

Through community building, lectures, social activism and discussion we expand our members' awareness, gain an understanding of the issues facing the world and provide learning opportunities through guest speakers on a variety of topics.

*Jefferson County Colorado Chapter of the  
American Humanists Association (AHA)*  
<https://www.jeffersonhumanists.org/>

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## Chapter Meeting Program Sunday, February 24, 2019

### Humanism and Protest Songs: Making a Statement Through Music. By Nancy Bolt

**H**umanism has a long history of protesting the status quo. Songs advocate for a better world and make us laugh at the craziness of the world we live in. Chris and Steef Sealey have been writing and singing protest songs for many years and are well-known in the Denver area. Chris writes here about their musical history:

Both Steef and Chris Sealey remember getting guitars when they were in junior high school. As would be typical of their lives, Chris was the good girl. She took lessons and played for church gatherings. Her first performance was playing and singing Blowin' in the Wind, and her first parody was There's No Business Like Snow Business (her leg was in a cast...) In college, she did 3 USO tours with a folk group of 5 young women – two of the tours to Viet Nam, and a third to US military installations and hospitals in Japan, Korea, Guam and the Philippines.



Steef, more of a rascal, acquired his sister's Stella guitar when she left for college. And when it became clear it wasn't the quality guitar he desired, he staged a bicycle/guitar accident to get a better instrument. Starting in college, folk music took center stage.

For both, there has always been much more to music than being on stage. From playing singalongs around bonfires at summer camp to singing We Shall Overcome at college protest marches, they felt the power of music to

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## Chapter Meeting Program Sunday, February 24, 2019

### Humanism and Protest Songs: Making a Statement Through Music. By Nancy Bolt. ...Continued

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connect and inspire. “That’s why I love folk music,” Steef says, “because it talks about justice and things that matter.” “It’s the singing together,” Chris adds, “singing with one powerful voice. There’s nothing like that feeling that we can pull together, that we can change the way things are, that we can prevail.”

And that’s how they think about folk music to this day. Steef has written hundreds of songs in the folk tradition. (Actually, his friends often point out that he adds a little Broadway to his compositions...) His subjects range from fracking to financial calamities, from voting to little acts of love.

Chris writes, too, although her favorite genre is the comic parody. Food, aging, social media – just about any topic is fair game. Laughing together AND singing together can be a powerful combination. It may not be the trendiest thing in the music world to identify as a folksinger, but that’s just what Steef and Chris are. No matter the decade, they believe folk music is still a powerful way to protest, to connect, and to inspire. ♦

### Humanist Perspectives 3rd Saturdays

**Humanists and Atheists Hosted by Tom Kellogg and Jim Bole**  
**Saturday, February 16th, 10 AM-12 :00 PM at JUC Mills Building**

Most Atheists are Humanists and most Humanists are Atheists. We will celebrate together like good godless heathens and indulge in the wisdom of Humanism and how Atheism came to some of the same conclusions hundreds of years ago. Humanism has a much richer history than Atheism, born out of culture, scientific discoveries and enlightened thinking.

Humanism will help lead us into the future as religion becomes irrelevant and can even help solve tough political problems. Atheism is a component of Humanism.

**Ralph Hughes** is on the JH Board of Directors and was a speaker at the American Humanist Association national conference last May in Las Vegas.

Attend this session for a very enlightening, meaningful morning. Breakfast pastries and beverages will be served.

The Jefferson Humanists Chapter of the American Humanist Association is very pleased to offer a regular explorations series on 3rd Saturdays, 10 AM-12 PM, at Jefferson Unitarian Church (JUC). Each session will be slightly different and include several segments to showcase aspects of Humanism through a presentation, videos, movies, forums and explorations, followed by discussions. We will include time for participants to socialize and get acquainted, in keeping with our chapter goal of building community. ♦

Did you miss the January, 19th Humanist Perspectives? Now you can see it at home. This documentary originally aired on the A&E TV show, "**Leah Remini - Jehovah's Witnesses and the Aftermath.**" Jefferson Humanist member **Shana Rubio** and her daughter were in the film. Shana shared her personal story with us and answered questions. She assists and counsels JW refugees in recovery. Some of the discussion was directed toward help our chapter might offer. If you missed it you can watch the full very moving episode here:

<https://www.aetv.com/shows/leah-remini-scientology-and-the-aftermath/season-3/episode-0>

## January 27, 2019 Chapter Meeting Program

### ALEC: The Biggest Threat You've Never Heard Of

Review By Robin Baer

**C**aroline Fry, Director of Outreach, Colorado Common Cause, was the speaker for the January program. Common Cause is a national non-partisan non-profit which seeks to make government more accountable, particularly with respect to money in politics. She presented a spirited program about the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), which advocates for and writes legislation, particularly with the support of corporations, and without the benefit of citizen input, thus creating model bills that it then presents to legislators, primarily at the federal level.

