

Preface

Herein are the results of the Survey of organizations of Non-belief. From start to finish, this project has taken a little over three months, with more hours spent working on it than I could easily account for.

I started this project because of the paucity of evidence-based information available on the subjects of starting and maintaining a group focused on non-believers. And also, because I view the continuation and aggrandizement of such groups to be of highest importance.

I am not a statistician, and my knowledge of the application of statistics is limited. To complete the analysis of the data acquired through this survey, I had to re-learn and supplement the knowledge of statistical methods that I had gained in college some time ago. Some of those who read this report may be much more adept than I am in the art and science of statistical analysis. I hope they will not be too harsh in pointing out any errors.

Please, feel free to use the tables and graphs in the report, or the data set included at the end of the document to perform your own analysis and form your own conclusions/opinions. If you are comfortable, and have the tools, you may want to analyze relationships between data that I have not, or use more complicated methods of analysis. I only ask that if you do, that you will share any findings with the rest of us.

The greatest thing that any research can do is stimulate more research. As far as I can tell, there have been no previous studies of organizations of this type. When you consider that non-believers tend to prefer facts (or at least good evidence) when making decisions, then it really is amazing that more research has not been done. We really do need more information, not just about our groups, but about non-believers in general, and I wouldn't suggest sitting around and waiting for others (who may have biases against us) to tell us who we are.

You don't have to be a whiz at something to give it a try. Your level of success in any endeavor may never reach your ideal, but action (even if awkward) is preferable to stagnation or complacency. It's time we got the ball rolling, and found out a little more about our groups, and ourselves.

To everyone who contributed to this project most importantly- those who responded to the survey, **I THANK YOU.**

Introduction and methods

Survey forms were sent out via e-mail to the contact individuals listed for two-hundred and forty-two organizations across the country. These organizations were located through a variety of sources, including internet searches for such organizations, existing lists of organizations found on the internet, and reports from other parties that knew of their existence.

Fifty-four responses were received with completed or partially completed surveys. Four responses were received from individuals stating that the organizations were no longer in existence. Three responses were received from individuals stating that they declined to participate in the survey.

Analysis of the data was conducted using Microsoft Excel® with the “Analyse-it®” plug-in (available at <http://www.analyse-it.com/>). Correlation between data sets was measured using Spearman rank correlation.

Summary of Pertinent Findings/Recommendations

There is insufficient evidence to conclude that any type of group name (Atheist, Humanist, Freethinker, or Different) is more successful.

If between 17 and 33% of your groups members are active in the group, then rest assured that this is normal.

In general, groups tend to draw active members from within a 10-15 mile radius. Groups in more metropolitan area draw members from a smaller radius (@5 miles), groups in more rural areas, within a 30 mile radius. Groups should focus their attentions accordingly. There is also an association between the percent of active members and the size of the geographical area in which groups seek members. Where possible, groups should seek members outside of metropolitan areas, and not just focus on larger cities.

Advertising is important to the success of a group. Of advertising methods reported, the use of print media (newspapers, magazines, etc) seems to be the most beneficial in terms of membership. Groups should explore any forms of advertisement available, but print media should be used by all groups.

Groups tend to meet only once or twice per month, but there is an association between active membership and number of meetings per month. Where possible, groups should attempt to provide more opportunities for members to interact. More research should be done to determine how often groups should meet.

Charging a membership fee may adversely affect total membership, though it does seem that charging a fee may increase active membership. More research should be done to find out why.

Groups tend to have a social focus, and there is a stronger association between social and educational focus and active membership than between forms of activism and active membership. Groups should focus primarily on social and educational activities. Groups that focus primarily on social activities and have not previously focused on educational should seek educational opportunities to include for their members. More research should be done to determine specific types of social and educational activities to include.

The leaders of organizations are generally satisfied with their experience with having a group. Rating this on a scale of 1 to 10, most rate satisfaction above as 8 or higher.

If you don't read the whole report, please read the sections on "Best" and "Worst" experiences reported by respondents. These are quoted from the respondents' own words and start on page 55.

For Future Studies

All items covered in this survey should be studied further, with particular attention to advertising, group activities and focus, number of meetings per month, and membership fees.

Items not covered in this survey that should be researched in future studies:

The age of the groups (how long they have been in existence)

Monthly or annual funds received (through membership fees or other sources) and how those funds are used;

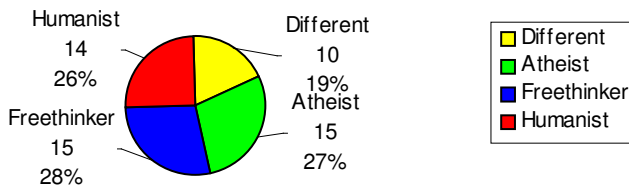
Specific types of activities that groups participate in (which are most successful?)

Demographics regarding members/active members.

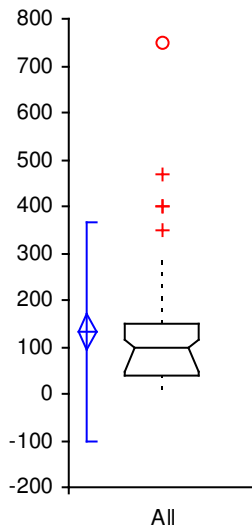
Groups should conduct surveys of their members to determine how to improve their function. Find out more from your members about such things as meetings per month, when to meet, where to meet, types of activities, and any inhibitors to active membership that may exist so that you can seek ways to work around them.

Basic Data for All Groups

Of the 54 groups responding 27% (n=15)¹ include “Atheist” in their title, 28% “Freethinker” or “Freethought” (n=15), and 26% “Humanist” (n=14). 19% of groups responding use none of these terms in their title. These groups use variations of such terms as: “Skeptic”, “Rationalist”, “Reason”, “Non-believer”, “Heretic”, “Critical Thinker”, or other terms (n=10)².



For all groups responding to the question regarding number of members (n=53), the median group size is 100 members, with 95% Confidence Interval (CI)³ for groups having 48-115 members⁴.



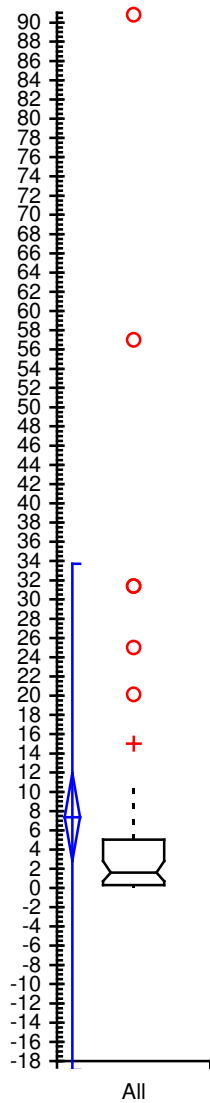
Members by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
All	53	131.038	141.5441	19.4426	92.023 to 170.052	100.000	112.000	48.000 to 115.000

¹ The “(n=)” refers to the size of the sample. Simply put, this is the number of groups that responded to the survey item.

² Due to insufficient numbers of respondents in any one of these categories (3 or fewer in each), these groups are placed together under the label “Different”.

³ Confidence Interval (CI) is a range that has a stated probability of containing the true value. In this report, a standard 95%CI is used, so that there is a 95% probability that the actual number described would be between the ranges given.

⁴ All measurements in this survey resulted in non-normal (uneven) distributions. Central tendencies (estimations of the averages), therefore are reported as median rather than mean scores. Mean scores are available within the charts.

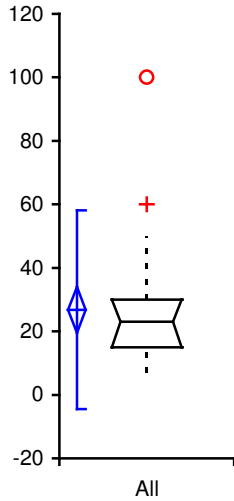


Area in Thousands of Square Miles by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
All	50	7.377	16.0087	2.2640	2.828 to 11.927	1.600	4.700	0.700 to 2.800

Groups responded to the question concerning geographical area of group. From this a value in square miles (listed in thousands of square miles on chart above) was calculated. Areas for each group were mapped by estimation. From this a radius of effect was drawn, and the area calculated as that of a circle.⁵ The median value for all groups is 1.6 thousand or 1600 square miles, with a 95% CI of 700 to 2800 square miles.

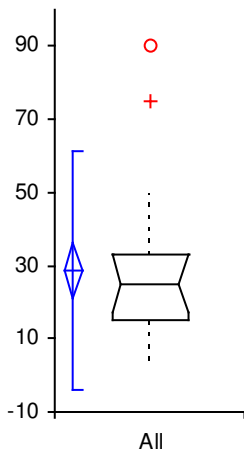
⁵ The specific data, including maps used to define the areas of effect for these calculations are not distributed with this survey. While this inhibits verification of the accuracy of this data, providing such information could easily constitute a breach of confidentiality.

For all groups responding to the follow-up question⁶ regarding “active members” (n=29) the median is 23, with 95%CI of 15 to 30 active members (chart below).



Active by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
All	29	26.793	19.0195	3.5318	19.558 to 34.028	23.000	15.000	15.000 to 30.000

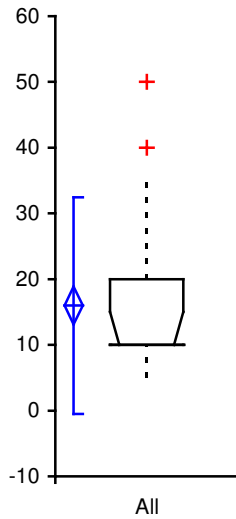
Regarding percentage of active members (n=29), the median is 25%, with a 95% CI of 17 to 33% of members actively participating.



%Active by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
All	29	28.586	19.9723	3.7088	20.989 to 36.183	25.000	18.000	17.000 to 33.000

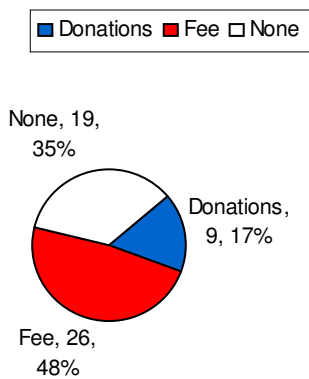
⁶ A request for additional information (number or percentage of active members) was sent to all 54 groups that had responded to the survey, 29 answered this request.

The median of average distance traveled by members to attend group functions is 10 miles, with 95% CI of 10 to 15 miles (n=49).



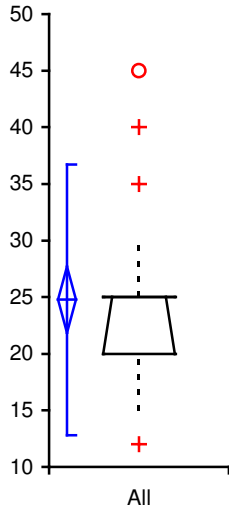
Distance by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
All	49	15.980	10.0156	1.4308	13.103 to 18.856	10.000	10.000	10.000 to 15.000

52% of all groups do not charge membership fees (n=28).⁷



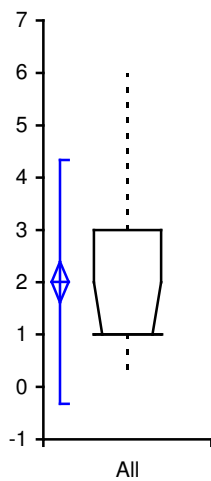
⁷ Combination of “None” and “Donations”

The median amount for those groups that do charge a fee (n=26) is \$25/year, 95% CI \$20 to \$25/year.



Fees/amount by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
All	26	24.769	7.2681	1.4254	21.834 to 27.705	25.000	5.000	20.000 to 25.000

On average, groups meet once per month (n=54), with 95%CI of 1-2 meetings per month. Some groups meet only every three months while others may have as many as six meetings per month. The few groups that have greater than two meetings per month tend to have a variety of different activities, and sometimes, different venues for those group activities.

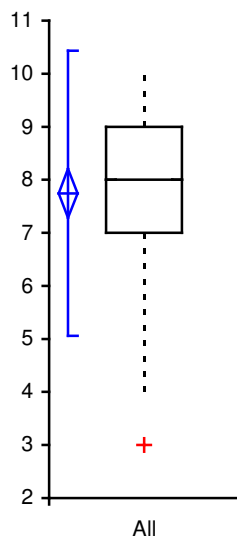


Meetings/month by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
All	54	2.006	1.4167	0.1928	1.619 to 2.393	1.000	2.000	1.000 to 2.000

Most respondents stated specific locations where they meet regularly, though some groups vary in meeting places for different types of activities. Venues listed for meeting places were: coffee shops, restaurants, public libraries, bookstores, rented meeting rooms, Unitarian Universalist churches, and member’s houses. Only two organizations indicated a building or facilities owned by the group.

Groups reported a variety of formats for meetings, including social gatherings; business meetings; specific activities such as movie nights, discussions, and lectures.

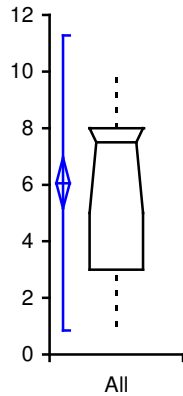
Respondents were asked to rate their over-all satisfaction with their group (with 1 being completely miserable and 10 being ecstatic). The median response to this question was “8”, with 95% CI of “8” being accurate itself (n=51).



