utah**)
 - Please send a *FREE* trial Subscription to the *Utah Humanist*
 - \$_____ additional contribution to help promote public awareness of humanism
- ⇒ All contributions in excess of the \$20 subscription fee tax deductible.
⇒ *Members* have the right to vote in Chapter elections and participate in Chapter decisions.
⇒ Dues provide for information packets, honoraria to speakers, expenses of newsletter publication, trial subscriptions, copies to libraries, and newsletter exchange with other chapters.

Humanists of Utah
P.O. Box 1043
West Jordan, UT 84084

Now you can pay with PayPal!

Notes:

- ◆ *General Meetings* are for all members and the general public. There are no admission charges.
- ◆ *Discussion Group* meetings are open to everyone. A different book or topic is covered every month.
- ◆ *Board Meetings* are planning and business sessions. They are open to all members.
- ◆ Eliot Hall is in the First Unitarian Church located at 569 South 1300 East in Salt Lake City.
- ◆ RE 201 is upstairs in the East Educational Building at the First Unitarian Church.

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Sign up for Amazon Smile and a percentage of your purchase will be donated to HoU:

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- Select “Your Amazon Smile.”
- Search for “Humanists of Utah.”
This will find “American Humanist Association” in West Jordan because we use the AHA as our umbrella for sales tax exemption.
- Click the “Select” button.

If you have a bookmark for Amazon please modify it to go to smile.amazon.com—you always want to use the “smile” option.

Smith’s Grocery Stores

Humanists of Utah is enrolled in Smith’s Inspiring Donations program. If you have a Smith’s Fresh Value card, you can register it to benefit Humanists of Utah. Simply visit www.smithsfoodanddrug.com/inspire, create an account, associate it with your Fresh Values card number, and then enter NPO Number: KQ330 within your “account summary.” All future purchases will now benefit HoU.

Upcoming Events

Meeting	Topic	Date	Time	Place
General Meeting	Disaster Preparedness <i>Linda Milne</i>	Mar 13	7:30	RE-201
Board Meeting	Chapter Business	Mar 22	7:30	TBA
General Meeting	TBA	Apr 9	7:30	RE-201
Board Meeting	Chapter Business	TBA	7:30	TBA

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