Ms. Fry stated that ALEC operates to control public policy and enhance corporate interests instead of the public interest and pays political entities for a “seat at the table.” It is, she said, an organization that very few people know about, which has both 501c3 and 501c4 designations in various parts of the organization. Because of these designations ALEC does not have to identify its donors or the money it collects. Common Cause is working continuously to enhance, expand and make public the secretive list of ALEC members and donors, which largely consists of big corporations and major political players. The amount of money ALEC has is also unknown, but it is known that it is used to “wine and dine” legislators and push ALEC’s bills, which favor its members. Currently, ALEC is working to use the same approach with city, county and state governments.

One big concern, she explained, is that the opaque nature of the organization makes it very difficult to find out where the money that ALEC controls comes from or where it goes. It is “dark money,” and ALEC is fighting transparency. Common Cause is also working to uncover as much about these secret assets as possible.

Ms. Fry described some of the laws ALEC has supported, including “stand your ground” gun laws. It also seeks to undermine and eliminate the 17th Amendment to the Constitution, which gives

citizens the right to vote directly for their senators in each state. Changing that Amendment would put the vote for senator in the hands of a committee in each state rather than having senators directly elected. ALEC also opposes local measures, such as our Colorado laws limiting oil and gas exploration and extraction.

Why is ALEC a concern? Because of ALEC’s opaque resources and the fact that the public cannot generally know where its money is going to or coming from, there is a problem of “quid pro quo” (something that can be given or taken in return for something else), such as favors to and from the organization and legislators. In the case of interactions with lawmakers at either the federal or local levels it can mean exchange of campaign money or the “revolving door,” where the legislator is offered a position when leaving office in exchange for the legislator supporting an ALEC bill. This lack of transparency can present very serious problems of corruption and abuse of ethical standards.

What can you do? Ms. Fry said Common Cause supports boycotting corporations that belong to ALEC and/or communicating as to why you do not want to do business with them. Common Cause has generated a list of ALEC members, which is available on its website.

<https://www.commoncause.org/colorado/>

She also suggested communicating with legislators at all political levels, federal and local, and talking to others you know about the problem—spread the word.

And, finally, she suggested: Join Common Cause!



## Now a few words from our President

# JEFFERSON HUMANISTS ANNUAL REPORT

Matthew Elisha

### 2018 Achievements

### 2019 Goals and Needs

#### January 2019

The Jefferson Humanists turned 5 years old this month. Founded in January 2014 with a handful of members, the Chapter now has approximately 75 members. That is less than in 2017. With that in mind, during our annual leadership retreat in September, we set a goal to double our membership in 2019 and are making plans to achieve this ambitious goal. This report offers a brief description of our achievements in the past year and goals for the future.

**A JH Facility:** We have talked for many years about finding a Jefferson Humanists space and have amassed ample reserve funds to help in renting a place in 2019. We are working to locate a facility that meets our needs and budget. Our hope is to find a space to store our files, library and necessary materials and equipment, such as our Jefferson Humanists banners. We also want a place to hold monthly leadership meetings and our many small group activities, including the Free Reading Opportunity Reading Group (FROG), Humanists Perspectives, and our new Movie Night. Having a place of our own would allow us to more easily hold impromptu gatherings and provide space for new activities and new services to our members.

**Outreach Efforts:** We had a small group who participated in the March for Our Lives in March, a booth at the March for Science in April, and again marched in the annual PrideFest Parade in June, all of which helped showcase our Chapter. To help reach our goal of doubling our membership in 2019, we currently have an Outreach Team working on plans for other ways we can promote the Chapter and encourage new members to join. Plans include setting up information tables at various Jeffco festivals and events and advertising in the media, including in local newspapers and on radio stations. We started the year

with a bang when we held the ‘Get Rid of Student Debt’ debate. This took intensive planning and many member hours to arrange the panel, find a venue, advertise the event, run the debate and much more. It provided an avenue for promoting the Chapter and educating the audience about this important issue.