Overall by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
All	51	7.745	1.6352	0.2290	7.285 to 8.205	8.000	2.000	8.000 to 8.000

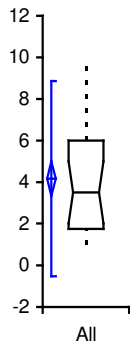
Respondents were asked to rate four other items on a 1-10 scale (where “1” was least important and “10” was most important). Respondents were asked to rate “Local Activism”, “National Activism”, “Education”, and “Social” as these pertained to their group. Three respondents did not respond to any of these scale items, forty-eight responded to all items, and three groups responded to all except “National Activism”.

For “Local Activism”, the median response was “7.5”, with 95% CI between “5” and “8” (n=50).



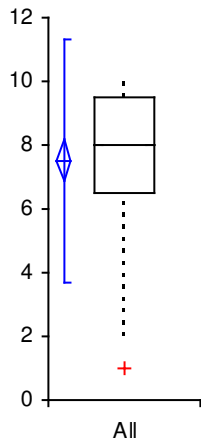
LocAct by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
All	50	6.060	3.1714	0.4485	5.159 to 6.961	7.500	5.000	5.000 to 8.000

For “National Activism”, the median response was “3.5”, with 95% CI between “2” and “5” (n=48).



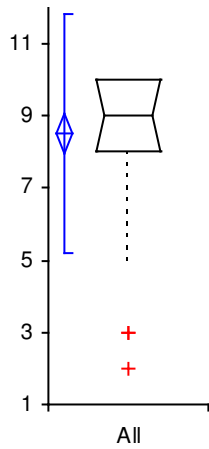
Nat Act by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
All	48	4.167	2.8534	0.4119	3.338 to 4.995	3.500	2.000	2.000 to 5.000

For “Education”, the median response was “8”, with 95%CI matching that median at “8” as well (n=51).



Education by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
All	51	7.510	2.3184	0.3246	6.858 to 8.162	8.000	3.000	8.000 to 8.000

For “Social”, the median response was “9”, with 95%CI of between “8” and “10” (n=50).



Social by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
All	50	8.520	2.0126	0.2846	7.948 to 9.092	9.000	2.000	8.000 to 10.000

The number of different advertising methods reported by groups was assessed, with a median of 3 different methods per group 95%CI of 2 to 3 different methods. The different methods were categorized as: web-site, print, word of mouth, public activities, fliers, newsletters, e-mail, radio, TV, mailings, affiliations, business cards, and “other” (n=50).⁸

Groups reported the following methods of advertisement:

- 61% web-site (n=33)⁹
- 54% print media (newspapers or magazines) (n=29)
- 30% word of mouth (n=16)
- 28% public activities (booths or tables at festivals or other public functions) (n=15)
- 24% fliers or posters (n=13)
- 17% newsletters (n=9)
- 17% e-mail (n=9)
- 11% radio (n=6)
- 9% other forms (bumper stickers, pens, t-shirts or similar items) (n=5)
- 7% TV (n=4)
- 6% mailings (postal mailings) (n=3)
- 4% affiliations (with larger local or national organizations) (n=2)
- 4% business cards (n=2)

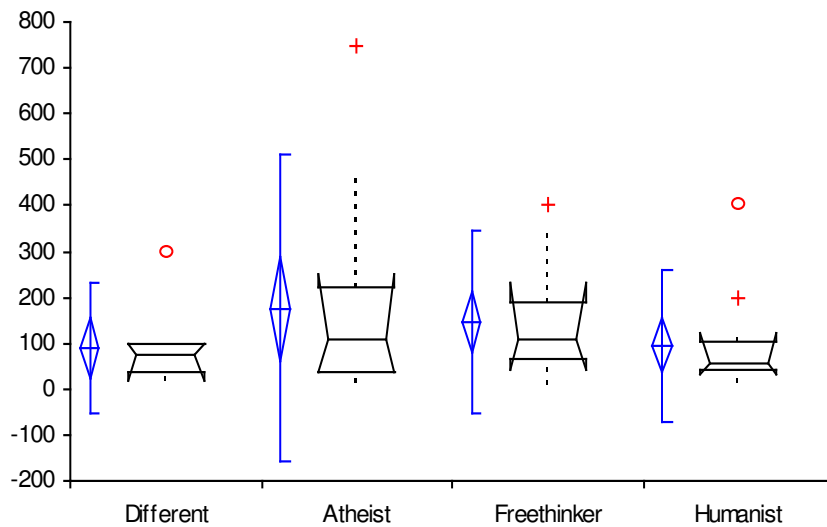
⁸ 7% of groups, (a total of four) reported no advertising used, however were they not advertised in some way (at least web-site or, or word of mouth) these groups could not have been included in the survey. Neither inclusion nor exclusion of these four groups effects the measures of median and CI.

⁹ Respondents were asked to list advertisement methods (if possible) in order of effectiveness. Not all groups specified ranking, however those groups that listed it usually listed web-site first.

Comparing data for types of groups: “Atheist”, “Freethinker”, “Humanist”, and “Different”.

Membership

For “Atheist” groups, the median number of members is 107. For “Freethinker” groups, the median is 110. For “Humanist” groups, the median number of members falls at 55. “Different” groups have a median number of members at 75.



Members by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Different	9	88.889	85.9061	28.6354	22.856 to 154.922	75.000	65.000	20.000 to 100.000
Atheist	15	174.600	203.1572	52.4550	62.095 to 287.105	107.000	184.500	35.000 to 250.000
Freethinker	15	146.067	121.7459	31.4347	78.646 to 213.487	110.000	125.000	40.000 to 230.000
Humanist	14	95.357	100.6797	26.9078	37.226 to 153.488	55.000	63.750	30.000 to 120.000

Although the median numbers of members for “Atheist”, “Freethinker”, and “Other than Freethinker” groups fall slightly above the median for *all* groups, these group medians are still within the 95%CI range for all groups (48 to 115). “Humanist”, “Different”, and “Other than atheist” groups, though falling below the median for all groups, are still within the 95%CI range as well.

From the data available, there is insufficient evidence to suggest on the basis of membership that any particular label for groups is more effective than any other label.¹⁰

¹⁰ The upper limit of the CI of the median for each of the groups “Atheist”, “Freethinker”, and “Humanist”, “Other than Humanist”, and “Other than Different” (250, 230, 120, 150, and 120 respectively) fall above the upper limit of the CI for “Different” groups (100). While it is *possible* that this may be an indication that groups other than the main three of “Atheist”, “Freethinker”, and “Humanist” are at some disadvantage in overall membership, it would be quite a stretch to assume this based on available data. The category

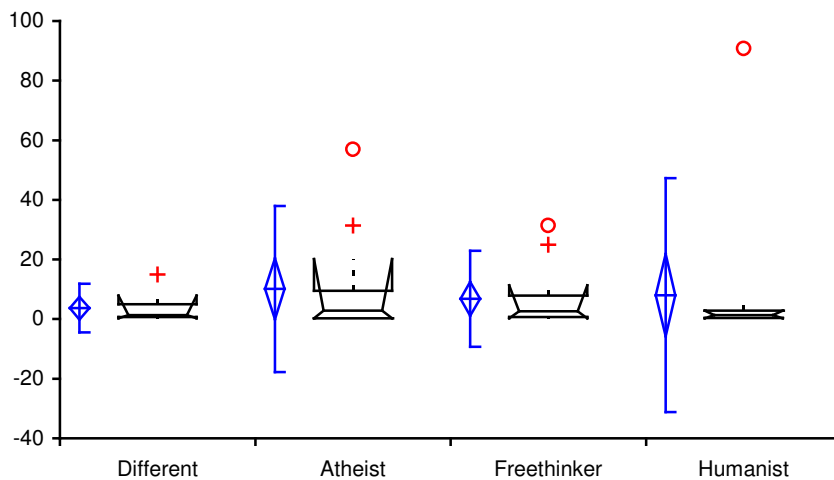
Area in Square Miles

“Atheist” groups cover a median of 1300 square miles per group with a 95% CI of 300 to 20,100square miles.

“Freethinker” groups cover a median of 2650 square miles per group with a 95% CI of 300 to 11,300 square miles.

“Different” groups cover a median of 1300 square miles per group with a 95% CI of 300 to 7900 square miles.

“Humanist” groups cover a median of 1300 square miles per group with a 95% CI of 300 to 7900 square miles.



Area in Thousands of Square Miles by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Different	9	3.678	4.9641	1.6547	-0.138 to 7.493	1.300	4.300	0.300 to 7.900
Atheist	13	10.128	16.9331	4.6964	-0.105 to 20.360	2.800	9.200	0.300 to 20.100
Freethinker	14	6.807	9.7694	2.6110	1.166 to 12.448	2.650	7.200	0.300 to 11.300
Humanist	14	8.029	23.8646	6.3781	-5.750 to 21.808	1.300	2.400	0.300 to 2.800

No groups fall below a 300 square mile area within the 95% confidence range¹¹.

“Atheist” groups tend to have the broadest area of coverage, with highest median and upper limit of CI, followed closely by “Freethinker” groups. The medians for “Different” and “Humanist” groups are the same, however, “Humanist” groups have the lowest upper limit of CI of all groups at 2800 square miles. “Humanist” groups seem to generally have a more concentrated area of focus. More on this later in the report.

“Different” is comprised of a variety of labels for which there was insufficient representation of each to independently classify them.

¹¹ That works out to about a 10 mile radius. A few campus groups limit themselves primarily to the campus community.

Active Members

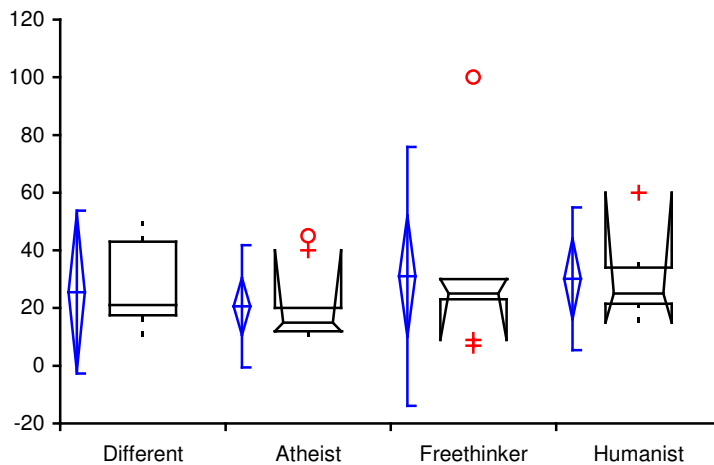
For all groups, the median for active members is about 23, with a 95%CI 15 to 30.

For “Atheist” groups 15, 95%CI 12 to 40 (n=9)

For “Freethinker” groups 25, 95%CI 9 to 30 (n=9)

For “Humanist” groups 25, 95%CI 15 to 60 (n=7)

For “Different” groups the median is 21, (n=4), and CI is the full range of data points.¹²



Active by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Different	4	25.500	17.1561	8.5781	-1.799 to 52.799	21.000	25.500	- to -
Atheist	9	20.556	12.8852	4.2951	10.651 to 30.460	15.000	8.000	12.000 to 40.000
Freethinker	9	31.000	27.2947	9.0982	10.019 to 51.981	25.000	7.000	9.000 to 30.000
Humanist	7	30.143	15.0713	5.6964	16.204 to 44.081	25.000	12.500	15.000 to 60.000

While “Freethinker” and “Humanist” groups have higher medians than “Atheist” groups, the median for atheist groups still falls within the CI of the other two, though at the lower limit of the CI for “Humanist” groups. The upper limit of the CI for Atheist groups however is well within the range for both “Humanist” groups, and above the CI for “Freethinker”. For this reason the data is insufficient to conclude that on the basis of active membership any group type is more effective than the others.¹³

Ranking (excluding “Different”) in descending order: “Humanist”, “Freethinker” and “Atheist”.

¹² The group “Different”, due to small sample size (n<5) is excluded from comparisons.

¹³ Statistically, no conclusion can be made that one group type has more active members than the others, however, the low median number exhibited by “Atheist” groups in relation to other groups (particularly “Humanist” groups, with the median barely reaching the lower limit of CI) suggests some possible inferiority in the “Atheist” groups. This is expounded upon later in the report.

Percent Active

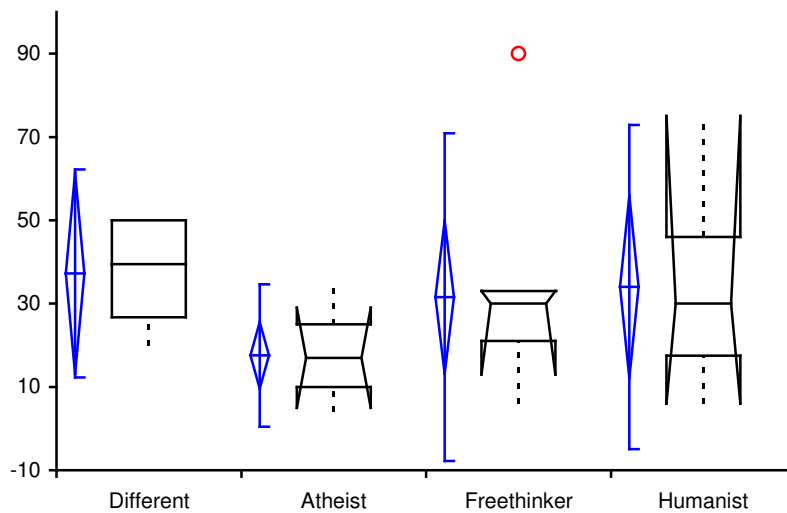
Regarding percentage of active members (n=29), the median is 25%, with a 95% CI of 17 to 33% of members actively participating.

