

# FREEDOM FROM RELIGION *foundation*

P.O. BOX 750 · MADISON, WI 53701 · (608) 256-8900 · WWW.FFRF.ORG

## Everything You Need to Know About FFRFCon21

Dear FFRF Convention Registrant:

We're truly delighted you'll be attending the **44th Annual National Convention of the Freedom From Religion Foundation** on the weekend of **Friday, Nov. 19 – Sunday, Nov. 21, 2021, at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel**, 50 Park Plaza in Boston, Mass. We can't wait to be with you! Please take a moment to review the enclosed materials and pack as a reference (we'll also be sending you a copy via email for your convenience).

### COVID REGULATIONS

Atheists are the most vaccinated group in the nation ("In Science We Trust") — and the wonderful news is that **we have 100 percent full vaccination compliance** among all participants and speakers! (We hope you've gotten your flu vaccination, as well as your booster, if eligible.) As this is written in late October, Boston is still under indoor masking orders. *Please assume that will continue, and come masked.* FFRF will be giving away our custom masks, while they last, for your use as well. We've asked for extra chairs and dining tables, but full social distancing will not be possible with about 450–500 attendees and a convention planned before the delta variant. (There will be limited seating in the stage left balcony, which has an elevator.) When not eating or drinking at convention events, please keep your mask on, including when you're getting books signed by our wonderful speakers. It's a small inconvenience for peace of mind. *Thank you.*

### CONVENTION CHECK-IN/REGISTRATION

The tentative convention schedule is attached. The convention brochure will publish the *final* schedule. *Even though you are pre-registered*, you must check-in to pick up your name badge, any meal tickets and the convention brochure. Registration and all events will be held on the hotel's Mezzanine Level (2nd floor). Look for the tables marked "Pre-Registered." If you ordered meal tickets, they will be tucked inside your badge and collected prior to meals. (See more under Meals.)

**A security guard will check to ensure everyone is wearing name badges** in order to be admitted to all FFRF events, so keep those badges on!

### THURSDAY RECEPTION/EARLY CHECK-IN, NOV. 18, 7–9 PM

If you're in Boston Thursday night, come find us to register starting at 7 p.m., meet others, check out FFRF's book and product tables, and enjoy some complimentary appetizers and cash bar from 7–9 p.m. in Ballroom B on the Mezzanine Level (2nd Floor).

### GENERAL FFRF CONVENTION SCHEDULE

Registration reopens at 7:30 a.m. on Friday (with pastries, juice, coffee & tea served from 7:30 until 9 a.m.) and continues throughout the convention. We have two full days of fantastic speakers on Friday and Saturday, followed by the Sunday morning membership and State Representatives meetings.

Over, please

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Dan Barker and Annie Laurie Gaylor, *Co-Presidents*

The Friday program begins at 9 a.m. sharp ending by 8:30 p.m. followed by dessert reception and resumes Saturday at 8:00 a.m. (for those attending the Non-Prayer Breakfast), with the all-day program from 9:30 a.m. until 9:30 p.m. Check the convention schedule enclosed for full details.

The book and sales tables, run by FFRF's illustrious staff, open Thursday night and run through Saturday at 5 p.m., although books by Ann Druyan and Sasha Sagan will be available for the Saturday post-dinner program. **Don't miss the chance to win a \$100 pre-"In God We Trust" bill** (with many smaller bills also awarded!). Chances are only \$3 each, or 3 for \$5. Look for our volunteers at the round table in the ballroom. Purchase by 5 p.m. Saturday. The drawing is after Saturday dinner.

**One schedule change for Atwood:** Due to concerns about Covid, Margaret Atwood will not be autographing books in person after her talk, but will presign copies available for sale.

### CONVENTION MEALS & RECEPTIONS

If you've ordered meals (none may be ordered after Oct. 31) please place your meal ticket (found in your name badge) by your place setting during plated meals (the Saturday breakfast and dinner). Submit your ticket to FFRF staff for the Friday box lunch and Friday night buffet.

There are three restaurants in the hotel, which also offer take-out. (In the Commons is the only one open for Saturday lunch). Back Bay Boston neighborhood is home to a number of restaurants — the concierge is happy to help. Due to the pandemic, there is no hotel room service.

