

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion ..."
The first words of the Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution

San Francisco Atheists

Fight against the unreasoning for equal rights

In early September of 2008, it became apparent to me and to many others that much of the financing for the YES on Prop. 8 Campaign was coming from right-wing Christian churches such as the Catholics, the Evangelicals, and most especially the Mormons. It occurred to me that the huge Mormon Temple in the Oakland hills stood as an iconic symbol of Mormon power, and would therefore be a great place for a protest demonstration. I picked the date of Sunday, October 26th, close to the November 4th, 2008 election.

Of course, the San Francisco Atheists and the East Bay Atheists were immediately on board with the idea. I also personally contacted the leadership of the NO on Prop 8 Campaign on Market Street when I went there to pick up some signs for the protest. I asked if they would use their extensive network to at least announce our planned protest. Their response was "No." Their reason was that they didn't want to do anything to offend the religious since many liberal churches were on their side.

The demonstration drew only about 50 to 60 participants because most people were confident--even though polls showed the race would be close--that liberal Californians would probably defeat the proposition. There was a much, much larger demonstration, drawing about 400 people, at the Mormon Temple after Prop 8 passed. I was able to contact and get much appreciated help from the Ex-Mormon organization and a few of the more radical gay and lesbian organizations.

Don "badass" Havis

[Click here](#) to see all photos from this event.