For “Atheist” groups 17%, 95%CI 5 to 29% (n=9)

For “Freethinker” groups 30%, 95%CI 13 to 33% (n=9)

For “Humanist” groups 30%, 95%CI 6 to 75% (n=7)

For “Different” groups the median is 39.5% (n=4) and CI is the full range of data points.¹⁴



%active by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Different	4	37.250	15.1740	7.5870	13.105 to 61.395	39.500	23.250	- to -
Atheist	9	17.556	10.3936	3.4645	9.566 to 25.545	17.000	15.000	5.000 to 29.000
Freethinker	9	31.556	23.9171	7.9724	13.171 to 49.940	30.000	12.000	13.000 to 33.000
Humanist	7	34.000	23.6573	8.9416	12.121 to 55.879	30.000	28.500	6.000 to 75.000

While “Freethinker” and “Humanist” groups have higher medians than “Atheist” groups, the median for “Atheist” groups still falls within the CI of the other two, though near the lower limit of the CI for “Freethinker” groups. The upper limit of the CI for “Atheist” groups however is well within the range for both “Freethinker” and “Humanist” groups. For this reason the data is insufficient to conclude that on the basis of percentage of active membership any group type is more effective than are others.¹⁵

Ranking Excluding “Different” in descending order: “Humanist”, “Freethinker”, and “Atheist”.

¹⁴ The group “Different”, due to small sample size (n<5) is excluded from comparisons.

¹⁵ Percentage of active membership as previously stated is a *dependent* variable, (dependent on *total number of members* and *number of active members*) and cannot be easily used in comparisons between other groups. The lower median percentage of active members, however does seem to be worth further consideration, and is examined later in this report.

Average Distance Traveled

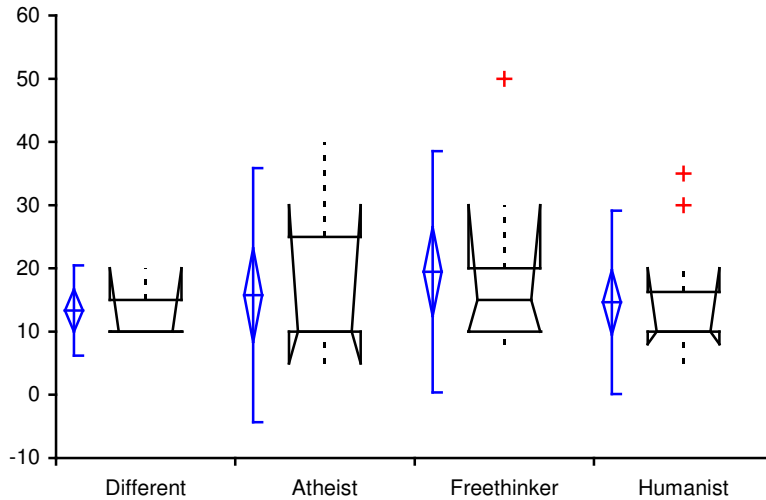
The median of average distance traveled by members to attend group functions is 10 miles, with 95% CI of 10 to 15 miles (n=49).

For “Atheist” groups 10, 95%CI 5 to 30 (n=13)

For “Freethinker” groups 15, 95%CI 10 to 30 (n=13)

For “Humanist” groups 10, 95%CI 8 to 20 (n=14)

For “Different” groups the median is 10, 95%CI 10 to 20 (n=9).



Distance by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Different	9	13.333	4.3301	1.4434	10.005 to 16.662	10.000	5.000	10.000 to 20.000
Atheist	13	15.769	12.2213	3.3896	8.384 to 23.154	10.000	15.000	5.000 to 30.000
Freethinker	13	19.462	11.6018	3.2178	12.451 to 26.472	15.000	10.000	10.000 to 30.000
Humanist	14	14.643	8.8196	2.3571	9.551 to 19.735	10.000	6.250	8.000 to 20.000

Although the median for “Freethinker” groups is slightly higher than that of other groups, it is still within the CI’s of other groups, though at the upper limit of CI for All groups.

Also of note is that the upper limit of CI’s for “Humanist” and “Different” groups.

These points alone, however, do not indicate that one or more type groups elicit active members from farther away.¹⁶

¹⁶ There may be other factors relating to the disparity between upper-limits of the CI for “Humanist” and “Different” groups. This is expounded upon later in the report.

Meetings per Month

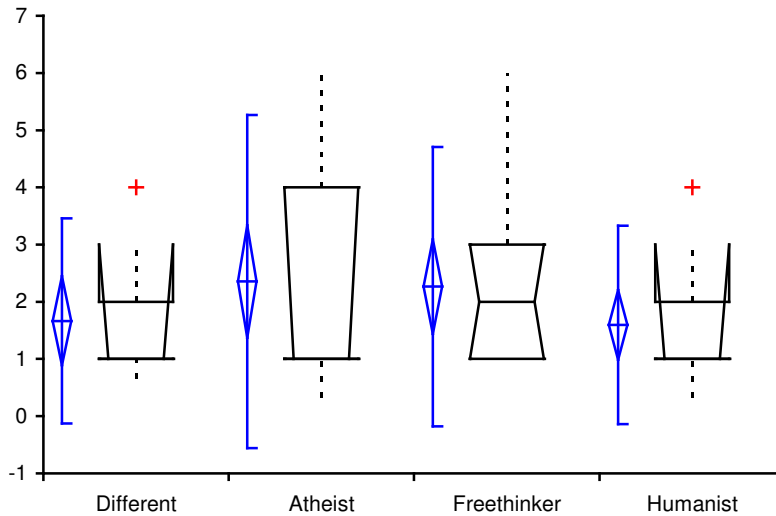
The median for group meetings for all groups is once per month (n=54), with 95%CI of 1 to 2 meetings per month.

For “Atheist” groups 1, 95%CI 1 to 4 (n=15)

For “Freethinker” groups 2, 95%CI 1 to 3 (n=15)

For “Humanist” groups 1, 95%CI 1 to 3 (n=14)

For “Different” groups the median is 1, 95%CI 1 to 3 (n=10).



Meetings/month by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Different	10	1.666	1.0893	0.3445	0.887 to 2.445	1.000	1.000	1.000 to 3.000
Atheist	15	2.355	1.7707	0.4572	1.375 to 3.336	1.000	3.000	1.000 to 4.000
Freethinker	15	2.267	1.4864	0.3838	1.444 to 3.090	2.000	2.000	1.000 to 3.000
Humanist	14	1.595	1.0558	0.2822	0.985 to 2.205	1.000	1.000	1.000 to 3.000

For “Freethinker” groups, the median is higher, though the CI is comparable to other groups. For “Atheist” groups the upper limit of CI is higher, though the median is not. While the CI is more likely to be affected by outliers (one or a few with values farther outside the ‘normal’ range), the median should not fluctuate as readily. The variable of “meetings per month” however, is trivial, and needs comparison with other variables to be of any use. More on this later in the report.

Fees

Although 52% of all groups do not charge membership fees (n=28), median fee amount for those who do (n=26) is \$25/year, 95% CI \$20 to \$25/year.

For “Atheist” groups 66% do not charge a fee (n=12)¹⁷. 33% charge a fee (n=5).

Of atheist groups that charge a fee, the median fee is \$24 per year, with a 95%CI of \$20 to \$25 per year.

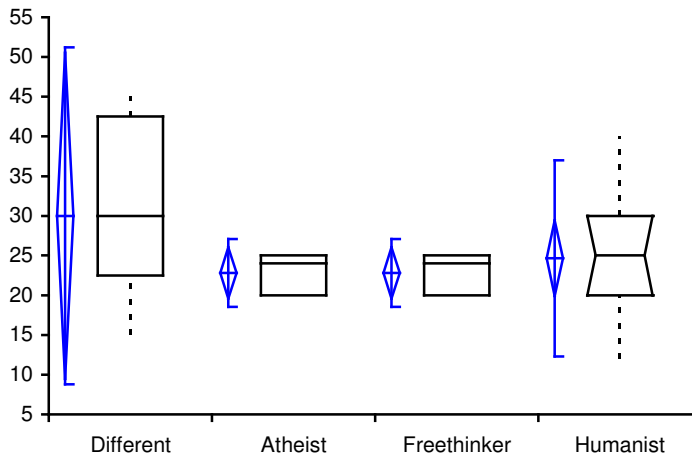
For “Freethinker” groups 66% do not charge a fee (n=12)¹⁸. 33% charge a fee (n=5).

Of atheist groups that charge a fee, the median fee is \$24 per year, with a 95%CI of \$20 to \$25 per year.

For “Humanist” 14% do not charge a fee (n=2). 86% charge a fee (n=12).

Of “Humanist” groups that charge a fee, the median fee is \$25 per year, with a 95%CI of \$20 to \$30 per year.¹⁹

For “Different” groups 60% do not charge a fee (n=6). 40% charge a fee (n=4).



Of “Different” groups that charge a fee, the median fee is \$30 per year²⁰

Fees/amount by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Different	4	30.000	12.9099	6.4550	9.457 to 50.543	30.000	20.000	- to -
Atheist	5	22.800	2.5884	1.1576	19.586 to 26.014	24.000	5.000	- to -
Freethinker	5	22.800	2.5884	1.1576	19.586 to 26.014	24.000	5.000	- to -
Humanist	12	24.667	7.4995	2.1649	19.902 to 29.432	25.000	10.000	20.000 to 30.000

The greatest significance from the data discovered through this comparison, is that the majority of “Humanist” groups charge a membership fee. There may be a relationship between this (charging a fee), and lower overall membership.²¹

¹⁷ 17% (n=2) of “Atheist” groups that do not charge a fee stated that they do accept donations.

¹⁸ 17% (n=2) of “Atheist” groups that do not charge a fee stated that they do accept donations.

¹⁹ Even for those (2) groups that did not report fees, one of the “Humanist” groups reported accepting donations.

²⁰ 67%(n=4) of “Different” groups that do not charge a fee stated that they do accept donations.

²¹ If there is a negative relationship between fee and overall membership, there may also be a relationship between fee and percent active membership. More on this later in the report. ←I just keep teasing, I know.

Overall Satisfaction

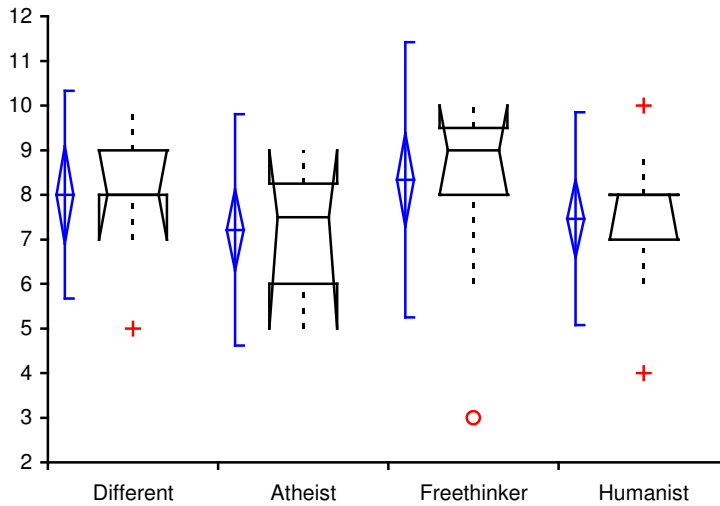
Respondents were asked to rate their over-all satisfaction with their group (with 1 being completely miserable and 10 being ecstatic). The median response to this question was “8”, with 95% CI of “8” being accurate itself (n=51).

For “Atheist” groups median 7.5, 95%CI 5 to 9 (n=14)

For “Freethinker” groups median 9, 95%CI 8 to 10 (n=15)

For “Humanist” groups median 8, 95%CI 7 to 8 (n=13)

For “Different” groups the median is 8, 95%CI 7 to 9 (n=9).



Overall by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Different	9	8.000	1.4142	0.4714	6.913 to 9.087	8.000	1.000	7.000 to 9.000
Atheist	14	7.214	1.5777	0.4216	6.303 to 8.125	7.500	2.250	5.000 to 9.000
Freethinker	15	8.333	1.8772	0.4847	7.294 to 9.373	9.000	1.500	8.000 to 10.000
Humanist	13	7.462	1.4500	0.4022	6.585 to 8.338	8.000	1.000	7.000 to 8.000

“Atheist” groups median ranks lowest. CI upper limit falls above “humanist” upper limit, at the upper margin of “Different” upper limit, and within that of “Freethinker”

“Freethinker” groups’ median ranks highest, with CI upper limit above all others, and Lower limit above “Humanist”.

“Humanist” median is above “Atheist”, below “Freethinker”, and equal to “Different”, with CI upper limit falling below lower limit of “Freethinker”, and within the other two CI’s.

“Different” groups median rank above “Atheist”, below “Freethinker”, and equal to “Humanist” groups median, with CI upper limit passing above “Humanist” upper limit. So....

Ranking in descending order of reported satisfaction: “Freethinker”, “Different”, “Humanist”, and “Atheist”.

Does this mean anything? Possibly...
Once again, more on this later in the report.

Scale Items Comparison by Group Type

Respondents were asked to rate, according to the importance to their groups, four items on a 1-10 scale (where “1” was least important and “10” was most important). The items are “Local Activism”, “National Activism”, “Education”, and “Social”.