**Friday Lunch:** Pick up your box lunch, if ordered, outside the ballroom starting at noon. There is a 1-hour break before Andrew Seidel's workshop on Christian nationalism at the Jan. 6 insurrection at 1 p.m. and a short break after his talk before the 2 p.m. afternoon program.

**Friday Dinner:** A hearty buffet with cash bar will be served in Statler on Mezzanine Level from 5–7 p.m. (We'll provide dessert later — complimentary hot beverages and cupcakes at 8:30 p.m. following Margaret Atwood's talk.)

**Saturday NonPrayer Breakfast:** That's 8 a.m. sharp in Georgian ABC on Mezzanine Level. Come on time so you don't miss the famous "Moment of Bedlam" led by Co-President Dan Barker.

**Saturday Lunch Break:** On your own from noon–2 p.m. We will provide a sheet of nearby restaurants.

**Saturday Dinner:** 6 p.m. with cash bar starting at 5:45 p.m. in Georgian ABC. We return to the ballroom after dinner, so if you do not have meal tickets, you will not miss the drawing for "clean," pre-"In God We Trust" currency and our concluding Evening with Sasha Sagan and Ann Druyan.

**Bar:** We offer a cash bar at each evening meal, and there is a convenient bar in the hotel at lobby level.

**Coffee:** We know some of you worship at the altar of caffeine! We will offer complimentary hot beverages Friday and Saturday morning 9–10:30 a.m. For the rest of the time, there is a Starbucks conveniently located just outside the hotel lobby.

**Complimentary Continentals:** A light snack of pastries, hot beverages & juices will be offered

from 7:30–9 a.m. Friday and 8:30–10 a.m. Sunday morning. This is not intended as a complete breakfast and does not address all special dietary needs, so please plan ahead.

### **LISTENING DEVICES & CAPTIONING**

Listening devices for those with hearing impairments may be borrowed at no charge and are found near registration. We suggest sitting near the front of the room for best sound. We will also be providing captioning (appearing under video monitor) for *most* of the conference.

### **SUNDAY ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP & STATE BOARD MEETINGS**

FFRF members are invited to the annual membership meeting Sunday morning at 9 a.m., followed by the annual State Representatives meeting ending by noon in Statler. Hear reports, chapter leaders, discuss future conventions and vote. Light breakfast pastries, coffee and tea will be served at the start. (*State Representatives: Remember to request late checkout Sunday.*)

### **CONVENTION RECORDINGS POLICY — PLEASE READ**

**Individuals may not audio- or videotape any speeches.** Nonintrusive photos during most presentations are OK but we will announce any embargos on-site. FFRF audio- and videotapes speeches, *if permitted by speakers*, and posts them at [ffrf.org/convention-2021](http://ffrf.org/convention-2021). Transcripts of **convention speeches, as always, will be published** in future issues of Freethought Today. Look for FFRF photography coverage in our newspaper and online by Convention Photographer Ingrid Laas, and talented Staff Photographer/Attorney Chris Line.

### **MAY I BRING A LAST-MINUTE GUEST?**

No. Registration is closed.

### **PARKING & TRANSPORTATION TO & FROM AIRPORT**

If you are a hotel guest in FFRF's room block (not booked through a third party), the hotel will discount self-parking to \$30 per day at Motor Mart Garage, 201 Stuart Street, just a one minute walk from the hotel. Please check in at registration to receive your parking validation sticker if you qualify for discounted parking.

More information: [motormartgarage.com/parking/park-plaza-hotel/](http://motormartgarage.com/parking/park-plaza-hotel/).

Taxis: Routinely cost \$20–\$45 from the airport to the hotel + 10%–15% tip. GOBoston Shuttle is available for a fee.

**Subway from airport to Boston Park Plaza costs less than \$3:** Take the Blue Line from the airport to the Government Center stop, then take the Green Line to the Arlington stop, which is one block from the hotel. **Warning:** It requires a lot of stairs and escalators! Check out FFRF's own informational video about the subway at [ffrf.org/convention-2021](http://ffrf.org/convention-2021).

### **FFRF WELCOMES YOU**

We want you and all participants to feel comfortable, welcome and safe. If any problem should ever arise, let us know. Tell one of our staffers to contact the directors immediately if you have a problem or concern, and we'll do our best to help. See you soon!