**Our Online Presence:** We continue to utilize our various online avenues for promoting the Chapter, including our website ([www.jeffersonhumanists.org](http://www.jeffersonhumanists.org)),

Meetup ([www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists](http://www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists)) and Facebook ([www.facebook.com/jeffcohumanists/](http://www.facebook.com/jeffcohumanists/)) sites. We now have almost 300 Meetup members and almost 150 Facebook followers, an increase of 30% for each from 2017. We’ve recently created sites on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/jeffersonhuman>) and Instagram ([www.instagram.com/jhumanists](http://www.instagram.com/jhumanists)) and are slowly learning how to utilize these other social media platforms to promote our organization.

**Programs:** The Program Committee facilitated 10 presentations for our Monthly Chapter Meeting in 2018. Topics included the origin of dogs, truth in journalism, the state of science education, Colorado history, homelessness, climate change, and a remembrance of the Kent State shootings.

We added a Humanist Moment before each program, a 10-minute presentation by a JH member on a humanist topic. So far, 9 members have presented Humanist Moments. We encourage all members to share stories of their road to humanism or a short presentation on a humanist issue of interest to them. See a board director to volunteer.

**Social Responsibility:** The Humanists Helping Humanity group increased our social responsibility efforts in 2018, holding quarterly grocery packing events at The Action Center, conducting a coat and

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# JEFFERSON HUMANISTS ANNUAL REPORT

Matthew Elisha

Continued

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blanket drive in the fall, and holding the first sewing and knitting get-together to create warm items for donating to those in need. Plans are to do much more in 2019. Contact Carole Hughes at [hjh@jeffersonhumanists.org](mailto:hjh@jeffersonhumanists.org) if you would like to be part of this group.



**New Activities:** In addition to existing programs like our Happy Hour, Humanist Perspectives, Reading & Hiking groups, we added two new activities in late 2018: a monthly Movie Night held on the first or 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month, and an Art, Science and Cultural Outing which varies each month. Both are gaining a foothold and offering members and friends additional outlets for community fellowship.

*“Humanism is a progressive philosophy of life that, without theism or other supernatural beliefs, affirms our ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good. ~American Humanist Association*

**Leadership:** To help the board and other JH leaders in better governance, we created a Leadership Handbook that will guide current and future leaders in understanding our chapter and our policies and procedures. It brings all our disparate guidance, policy and procedure documents into a single volume that can be built on going forward. It will be a beneficial resource for our board orientation in February.

In 2018, we initiated the Coordinating Council, a bi-monthly meeting of all chapter leaders. This helped in leader communication and ensure leaders are “on the same page” to better understand what needs to be done to effectively run the chapter.

**2019 Goals:** In September, chapter leaders attended the annual retreat to discuss goals for 2019. The group determined that we have to do more to grow our membership, and set the ambitious goal to double our rolls this year. We are focused on concentrated outreach to meet more people and encourage them to join our humanist community.

We encourage all members to invite friends and others to join us for various Jefferson Humanists events in 2019. The more visitors who join us for our activities, the more likely we are to create new humanists who will want to be part of our community.

**Volunteer to help:** Providing these programs and community events takes a lot of work from dedicated volunteers. We need more members to help. Please consider volunteering. We need people to:

- help plan and execute **Outreach events** to promote the chapter and recruit members,
- **coordinate appetizers** for our monthly chapter meetings,
- **assist the program committee** to create future monthly presentations,
- **expand our social responsibility** efforts,
- **take on leadership positions**, including as executives and directors,
- **act as co-leaders** to help run our various monthly activities such as Nature Hikes, Humanist Perspectives, Movie Night, and Art Science & Cultural Outings.

If you're interested in volunteering to help in any of these areas, please see President, Matthew Elisha, or Vice-President, Jim Bole, or email [president@jeffersonhumanists.org](mailto:president@jeffersonhumanists.org) or [vicepresident@jeffersonhumanists.org](mailto:vicepresident@jeffersonhumanists.org). ♦

# Humanists Helping Humanity our Social Responsibility

## Recent Actions and Upcoming Events By Carole Hughes

### *Recent Actions*

#### *Grocery Packing at The Action Center Warehouse*

On January 5th, ten Jefferson Humanists spent a Saturday morning packing grocery boxes at The Action Center's warehouse. Part of an assembly line, we helped pack 701 boxes for distribution to low income residents of Jefferson County and the homeless in our community. We've scheduled three more 2019 grocery-packing days, so if you can spare a Saturday morning, consider joining us.