Local Activism

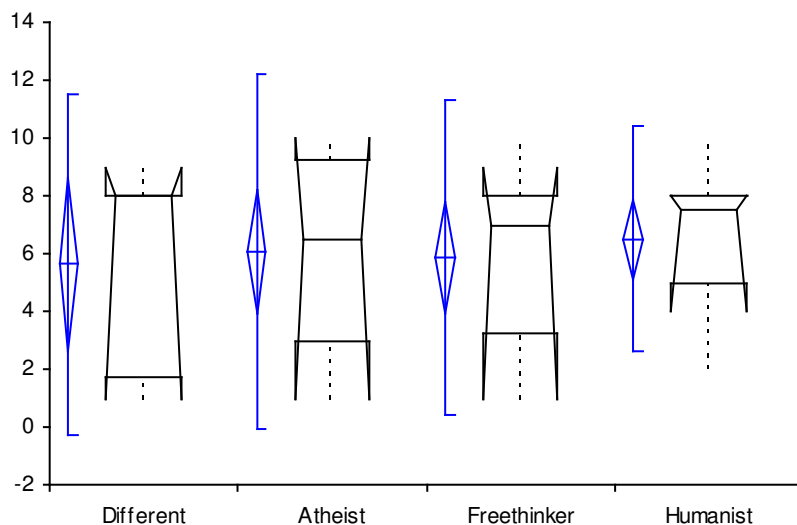
For “Local Activism”, the median response for all groups was “7.5”, with 95% CI between “5” and “8” (n=50).

For “Atheist” groups median 6.5, 95%CI 1 to 10 (n=14)

For “Freethinker” groups median 7, 95%CI 1 to 9 (n=14)

For “Humanist” groups median 7.5, 95%CI 4 to 8 (n=14)

For “Different” groups the median is 8, 95%CI 1 to 9 (n=8).



LocAct by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Different	8	5.625	3.5832	1.2669	2.629 to 8.621	8.000	6.250	1.000 to 9.000
Atheist	14	6.071	3.7306	0.9971	3.917 to 8.225	6.500	6.250	1.000 to 10.000
Freethinker	14	5.857	3.3249	0.8886	3.937 to 7.777	7.000	4.750	1.000 to 9.000
Humanist	14	6.500	2.3778	0.6355	5.127 to 7.873	7.500	3.000	4.000 to 8.000

“Atheist” groups median falls lowest at 6.5, and “Different” groups falls highest at 8, followed by

Ranking in descending order of reported satisfaction: “Freethinker”, “Different”, “Humanist”, and “Atheist”.

National Activism

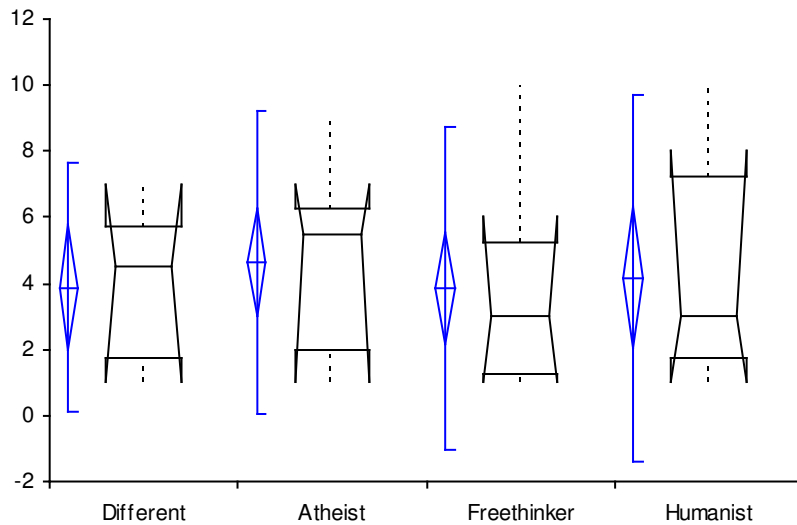
For “National Activism”, the median response for all groups was “3.5”, with 95% CI between “2” and “5” (n=48).

For “Atheist” groups, the median 5.5, 95%CI 1 to 7 (n=14)

For “Freethinker” groups median 3, 95%CI 1 to 6 (n=14)

For “Humanist” groups median 3.5, 95%CI 1 to 8 (n=12)

For “Different” groups the median is 4.5, 95%CI 1 to 7 (n=8).



Nat Act by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Different	8	3.875	2.2952	0.8115	1.956 to 5.794	4.500	4.000	1.000 to 7.000
Atheist	14	4.643	2.7903	0.7457	3.032 to 6.254	5.500	4.250	1.000 to 7.000
Freethinker	14	3.857	2.9576	0.7904	2.149 to 5.565	3.000	4.000	1.000 to 6.000
Humanist	12	4.167	3.3800	0.9757	2.019 to 6.314	3.000	5.500	1.000 to 8.000

“Atheist” groups median falls highest at 5.5, and “Different” groups falls next highest at 4.5, followed by “Humanist” groups, and “Freethinker”.

Of not, the “Humanist” groups though having median below “Atheist” and “Different” has the highest upper limit for CI, which makes ranking for this group in this section a bit more ambiguous. “Freethinker” groups, however rank lowest by median and CI.

Education

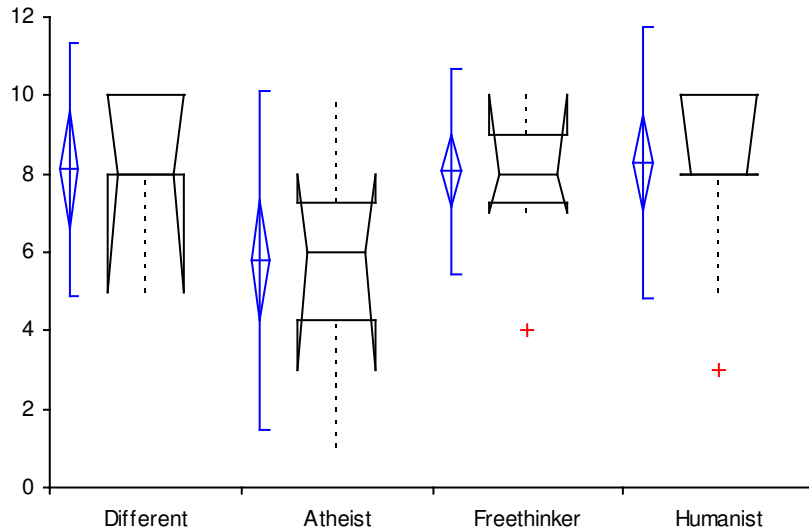
For “Education”, the median response was “8”, with 95%CI matching that median at “8” as well (n=51).

For “Atheist” groups the median was 6, 95%CI 3 to 8 (n=14)

For “Freethinker” groups median 8, 95%CI 7 to 10 (n=14)

For “Humanist” groups median 8, 95%CI 8 to 10 (n=14)

For “Different” groups the median is 8, 95%CI 5 to 10 (n=9).



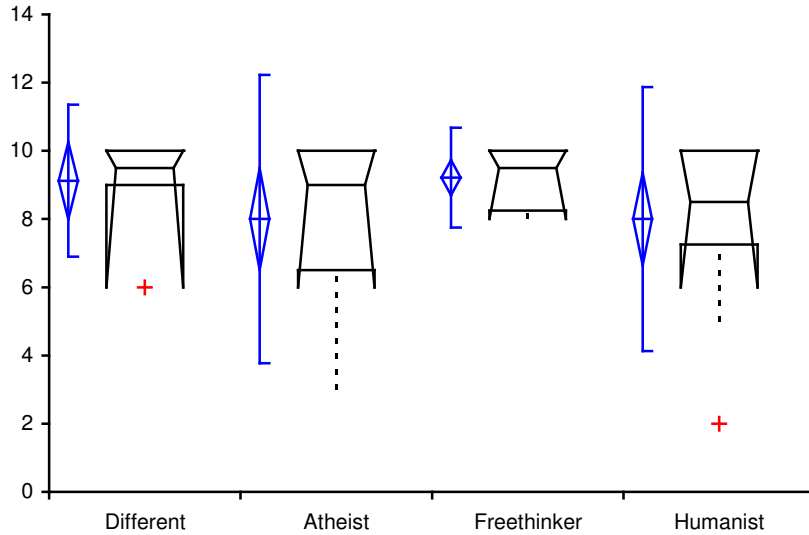
Education by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Different	9	8.111	1.9650	0.6550	6.601 to 9.622	8.000	2.000	5.000 to 10.000
Atheist	14	5.786	2.6364	0.7046	4.264 to 7.308	6.000	3.000	3.000 to 8.000
Freethinker	14	8.071	1.5915	0.4254	7.153 to 8.990	8.000	1.750	7.000 to 10.000
Humanist	14	8.286	2.0913	0.5589	7.078 to 9.493	8.000	2.000	8.000 to 10.000

“Atheist” groups median falls lowest at 6, also with the lowest range for CI, with upper limit for CI falling at the lower end of CI for “Humanist” groups and near the lower limit of CI for “Freethinker” groups.

Ranking in descending order of importance of Education: “Humanist”, “Freethinker”, “Different”, and “Atheist”.

Social

For “Social”, the median response was 9, with 95%CI of between 8 and 10 (n=50).
 For “Atheist” groups the median was 9, 95%CI 6 to 10 (n=14)
 For “Freethinker” groups median 9.5, 95%CI 8 to 10 (n=14)
 For “Humanist” groups median 8.5, 95%CI 6 to 10 (n=14)
 For “Different” groups the median is 9.5, 95%CI 6 to 10 (n=9).



Social by Type of Group	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Different	8	9.125	1.3562	0.4795	7.991 to 10.259	9.500	1.000	6.000 to 10.000
Atheist	14	8.000	2.5720	0.6874	6.515 to 9.485	9.000	3.500	6.000 to 10.000
Freethinker	14	9.214	0.8926	0.2386	8.699 to 9.730	9.500	1.750	8.000 to 10.000
Humanist	14	8.000	2.3534	0.6290	6.641 to 9.359	8.500	2.750	6.000 to 10.000

“Humanist” groups median falls lowest at 8.5, but with CI equal to all other groups save “Freethinker”. “Freethinker”, and “Different” groups have the highest medians at 9.5 with CI for “Freethinker” groups showing the highest lower limit at 8 to 10.

Ranking in descending order of importance of Social: “Freethinker”, “Different”, “Atheist” and “Humanist”.

Advertising by Type of Group

“Atheist” groups use of advertising: Web-Site 60%, Print 40%, Word of Mouth 47%, Public Act 33%, Fliers 27%, Newsletter 7%, E-Mail 7%, Radio 13%, Other 20%, TV 13%, Mailings 0%, Affiliations 0%, Business Cards 13%. Median number of types of advertising 3, 95%CI 2 to 4

“Freethinker” groups use of advertising Web-Site 60%, Print 67%, Word of Mouth 33%, Public Act 27%, Fliers 20%, Newsletter 20%, E-Mail 13%, Radio 13%, Other 0%, TV 7%, Mailings 7%, Affiliations 0%, Business Cards 0%. Median number of types of advertising 3, 95%CI 2 to 3

“Humanist” groups use of advertising Web-Site 64%, Print 57%, Word of Mouth 14%, Public Act 29%, Fliers 29%, Newsletter 29%, E-Mail 21%, Radio 7%, Other 14%, TV 0%, Mailings 14%, Affiliations 14%, Business Cards 0%. Median number of types of advertising 3, 95%CI 2 to 4

“Different” groups use of advertising Web-Site 60%, Print 20%, Word of Mouth 20%, Public Act 20%, Fliers 20%, Newsletter 10%, E-Mail 30%, Radio 10%, Other 0%, TV 10%, Mailings 0%, Affiliations 0%, Business Cards 0%. Median number of types of advertising 2, 95%CI 1 to 3

“Atheist” groups rank higher than all other groups in their use of “Word of Mouth”, “Public Activities”, “Other”, “TV”, and “Business Cards” for advertising. “Atheist” groups rank lower than all other groups in the use of “Print”, “Newsletter”, and “E-mail”.

“Freethinker” groups rank higher than all other groups in the use of “Print” media for advertising. “Freethinker groups” do not rank lower than all other groups in the use of any type of advertising.

“Humanist” groups rank higher than all other groups in their use of “Web-site”, “Fliers”, “Newsletter”, “Mailings”, and “Affiliations”. “Humanist” groups rank lower than all other groups in the use of “Word of Mouth”, “Radio”, and “TV”

“Different” groups rank higher than all other groups in their use of “E-mail” for advertising purposes. “Different” groups rank lower than all other groups in the use of “Public Activities”, and in median number of different types of advertising.

The much awaited “Later in the report”

“Freethinker”

“Freethinker ” groups ranked highest in overall membership, average distance traveled by members to attend functions, number of meetings per month, overall satisfaction, ranking social activities as important to the group, and in use of print media for advertising

“Freethinker” groups ranked lowest on National activism for importance to their group.

“Humanist”

“Humanist” groups ranked highest in number of active members, percent active members²², charging of membership fees, educational activities as being important in group activities, and use of: “Web-site”, “Fliers”, “Newsletter”, “Mailings”, and “Affiliations” for advertisement.

“Humanist” groups ranked lowest in Area in Square miles, overall membership, average distance traveled to attend meetings, ranking of the importance of social activities to the group, and use of: “Word of Mouth” and “Radio” in advertising.

“Different”

“Different” groups ranked highest in the importance of local activism in group activities, and in the use of E-mail for advertisement.

“Different” groups ranked lowest in the use of public activities for advertisement and in number of types of advertisement.