Also enclosed: Boston Park Plaza Hotel Mezzanine Level floor plan, map, current schedule

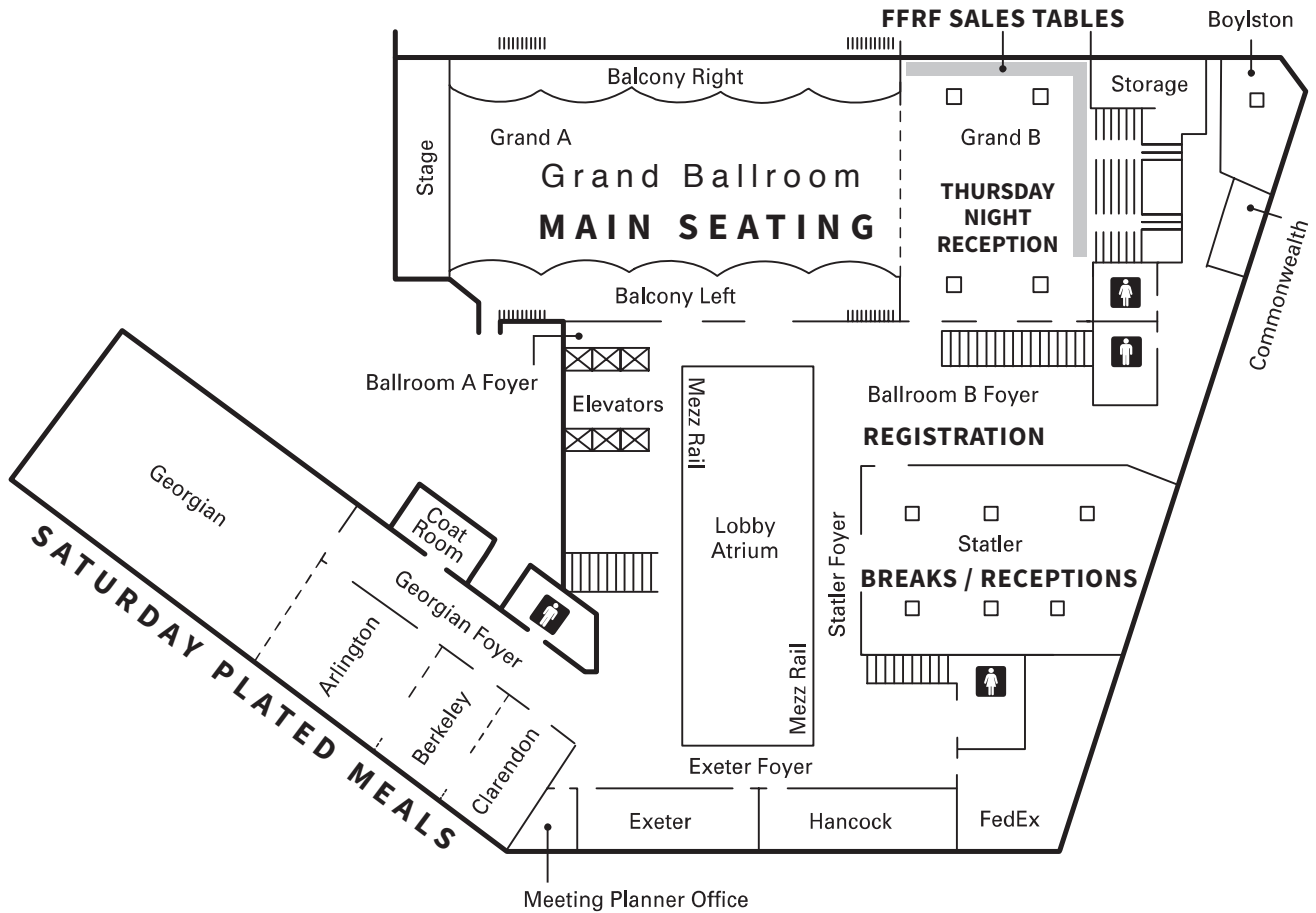
Convention information at our website is available: [ffrf.org/convention-2021](http://ffrf.org/convention-2021)

Live tweet using **#FFRFCon21**. Follow us @FFRF.