### *UPCOMING EVENTS:*

#### *March 2019-Exact Date TBD: Prepare and Serve a Meal at a Family Tree Shelter*

Jefferson Humanists will be preparing and serving dinner at a local shelter. More details to be announced in the March newsletter and on the JH website.

#### *April 6, 2019: Grocery Packing at The Action Center Warehouse*

**9 AM until Noon.** RSVP by **March 29** if you can join us at The Action Center's warehouse, where we'll be packing grocery boxes for distribution to low income residents of Jefferson County and the homeless in our community. We can use 20 volunteers for this effort. Children welcome. RSVP by **3/29/2019** to Carole Hughes at 303 234-1304 OR



[socialresponsibility@jeffersonhumanists.org](mailto:socialresponsibility@jeffersonhumanists.org)

#### *Yes, in 2019 we are still collecting those Personal Hygiene Items*

Personal hygiene necessities (shampoo, conditioner, soap, toothpaste, floss, toothbrushes, lotion, etc.) will continue to be collected at Chapter Meetings. They will be donated to The Action Center, a local non-profit organization providing help with basic human needs and pathways to self-sufficiency to low income Jefferson County residents and the homeless. Look for the donations box at Chapter Meetings.

Comments about Jefferson Humanists' social responsibility efforts?

Contact Carole Hughes at 303-234-1304 OR

[socialresponsibility@jeffersonhumanists.org](mailto:socialresponsibility@jeffersonhumanists.org) ♦

**This Valentine's Day, feel free to share this with your loved ones!**

Humanism is love with reason—love embracing inquiry, education and science.

Humanism is good love—love that encourages good for goodness sake.

Humanism is equal love—love that welcomes everyone equally

~The Humanist



**FROG Meeting**  
**Freethinkers Reading Opportunity Group**  
**Second Saturday Monthly**

**February 9th**  
**Sapiens: by Yuval Noah Harari**  
**Hosted by**  
**Helena Goldstein**

Join the Jefferson Humanists' book group, FROG (Freethinkers Reading Opportunity Group) for our February 9th meeting. We will discuss **Sapiens: a Brief History of Humankind**, by Yuval Noah Harari. "An absorbing, provocative history of civilization, packed with heretical thinking and surprising facts", John Gray, in the Financial Times.

We will meet Saturday February 9th from 2:00 to 4:00 PM

in the meeting room at the Arvada Library.

The library is located at 7525 W 57th Ave, Arvada, CO.  
Please feel free to join us even if you haven't finished the book.

**If you need a copy of the book, please email me.**  
**I have extra copies of Sapiens to lend.**

RSVP at <http://meetu.ps/e/G2ZhZ/xZ0q3/f>.

Or email Helena Goldstein ([frog@jeffersonhumanists.org](mailto:frog@jeffersonhumanists.org))  
with any questions.

"It's relatively easy to agree that only *Homo Sapiens* can speak about things that don't really exist, and believe six impossible things before breakfast that don't really exist.

*You could never convince a monkey to give you a banana by promising him limitless bananas after death in monkey heaven.*" ~Sapiens.

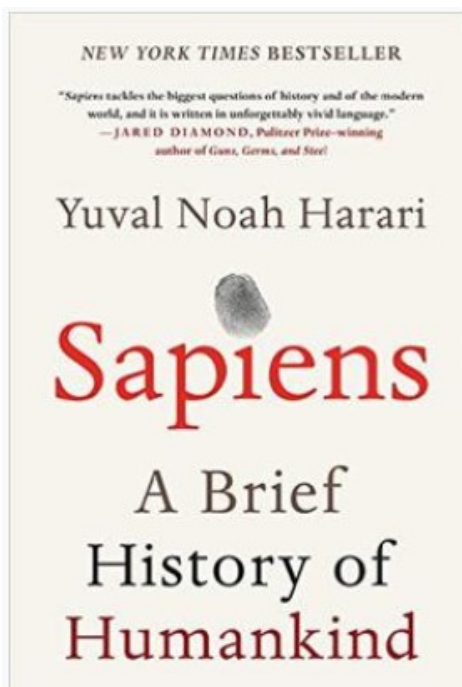
Looking ahead, upcoming meetings are:

March 9th: The Words We live By, by Linda R. Monk - about the US Constitution. We'll be at Lakewood Library (10200 W 20th Ave in Lakewood, just 3 blocks west of Kipling).