“Atheist”

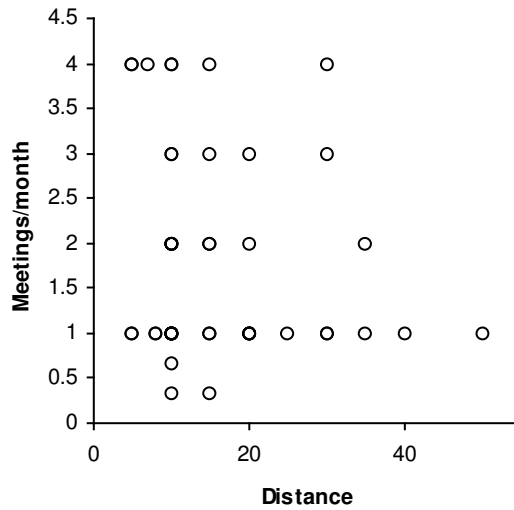
“Atheist” groups ranked highest in Are in Square miles, the use of “Word of Mouth”, “Public Activities”, TV, Business Cards, and “Other” forms of advertising.

“Atheist” groups ranked lowest in overall satisfaction, reporting of local activism and of educational activities as important for group activities, the use of Print media, newsletters, and email for advertising.

²² Excluding “Different” groups due to insufficient sample size (n<5).

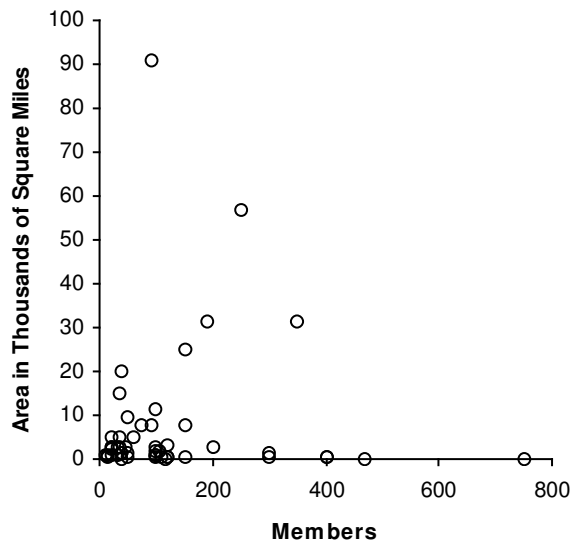
Correlation and Comparisons

Average distance traveled and number of meetings per month, (No correlation)



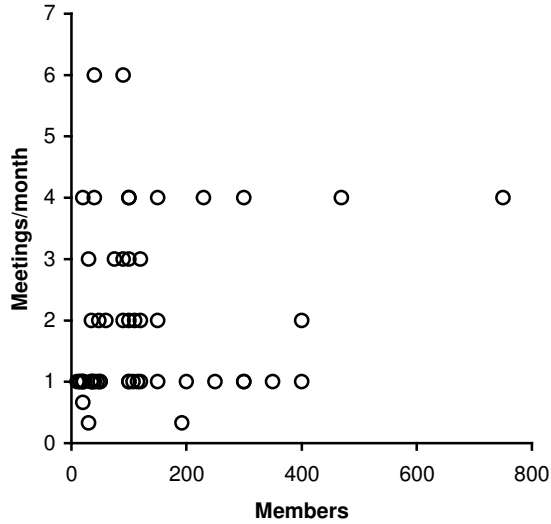
n	49 (cases excluded: 5 due to missing values)
rs statistic	-0.12
95% CI	-0.39 to 0.17
2-tailed p	0.4128 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Membership and Area in Square miles



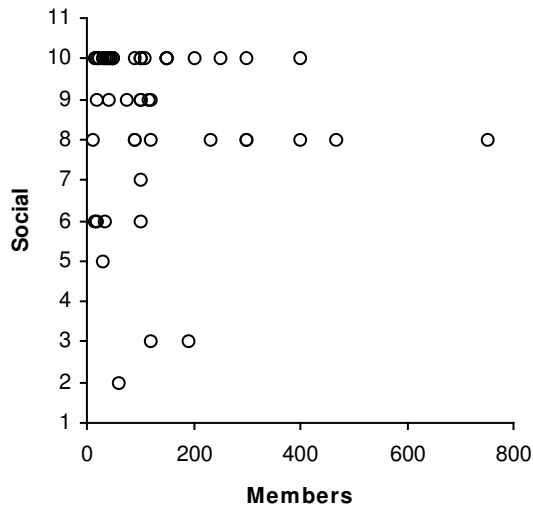
n	50 (cases excluded: 4 due to missing values)
rs statistic	-0.13
95% CI	-0.40 to 0.15
2-tailed p	0.3554 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Membership and number of meetings per month (No correlation)



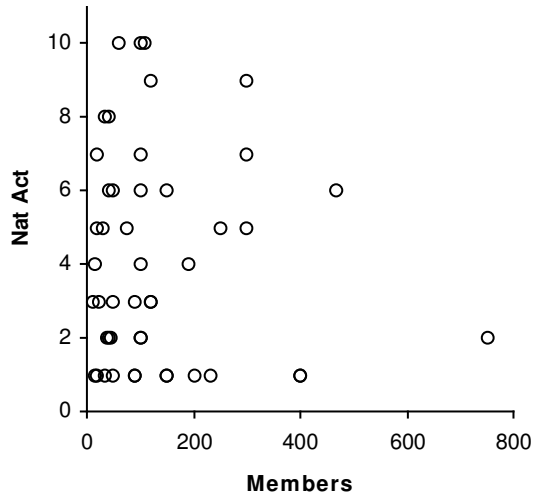
n	53 (cases excluded: 1 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.20
95% CI	-0.08 to 0.44
2-tailed p	0.1568 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Membership and Social (No correlation)



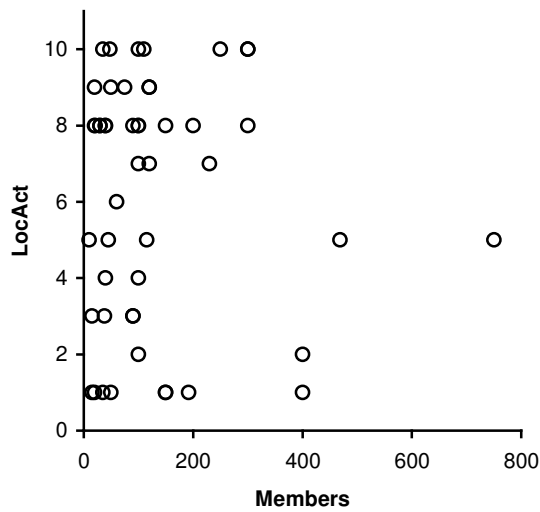
n	49 (cases excluded: 5 due to missing values)
rs statistic	-0.07
95% CI	-0.34 to 0.21
2-tailed p	0.6305 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Membership and National Activism, (No Correlation)



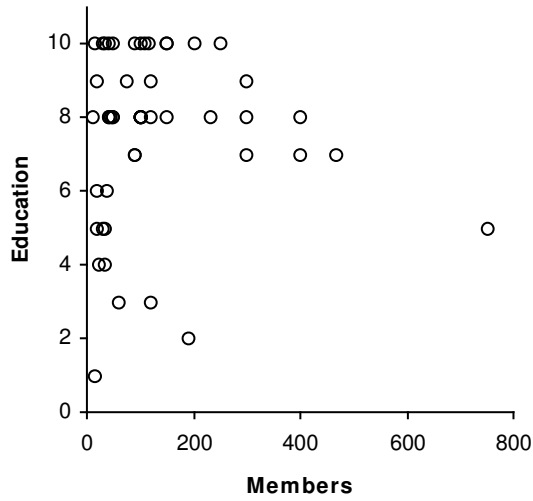
n	47 (cases excluded: 7 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.00
95% CI	-0.29 to 0.28
2-tailed p	0.9749 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Membership and Local Activism (No Correlation)



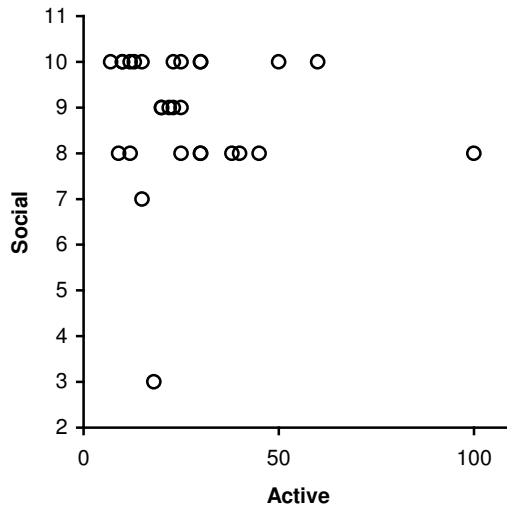
n	49 (cases excluded: 5 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.06
95% CI	-0.23 to 0.33
2-tailed p	0.7063 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Membership and Education (No Correlation)



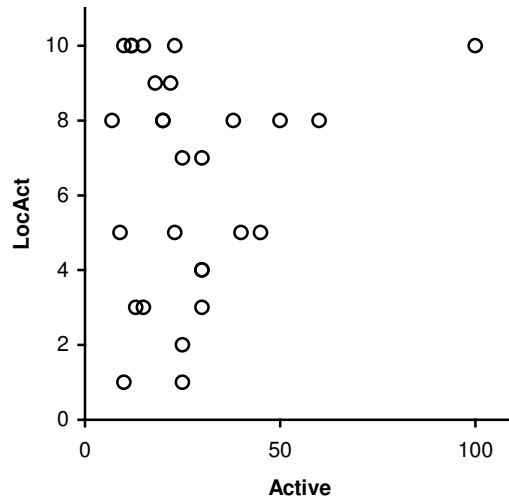
n	50 (cases excluded: 4 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.11
95% CI	-0.17 to 0.38
2-tailed p	0.4331 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Active and Social (No Correlation)



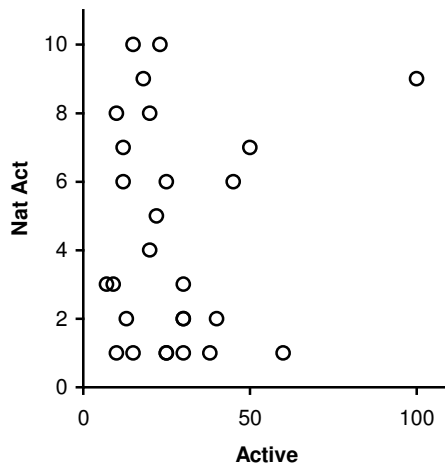
n	28 (cases excluded: 26 due to missing values)
rs statistic	-0.16
95% CI	-0.51 to 0.22
2-tailed p	0.4054 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Active and Local Activism



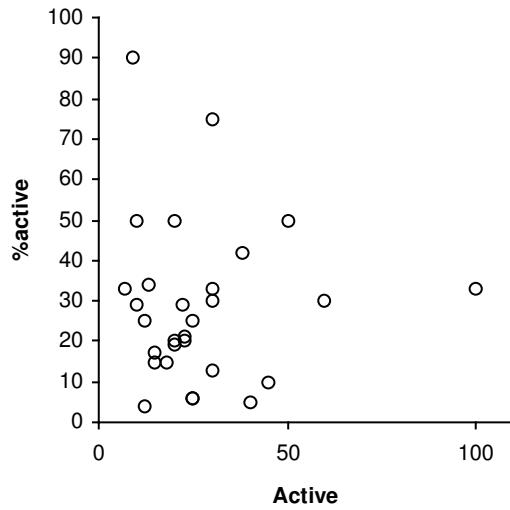
n	28 (cases excluded: 26 due to missing values)
rs statistic	-0.12
95% CI	-0.47 to 0.27
2-tailed p	0.5563 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Active and National Activism (No Correlation)



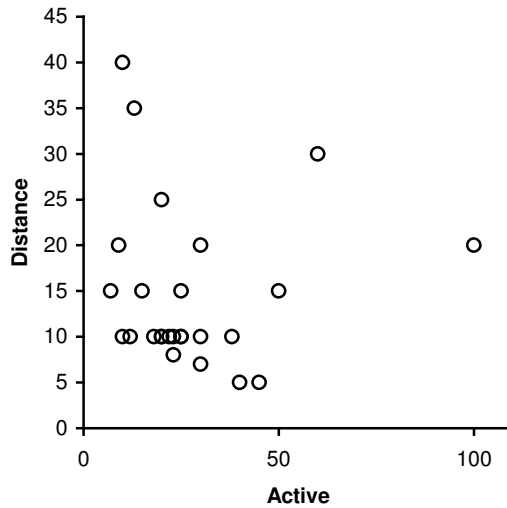
n	27 (cases excluded: 27 due to missing values)
rs statistic	-0.14
95% CI	-0.50 to 0.25
2-tailed p	0.4725 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Active members and Percent Active (No Correlation)



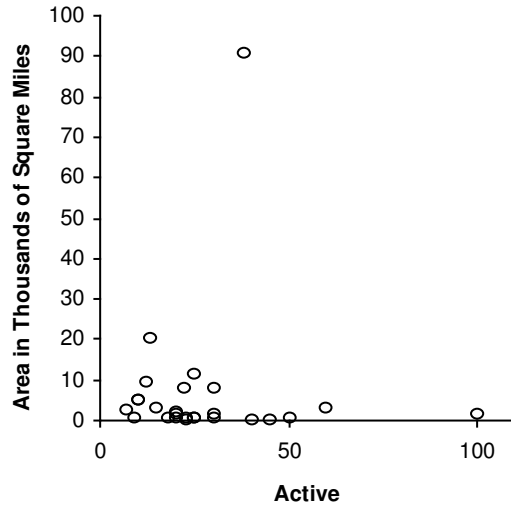
n	29 (cases excluded: 25 due to missing values)
rs statistic	-0.05
95% CI	-0.41 to 0.32
2-tailed p	0.7934 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Active and average distance traveled (No Correlation)