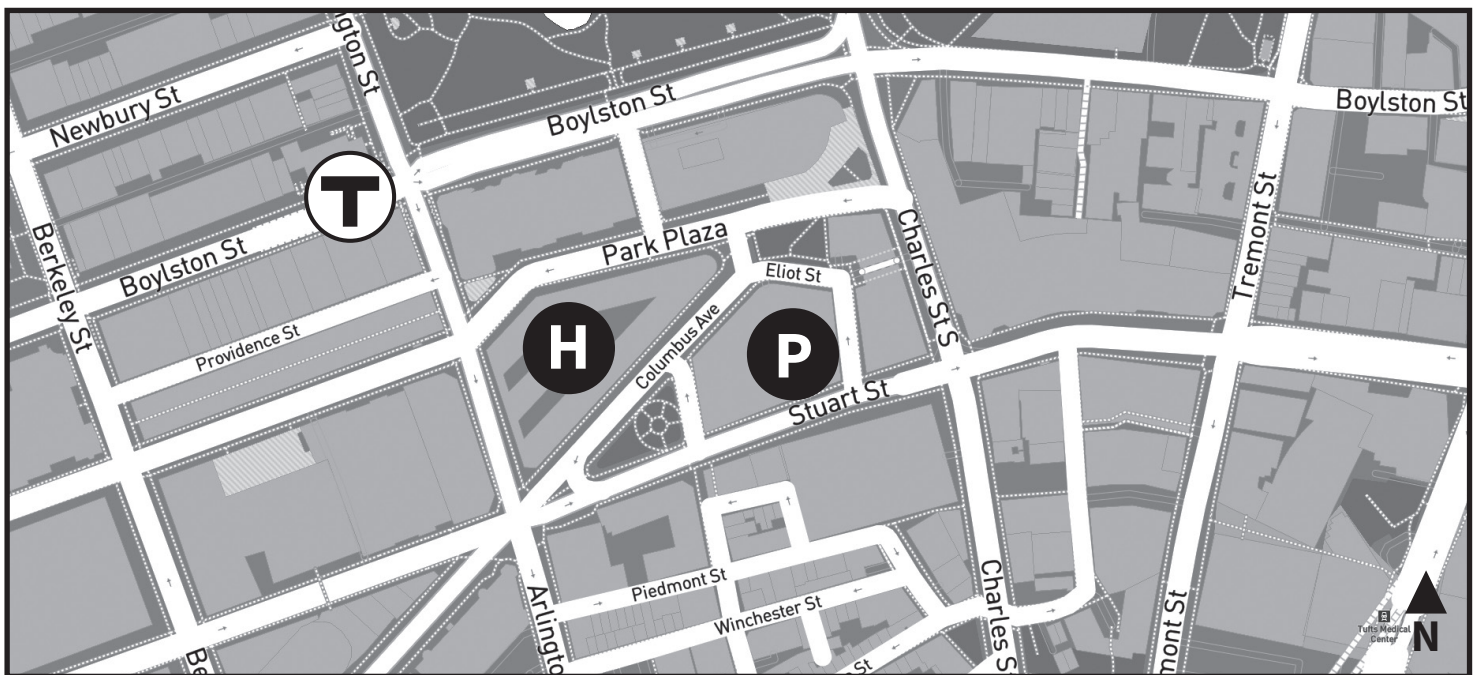
Over for maps

# BOSTON PARK PLAZA HOTEL

MEZZANINE LEVEL | SECOND FLOOR



## HOTEL AREA



**T** Arlington Station  
MBTA Green Line

**H** Boston Park Plaza Hotel  
50 Park Plaza

**P** Motor Mart Parking Garage  
201 Stuart Street

Subject to minor change  
Convention brochure schedule  
will have final details

# CONVENTION SCHEDULE

## THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18

**7:00–9:00 PM** Registration » *Ballroom B*

Book & sales tables open

Reception with appetizers, drinks

## FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19

**7:30–9:00 AM** Registration Re-opens  
» *Ballroom Foyer*

Remains open throughout convention  
Complimentary pastries, hot beverages, fruit juices