April 13: Topic: Living the Secular Life - do a reading or watch something of your choice on this topic, and we'll share what we learned. Location to be announced.

**Your fellow readers look forward to seeing you February 9th!**

**Location: Arvada Library ♦**



## FROG Book Group

### January's Review by Helena Goldstein



Left to right: Jim, Matthew, Nancy, Bob, Dan, David, Roberta, Helena and Carol

**T**en members of FROG met on January 12, to discuss the book *Coyote* by Allen Steele. This science fiction book was a change of pace from our usual reading. In the future, United States has split into several countries, one of which has a repressive regime. A group of political refugees steals a starship and heads off to start a new life on a habitable moon (Coyote) in a distant planetary system.

Once on the planet, a new society must be organized. But in addition to the political refugees, the group

includes some crew members and soldiers who were, effectively, hijacked. Some people still feel loyal to the country they left, 249 light years away, even though they have no way of knowing if that country even still exists. Who makes the rules and who enforces them?

The plot had a few holes which bothered some people more than others. Some liked long descriptions of the planet, others thought that slowed the plot down. As usual, the difference of opinion led to a lively discussion enjoyed by all. ♦

#### Below is the FROG schedule for 2019. So, mark your calendars now!

- ◇ **March 9**    **The Words We Live By:** by Linda R. Monk (non-fiction)
- ◇ **April 13**    **Topic:** Living the Secular Life
- ◇ **May 11**     **There, There:** by Tommy Orange (fiction)
- ◇ **June 8**      **The Way of the Heathen:** Practicing atheism in everyday life by Greta Christina (non-fiction)
- ◇ **July 13**     **Donut Economies:** by Kate Raworth (non-fiction)
- ◇ **August 10**   **Nothing to Be Frightened Of:** by Julian Barnes (non-fiction)
- ◇ **Sept. 14**    **The Road to Unfreedom:** Russia, Europe, America by Timothy Snyder (non-fiction)
- ◇ **Oct. 12**     **Topic -** The Role of Feminism in Humanism
- ◇ **Nov. 9**      **The Newcomers:** Finding refuge, friendship and hope in an American Classroom by Helen Thorpe (non-fiction) December will be on next month's newsletter.
- ◇ **Dec. 14**    **Unsheltered:** by Barbara Kingsolver (fiction)



## “Getting Rid of Student Debt” Planned/Organized by JH, Ralph and Carole Hughes



This event was organized by the Jefferson Humanists. [www.jeffersonhumanists.org](http://www.jeffersonhumanists.org). In this Cambridge-style debate, two teams of experts argued for and against using government funding and regulation to reduce or eliminate today's \$1.5 trillion in student loans, allowing the public to evaluate such proposals by Colorado's new governor and several members of the U.S. Congress. Attendees will vote on which team is most persuasive.

**Arguing for the motion:** - JoyAnn Ruscha - Policy Advisor, commentator & longtime advocate of student debt relief - Jack Kroll - CU Regent & Asst. Director of Admissions & graduate student in finance.

**Arguing against the motion:** - Jim Sengenberger - Political commentator, founder of the Millennial Policy Center & Denver radio personality on 710 KNUS - Dr. Paul Prentice - Sr. Fellow of the Independence Institute, Chief Macroeconomist in Reagan's Dept. of Agriculture.”

See and listen to the entire recorded debate on your computer: <https://youtu.be/fHjM3gHVJ98> ♦

Keep in touch. RSVP, keep up with all functions and activities on our Meetup page.

<https://www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists/>



### Art and Cultural Outing

Jefferson Humanists gathered for Art of the State 2019, a free art exhibit at the Arvada Center. This juried exhibition showcases the quality, depth, and diversity of Colorado artists. With over 1,555 entries from 566 artists in a call for entry that was open to all Colorado artists utilizing all media, jurors selected 154 pieces by 135 Colorado artists. If you didn't go January 20th, the exhibit runs until March 31st

See more info at <https://arvadacenter.org/art-of-the-state-2019> ♦



# Friday-Jefferson Humanists Movie Night



Please join us for the monthly JH Movie Night, where we'll be showing Snowden (rated R). Doors open at 6:45 and the movie starts right at 7:00. Popcorn, snacks, and drinks will be served for a small donation. You are welcome to bring a comfy chair.

