



2021-22
FACULTY COLLOQUIUM SERIES

"Rural Coloradans Fight Back: Grand Junction's Resistance to Amendment 2"

Dr. Sarah Swedberg
Professor of History

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ESCALANTE HALL, ROOM 101, 12-1 PM

In 1992, 53% of Colorado voters approved Amendment 2, a ballot initiative that made protections for people of “homosexual, lesbian, or bisexual orientation” illegal. On election night, a group of Grand Junction residents began to organize resistance, holding the first meeting of the Common Decency Coalition (CDC) five days later. This presentation examines the activism and attitudes of Grand Junction residents who resisted hate and prejudice through normalizing actions. It relies on oral histories, CDC materials, and local coverage of the fight over Amendment 2.

About the speaker:

Sarah Swedberg is a professor of history at Colorado Mesa University and a scholar of the early American republic (the period immediately following the American Revolution). Her research has focused on medical history and particularly the history of mental illness. In 2020, she published her first book, *Liberty and Insanity in the Age of the American Revolution* in which she examined the ways Americans worried about irrationality in a time of great change. Today's presentation comes from a moment of kismet and is based on an ongoing oral history project about late 20th century Grand Junction.