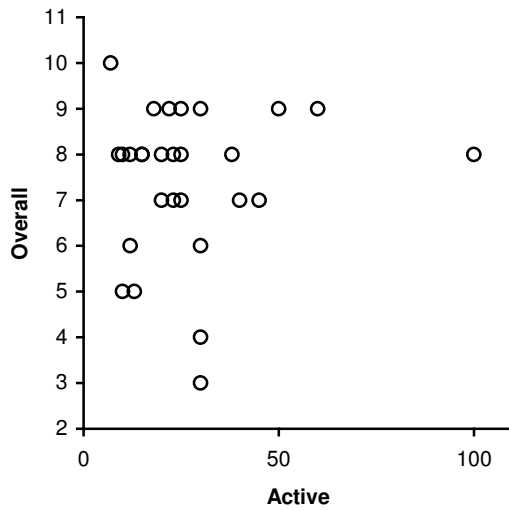
n	26 (cases excluded: 28 due to missing values)
rs statistic	-0.23
95% CI	-0.57 to 0.17
2-tailed p	0.2580 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Active and Area in Square miles (No Correlation)



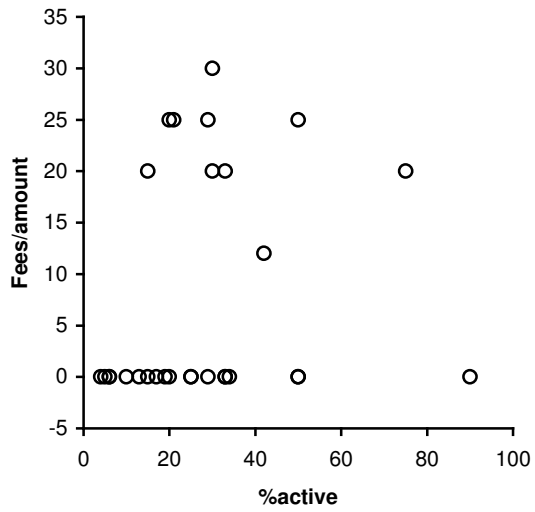
n	26 (cases excluded: 28 due to missing values)
rs statistic	-0.25
95% CI	-0.58 to 0.15
2-tailed p	0.2210 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Active and Overall rating (No Correlation)



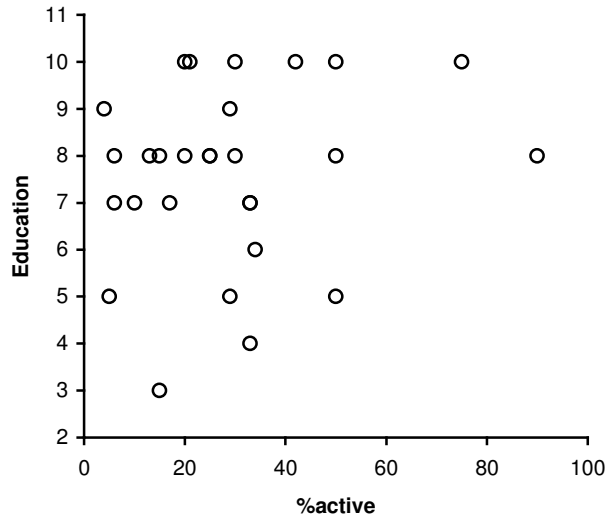
n	28 (cases excluded: 26 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.00
95% CI	-0.37 to 0.38
2-tailed p	0.9909 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Percent Active members and membership fees (No Correlation)



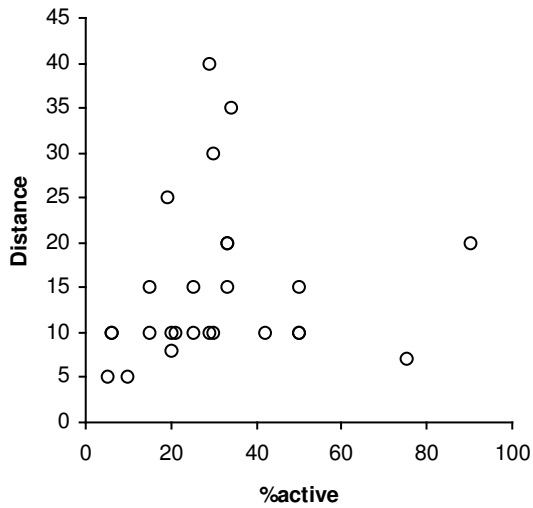
n	29 (cases excluded: 25 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.27
95% CI	-0.11 to 0.58
2-tailed p	0.1594 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Percent Active members and educational activities (No Correlation)



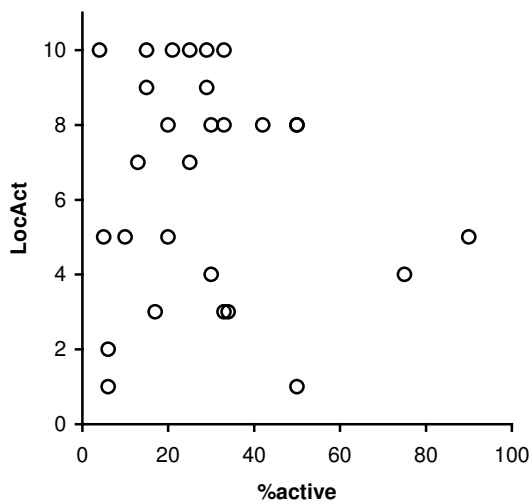
n	28 (cases excluded: 26 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.15
95% CI	-0.24 to 0.50
2-tailed p	0.4452 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Percent Active and average distance traveled (No Correlation)



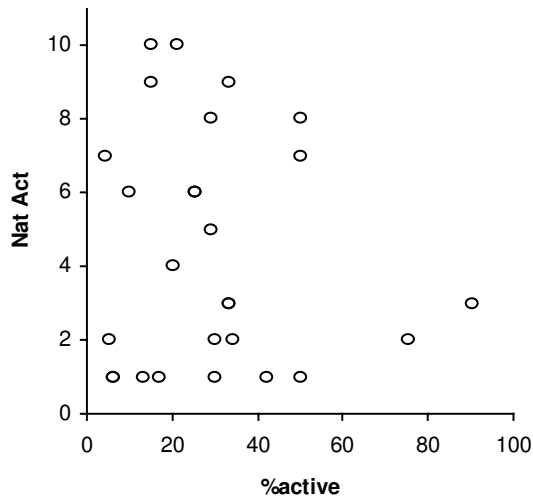
n	26 (cases excluded: 28 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.32
95% CI	-0.08 to 0.63
2-tailed p	0.1142 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Percent Active and Local Activism (No Correlation)



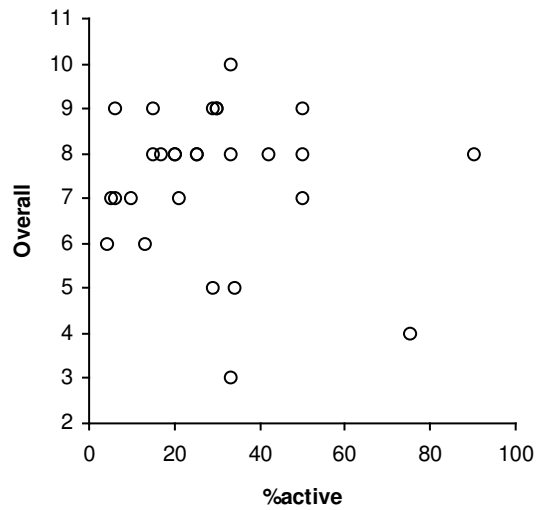
n	28 (cases excluded: 26 due to missing values)
rs statistic	-0.07
95% CI	-0.43 to 0.31
2-tailed p	0.7368 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Percent Active and National Activism (No Correlation)



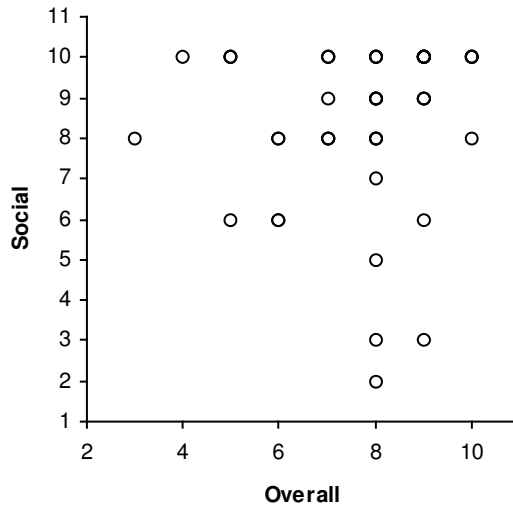
n	27 (cases excluded: 27 due to missing values)
rs statistic	-0.03
95% CI	-0.40 to 0.36
2-tailed p	0.8866 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Percent Active and Overall rating (No Correlation)



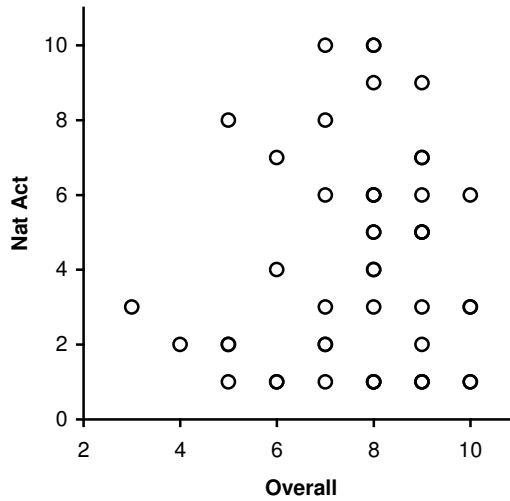
n	28 (cases excluded: 26 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.06
95% CI	-0.32 to 0.43
2-tailed p	0.7492 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Overall satisfaction and Social activities (No Correlation)



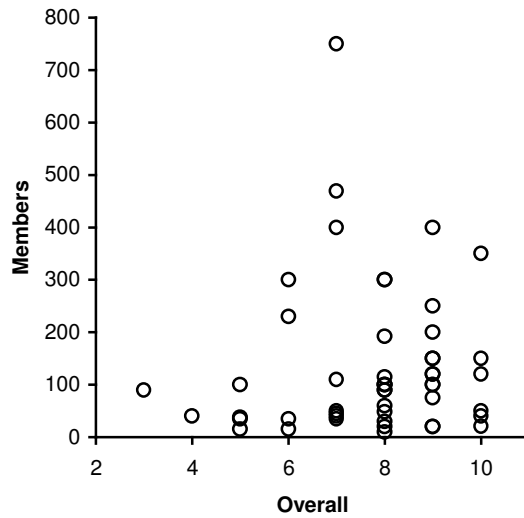
n	49 (cases excluded: 5 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.22
95% CI	-0.07 to 0.47
2-tailed p	0.1304 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Overall satisfaction and National activism (No Correlation)



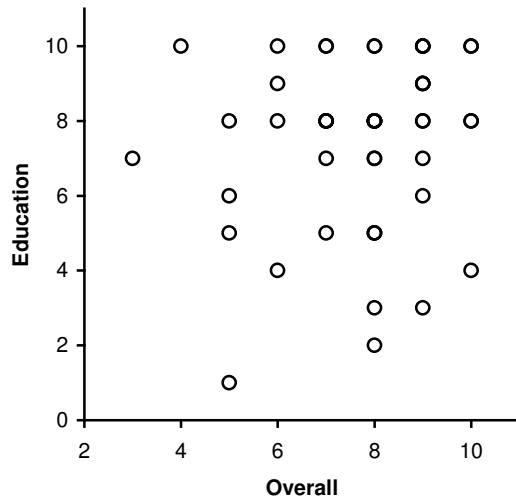
n	48 (cases excluded: 6 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.03
95% CI	-0.25 to 0.32
2-tailed p	0.8190 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Overall satisfaction and membership, (No Correlation)



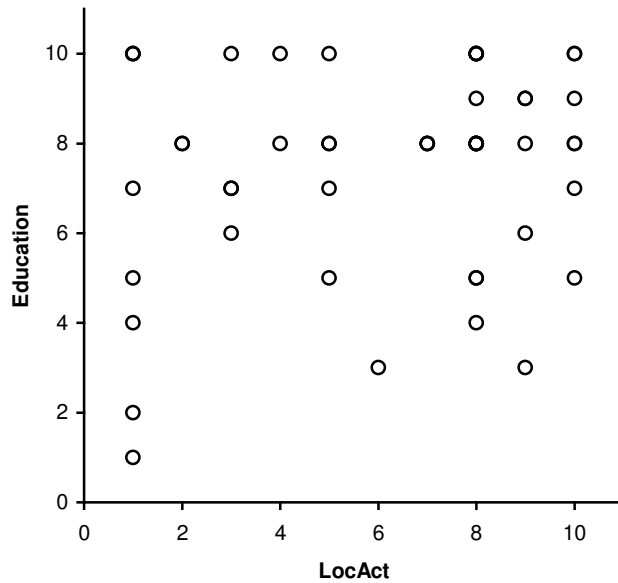
n	50 (cases excluded: 4 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.18
95% CI	-0.10 to 0.44
2-tailed p	0.2057 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Overall satisfaction and educational activities (No Correlation)