Click here to see the official trailer:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QISAiI3xMh4>

Disillusioned with the intelligence community, top contractor Edward

Snowden (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) leaves his job at the National Security Agency. He now knows that a virtual mountain of data is being assembled to track all forms of digital communication -- not just from foreign governments and terrorist groups, but from ordinary Americans. When Snowden decides to leak this classified information, he becomes a traitor to some, a hero to others and a fugitive from the law. ♦

Friday, February 15, 2019

6:45 PM to 9:00 PM

### How to find us

We will be meeting in the Mills Building behind the main building on the east side.



### Food for Thought

<https://thehumanist.com/news/>



**Each day comes with small joys just waiting to be noticed.  
Every new beginning comes from some other beginnings end.**

## Humanist Heathen Happy Hour (4H) Colorado Plus Brew Pub in Wheat Ridge

Hosted by Tom Kellogg and David Smith

**When: Wednesday, February 20th  
from 6:00 – 8:00 PM**

**Where: 6995 W 38th Ave, Wheat Ridge, a  
few blocks east of Wadsworth on the  
north side of 38th.**

Colorado Plus Brew Pub and Tap House is a very nice place with 56 taps, a full bar and good food. We will be in a quiet corner so we can talk to each other. Their Wednesday wing special is 10 wings for \$10. Get there before 6:00 for Happy Hour specials.

The Jefferson Humanists welcome you to come join fellow 4H folks for drinks, dinner and unique conversations, every 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:00 PM. We'll try new places and go back to our favorites.

**D**ecember we went to Discovery Tap House in north Wheat Ridge. They bring in a rotating selection of unique craft beers. We brought in our own pizza and salad, and had a great dinner party.



**J**anuary, fourteen intrepid humanists went to Barrels and Bottles in downtown Golden. They offer a good selection of beers, wine and other beverages, along with a limited food menu. Drink and food orders are made at the counter, with food delivered to the tables. Food generally arrived slowly. The oversized 4-ft wide tables and bad acoustics made holding conversations difficult as people practically had to yell to be heard by their cohorts across the wide expanse. Furthermore, bench seating along the wall made moving around difficult. Nevertheless, we enjoyed whatever chats we had, and vowed to find better locations for future 4H get-togethers. ♦

### Early Humanist

**Born:** June 16, 1313, [Certaldo, Italy](#)

**Died:** December 21, 1375, [Certaldo, Italy](#)

**Parents:** [Boccaccino di Chellinod](#)

**Movies:** [The Decameron](#), [Wondrous Boccaccio](#), [The Little Hours](#).

Giovanni Boccaccio was an Italian writer, poet, correspondent of Petrarch, and an important Renaissance humanist. Boccaccio wrote a number of notable works, including *The Decameron* and *On Famous Women*.



The son of a merchant

Quotes by Giovanni Boccaccio

*“Nothing is so indecent that it cannot be said to another person if the proper words are used to convey it.”*

*“While farmers generally allow one rooster for ten hens,  
ten men are scarcely sufficient to service one woman.”*

## Humanists Denounce SCOTUS Decision to Allow Trans Military Ban



“If we fulfill our part of the bargain, they need to fulfill theirs.”

**Sarah Henry, (202) 238-9088, [shenry@americanhumanist.org](mailto:shenry@americanhumanist.org)**

*(Washington D.C., January 22, 2019)* – Leaders at the American Humanist Association (AHA) expressed their disappointment in today’s Supreme Court decision allowing the enforcement of the Trump administration’s ban on transgender military service members. “In America, everyone is entitled to fair treatment in the workplace, including the thousands of service members who identify as transgender,” says American Humanist Association Executive Director Roy Speckhardt. “This decision is a slap in the face to those bravely serving our country, their families, and anyone who values equal protection under the law as the US Constitution is supposed to guarantee.”

While the Court majority will allow the ban to go forward as lower courts address the case, Justices Ginsberg, Breyer, Sotomayor, and Kagan dissented.

“Today’s ruling is another example of bigotry and Christian nationalism overriding legal protections for all Americans,” says Tris Mamone, advisory board member of the LGBTQ Humanist Alliance. “The Trump administration has never been a friend to the LGBTQ community, and this policy is another example of that hostility. We at the American Humanist Association stand in solidarity with those, regardless of gender identity, who serve our country in the armed forces.” ♦