**8:00** Doors, sales tables re-open » *Ballroom A/B*

**9:00** Welcome

Lisa Strand, Director of Operations

**Year in Review**

FFRF Co-Presidents Dan Barker &  
Annie Laurie Gaylor

**Nothing Fails Like Prayer Award/  
Secular “Invocation”**  
Randa Black

**9:30** Legal Report by FFRF Attorneys  
Legal Director Rebecca Markert,  
Attorneys Sam Grover & Chris Line

**10:30** “Our Non-Christian Nation”  
Law Professor Jay Wexler

**11:00** Break

**11:15** “Rationality: What It Is, Why It Seems  
Scarce, Why It Matters”  
Steven Pinker

**Noon** Pinker/Wexler/Seidel book signings

**Noon–2:00 PM** Lunch Break » *Ballroom Foyer*  
Optional box lunches: Pick up noon to 1:30

**1:00** Workshop: Christian Nationalism on Jan. 6  
» *Ballroom A/B*

FFRF Director of Strategic Response Andrew Seidel

**1:45** Break

**2:00** Freethinkers of the Year » *Ballroom A/B*

Randall Cragun (with Robert Corker, Chris Nelson

& Heather Coleman Nelson), & David Williamson  
(with Keith Becher & Jeffery Koeberl)

**2:30** “The Power Worshipers: Inside the  
Dangerous Rise of Religious Nationalism”  
Katherine Stewart

**3:30** Stewart book signing

**3:30–4:00** Break » *Statler Room*  
Snacks, beverages

**4:00** Clarence Darrow Award » *Ballroom A/B*  
Linda Greenhouse

Greenhouse book signing

**5:00–7:00** Buffet Dinner » *Statler Room*  
(Ticketed event)

**7:00** Atheists Do Got Music  
Dan Barker

**7:30** An Evening with Margaret Atwood  
(In conversation with Katherine Stewart)

**8:30** Cupcakes & Hot Beverages Reception  
» *Ballroom Foyer*

**8:45** Atwood Reception » *Statler Room*  
(Ticketed event)

## SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20

**8:00 AM** Non-Prayer Breakfast » *Georgian ABC*  
(Ticketed event)

**9:30** Avijit Roy Courage Award » *Ballroom A/B*  
Sushant Singh (with Bonya Ahmed)

**10:00** “Living the Secular Life”  
Phil Zuckerman

**10:30** “Black Freethinkers”  
Chris Cameron

**11:00** Freethought Heroine Award  
Sikivu Hutchinson

**11:30** Henry Zuma Freedom From Religious  
Fundamentalism Award  
Megan Phelps-Roper

Noon Zuckerman/Cameron/Hutchinson/  
Phelps-Roper book signings

**Noon–2:00 PM** Lunch Break

Chapter Lunch » *Statler Room* (Ticketed event)

**2:00** Student Honorees » *Ballroom A/B*  
Galilea Baca, Everett Viega,  
Fadima Tall, Tylinn Wilson

**2:30** Hispanic American Freethinkers

David Tamayo, Founder

**3:00** Forward Award

Gloria Steinem  
(In conversation with Annie Laurie Gaylor)

**4:00** Break

**4:00–4:30** Steinem Reception » *Statler Room*  
(Ticketed event)

**4:15** “Ask an Attorney” Workshop » *Ballroom A/B*  
Moderated by Rebecca Markert with Sam Grover,  
Chris Line & Andrew Seidel

**5:00** Sales tables close

**5:45** Cash bar opens (90 minutes) » *Georgian ABC*  
**6:00** Saturday Night Dinner » *Georgian ABC*  
(Ticketed event)

**8:00** “Clean Money” Drawing » *Ballroom A/B*  
Moderated by Buzz Kemper

**8:30** Tribute Song, Dan Barker

**8:35** An Evening with Ann Druyan  
and Sasha Sagan

“For Small Creatures Such As We”

Sasha Sagan

Emperor Has No Clothes Award

Ann Druyan

Druyan/Sagan book signings

## SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21

**8:30 AM** Pastries, coffee served while they last  
» *Statler Room*

**9:00** Annual Membership Meeting » *Statler Room*  
Open to all current FFRF members

**11ish** Annual State Representatives Meeting  
Adjourn by noon