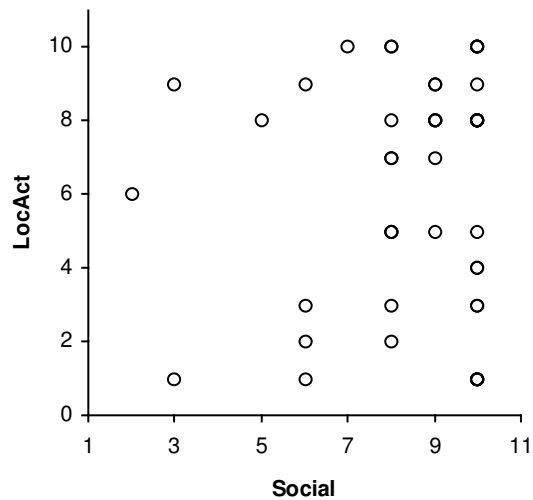
n	50 (cases excluded: 4 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.19
95% CI	-0.09 to 0.44
2-tailed p	0.1867 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Local activism and educational activities (No Correlation)



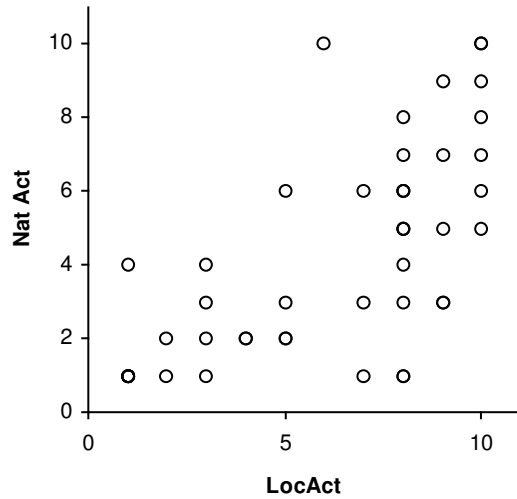
n	50 (cases excluded: 4 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.14
95% CI	-0.14 to 0.40
2-tailed p	0.3247 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Local Activism and Social (No Correlation)



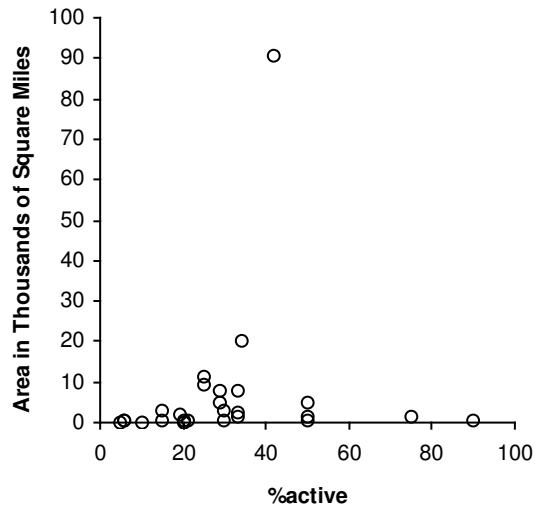
n	50 (cases excluded: 4 due to missing values)
rs statistic	-0.01
95% CI	-0.29 to 0.27
2-tailed p	0.9275 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Local Activism and National Activism (POSITIVE CORRELATION!!)



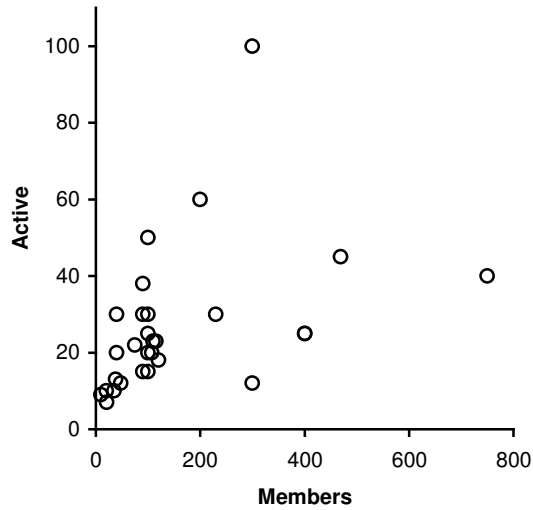
n	48 (cases excluded: 6 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.73
95% CI	0.56 to 0.84
2-tailed p	<0.0001 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Percent Active- Area in square miles (POSITIVE CORRELATION!!)



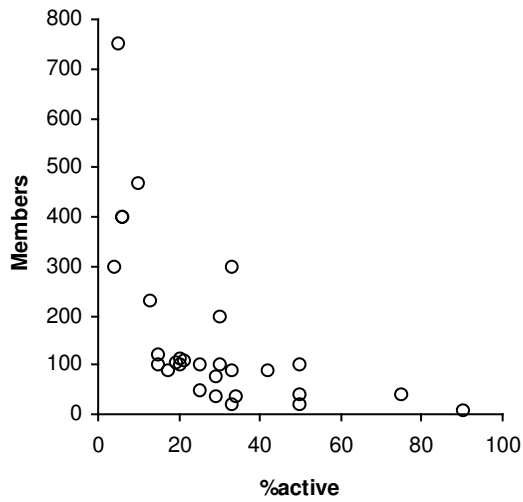
n	26 (cases excluded: 28 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.49
95% CI	0.12 to 0.74
2-tailed p	0.0115 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Total members and active members(POSITIVE CORRELATION!!)



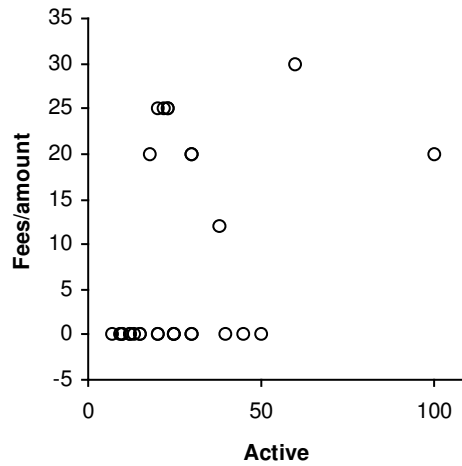
n	29 (cases excluded: 25 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.60
95% CI	0.30 to 0.79
2-tailed p	0.0005 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Total Members and Percent Active (NEGATIVE CORRELATION!!)



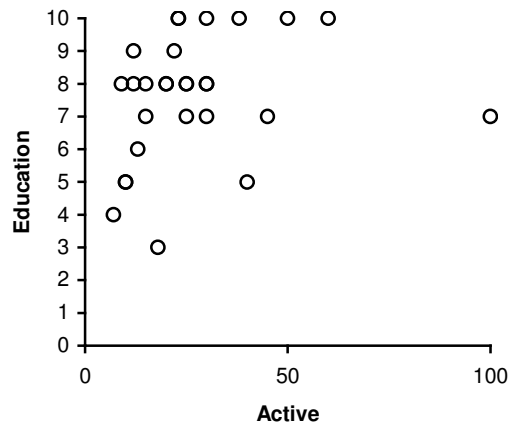
n	29 (cases excluded: 25 due to missing values)
rs statistic	-0.76
95% CI	-0.88 to -0.55
2-tailed p	<0.0001 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Active members and membership fees (Boarders on Correlation)



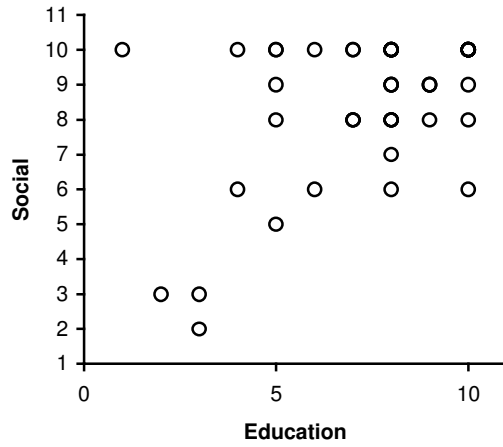
n	29 (cases excluded: 25 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.33
95% CI	-0.04 to 0.62
2-tailed p	0.0816 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Active members and educational activities (Boarders on Correlation)



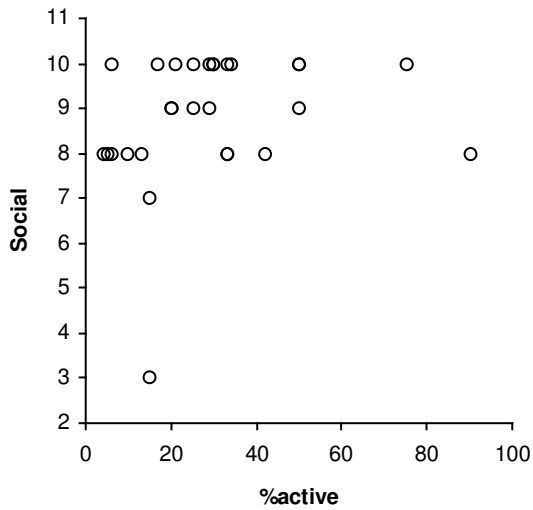
n	28 (cases excluded: 26 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.34
95% CI	-0.04 to 0.63
2-tailed p	0.0767 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Education and Social (Boarders on Correlation)



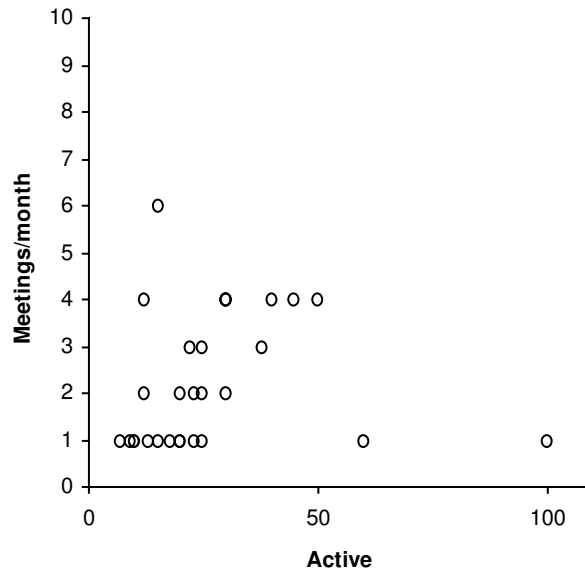
n	50 (cases excluded: 4 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.33
95% CI	0.05 to 0.56
2-tailed p	0.0202 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Percent Active members and social activities (Boarders on Correlation)



n	28 (cases excluded: 26 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.36
95% CI	-0.02 to 0.65
2-tailed p	0.0613 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Active-Meetings/Month (Borders on Correlation)



n	29 (cases excluded: 25 due to missing values)
rs statistic	0.39
95% CI	0.03 to 0.66
2-tailed p	0.0348 (t approximation, corrected for ties)

Local Activism and National Activism (POSITIVE CORRELATION!!)

It's not surprising that these two would be associated, much of what one would consider National Activism starts as Local Activism. There may be a logical causal link in that basic relationship, or simple interest in activism may lead to both being focussed on by groups. Activism in general for all groups, however does not seem to have great importance. $rs=0.73$ (95%CI 0.56 to 0.84) $P<0.0001$.

Total members and active members (POSITIVE CORRELATION!!)

On the face of it, this one seems to make perfect sense. This only means that as one goes up the other does as well. And this is a rare instance where causality is obvious. You have to be a member to be an active member. There is not, however a direct one-to-one proportionality between membership and active membership. Further studies over time with a few groups, measuring the numbers of each could give more accurate data and a better idea of how many members it takes to get one active member. With the median percentage at 17-33%, on average one would expect to find between 3 and 6 new members before having one that was active in the group. $rs = 0.60$ (95%CI 0.30 to 0.79) $P=0.0005$

Total Members and Percent Active (NEGATIVE CORRELATION!!)

This goes along with the correlation above. Overall membership tends to go up faster than active membership does, resulting in the negative correlation. As membership goes up, the percent of active members goes down more on associated phenomena below. $r_s = -0.76$ (95%CI -0.88 to -0.55) $p < 0.0001$

Percent Active- Area in square miles (POSITIVE CORRELATION!!)

This was a thoroughly unexpected correlation, $r_s = 0.49$ (95%CI 0.12 - 0.74) $p = 0.0115$ but once considered, along with other data leads to a fairly simple conclusion. As group membership increases, active membership increases as well. As group size increases, percentage of active membership seems to decrease.

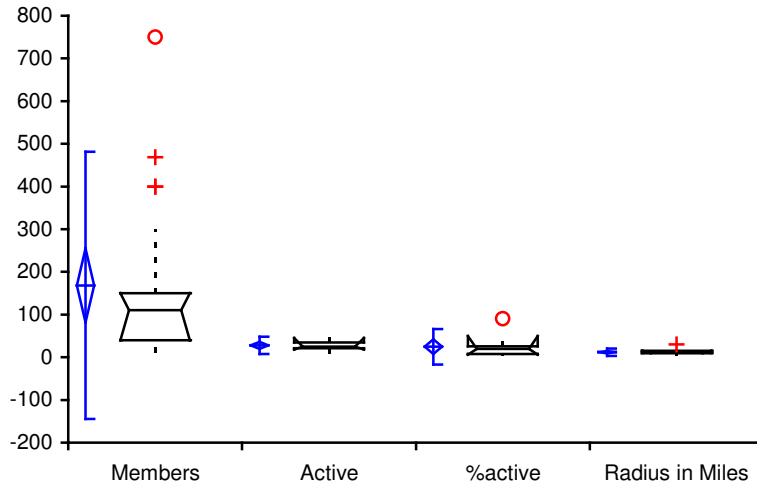
One would expect to see an increase in overall membership as geographical area of coverage for a group increased (provided that there were sufficient advertising for the group). While it may be due to lack of sufficient advertising or other concerns, this isn't borne out in the data here. I've puzzled this over and come up with a couple of possible explanations, which unfortunately, cannot be supported with the data here.

Groups that have larger numbers of total members tend to be centered in more metropolitan areas (and often a more limited geographical area of activity) with a more dense population base, while smaller groups tend to encompass more rural areas that are more sparsely inhabited. As group size increases, the percentage of active members seems to decrease. The converse is also true, smaller groups tend to have higher percentages of active members. These smaller groups, in more rural areas, tend to encompass a larger geographical area for activity²³. (See the charts on the next page for the breakdown by "Rural" and "Metropolitan").

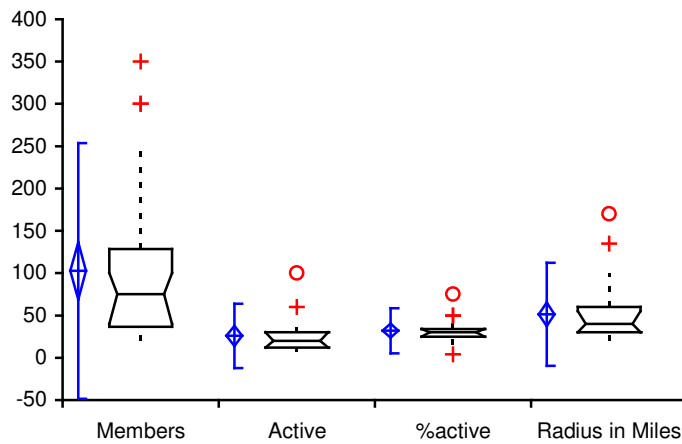
Within the metropolitan areas, there are typically more activities with which to occupy ones time. This is likely the cause of the disparity between percentages of active members, but other factors may influence this as well. Groups in more metropolitan areas are more likely to be close to other competing groups. An individual may join more than one group, and then only be active in one (more likely if no membership fees are charged by either group). Conversely, in more rural areas, there are fewer activities (in the real back-waters there are exceedingly few recreational activities that don't involve religious organizations), and individuals may be more likely to involve themselves in a group.

²³ From the breakdown of groups by type, "Humanist" groups tend to have fewer members but also higher percentages of active members. While most "Humanist" groups are centered in more metropolitan areas, they are an exception within all groups.

Also, a few of the groups responding to the survey are just starting in areas that have previously had no such activity. It may be that these newer groups are filling a growing need, and as they come up are experiencing an influx of disproportionately higher percentages of individuals who are interested in active participation. Had I included in the original survey a question regarding the age of individual groups, this theory could have been tested.



Metropolitan	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Members	21	168.286	190.3568	41.5393	81.636 to 254.935	110.000	110.000	40.000 to 150.000
Active	11	28.000	12.3045	3.7099	19.734 to 36.266	25.000	13.500	18.000 to 45.000
%active	11	24.818	25.2738	7.6203	7.839 to 41.797	20.000	17.500	6.000 to 50.000
Radius in Miles	21	11.857	5.3599	1.1696	9.417 to 14.297	10.000	5.000	10.000 to 15.000



Rural	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Members	31	102.613	91.8541	16.4975	68.921 to 136.305	75.000	92.000	40.000 to 100.000
Active	17	25.824	23.1469	5.6140	13.922 to 37.725	20.000	18.000	12.000 to 30.000
%active	17	31.941	16.1844	3.9253	23.620 to 40.262	30.000	9.000	25.000 to 34.000
Radius in Miles	29	51.448	36.9957	6.8699	37.376 to 65.521	40.000	30.000	30.000 to 55.000

On the Border

While these do not truly meet established ‘standards’ (correlation coefficient ‘rs’ $>+0.40$ or $r<-0.40$ in sociological statistics), values were approaching significance $r>+0.30$ p -value <0.10 (less than a 10% chance of correlation indicated by the data being a random occurrence.) and are at least worth consideration. Take these data as you will.

Active members and membership fees (Borders on Correlation)

While not significant at the 95% level, does fit beneath the 90% mark. This in corroboration with the earlier association between membership fee and active membership in “Humanist” groups. $r_s = 0.33$ (95%CI 0.04 to 0.62) $p = 0.0816$ Further research could support or demolish the idea, but it appears at least worth consideration that membership fees and higher numbers of active members could be related.

Active-Meetings/Month (Borders on Correlation)

Having more than one meeting per month creates more opportunities for individuals to be active within a group. If your group has just one meeting per month, and that meeting is on the same day of the week, some individuals may not be able to attend. Anecdotally, I’ve seen a few groups that not only have gatherings on different days of the week, but in more than one local as well. $r_s = 0.39$ (95%CI 0.03 to 0.66) $p = 0.0348$

Active members and educational activities (Borders on Correlation)

Also from earlier associations with “humanist” groups, who ranked highest in active membership and in rating educational activities as important to groups. Thinking about it,

sponsoring educational activities for groups of non-believers seems quite reasonable. Now an association between two variable such as educational importance, and active memberships does not imply causality. On considering the two though, there are at least a couple of possible causal links. As groups grow, more people become active who are interested in promoting educational activities in their groups. Or possibly, groups sponsor educational opportunities that attract active members. Either way it seems to support the idea that many of us probably already had, that non-believers are interested in learning. Given that, and a little evidence (even if a little loose), might it not be worthwhile to cater to thirst for knowledge? $r_s=0.34$ (95%CI 0.04 to 0.63) $p=0.0767$

Education and Social (Borders on Correlation)

Considering that groups tend to rank social activities higher than other group type activities, that education runs a close second, and that many educational situations can lend to social activity as well, this association isn't that far out there. One might say that groups tend to be either Social/Educational or Local/National Activist oriented. $r_s=0.33$ (95% CI 0.05 to 0.56) $p = 0.0202$

Percent Active members and social activities (Borders on Correlation)

With the overall high values ascribed by respondents to social activities, it makes sense that there could be a relationship between social focus and active membership. The association here is with *percent* of active members, and not just active members. The main factor that seems to decrease the percentage of active members, is more members joining a group and *not* taking part in activities. IF there is indeed an association/causal link between social activities and percentage of active members, then either one of these things must occur:

Focussing on social activities inhibits non-active members from joining,

As higher percentages of active members emerge, they stimulate the group focus on social activities.

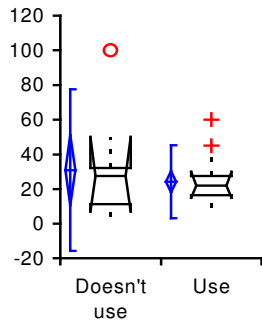
Or, focussing on or providing social activities stimulates members to become active in the group.

$r_s=0.36$ (95%CI-0.02 to0.65) $p= 0.0613$

Active members and: “Web-site”

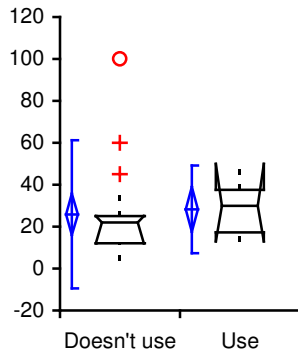
While those groups that did not respond with “Web-site” as means of advertising seem to have marginally better membership than those that did report this form of advertising, “this does not compute”.

“Web-site” was the most commonly listed form of advertisement, and unless such advertising actually drove potential members away, I cannot see how *not* using a web-site would be an advantage. Also, some groups that did not list a web-site for advertising sent a link to their site with the survey response. One possible cause for this disparity could be that some groups use a web-site as their main if not *only* source of advertisement. Take this as you will.



Active by Website	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Doesn't use	10	30.900	28.3057	8.9510	10.651 to 51.149	27.500	20.750	7.000 to 50.000
Use	19	24.211	12.7435	2.9236	18.068 to 30.353	22.000	11.000	15.000 to 30.000

Active members and “Fliers”



Active by Fliers	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Doesn't use	21	25.857	21.5181	4.6956	16.062 to 35.652	22.000	13.000	12.000 to 25.000
Use	8	28.250	12.7251	4.4990	17.612 to 38.888	30.000	20.250	13.000 to 50.000

This may come as a shock to some, as many have stated that fliers are a “waste of time”. Certainly, results may vary, and the efficacy of such advertising may depend upon the level of tolerance in your area. Fliers may take time to put up, but only a second to rip down. They are however, relatively inexpensive to create on a home computer, and relatively easy to distribute on bulletin boards in places like libraries, or college campuses.

Active members and “Newsletter”

Insufficient data for comparison.

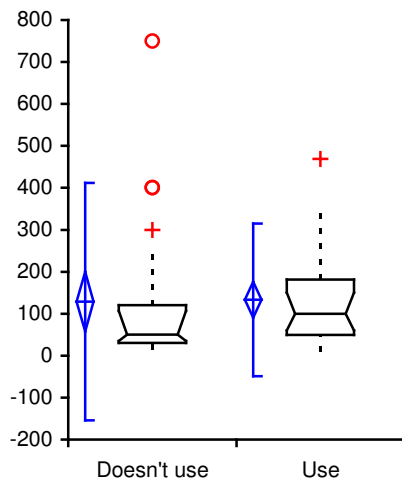
Active members and “Mailings”

Insufficient data for comparison.

Active members and “Affiliations”

Insufficient data for comparison

Membership and use of print media.



Members by Print	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Doesn't use	25	128.720	172.2303	34.4461	57.627 to 199.813	50.000	90.000	35.000 to 107.000
Use	28	133.107	110.4926	20.8811	90.263 to 175.952	100.000	132.000	60.000 to 150.000

Now this is a form of advertising that is likely to be worth looking into. The median membership for groups that use this form of advertising is double that of those who don't.

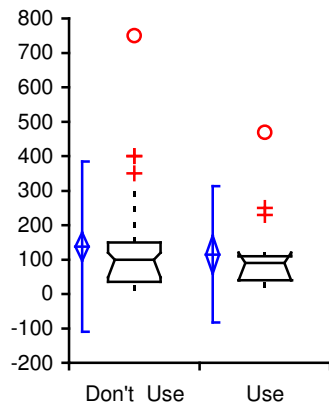
Groups reported a variety of ways that they have used print media for advertising. Be it in a free local entertainment guide, or a heavily circulated newspaper or magazine, this form of advertising will likely reach more people.

Most newspapers have a special section devoted to local activities/events/meetings and will print announcements for free.

There are also “Letters to the Editor” and “Opinion/Editorials” sections, that you might be able to get published in free of charge. Some groups run paid advertisements, and some get special placement in the religion pages as well.

And don't forget, there are a few publications out there that focus on the non-believers. You might check those as well.

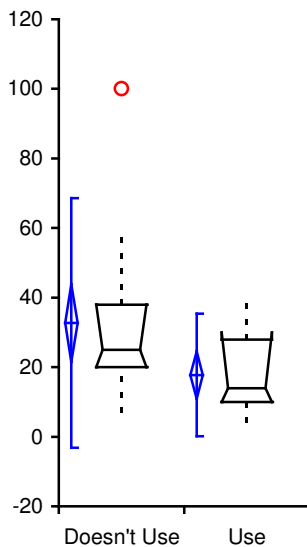
Members by “Public” forms of advertising



Members by Public	n	Mean	SD	SE	90% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	90% CI of Median
Don't Use	38	137.526	150.1611	24.3594	96.430 to 178.623	100.000	114.250	48.000 to 120.000
Use	15	114.600	120.0784	31.0041	59.992 to 169.208	90.000	70.000	40.000 to 120.000

I had expected more personal forms of advertising such as this, where you get to meet and talk with people face to face to make a huge difference, however, I don't see one.

Active members and “Word of Mouth”



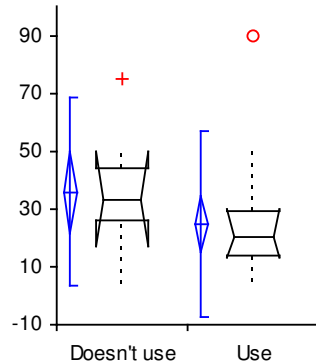
Active by WOM	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Doesn't Use	17	32.706	21.7823	5.2830	21.506 to 43.905	25.000	18.000	20.000 to 38.000
Use	12	17.750	10.7121	3.0923	10.944 to 24.556	14.000	18.000	10.000 to 30.000

It's hard to see how word of mouth could be a bad form of advertising, but I guess it could depend on the mouth that's delivering the words. This (as with Web-sites) may be to some groups a primary form of advertisement. One problem that I see with this form, is, unless you stand on a street corner, or go out trolling for non-believers, the effectiveness of “word of mouth” advertising it could be rather limited in scope.

Active members and “Radio”

Insufficient data for comparison.

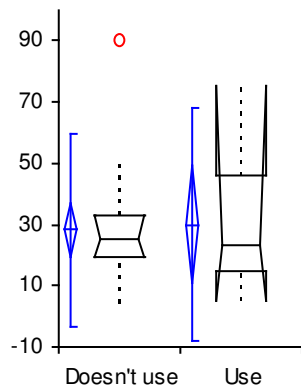
Percent Active members and: “Web-site”



%active by Web-site	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Doesn't use	10	35.900	19.7453	6.2440	21.775 to 50.025	33.000	17.750	17.000 to 50.000
Use	19	24.737	19.4988	4.4733	15.339 to 34.135	20.000	15.500	13.000 to 30.000

As previously covered in this report, there does seem to be an association between smaller groups in more rural settings, and higher percentages of active members. Smaller groups might not have the funds available for paid web hosting, however (despite some annoyances) there are a few free hosting sites out there. ‘nuff said

Percent Active members and “Fliers”



%active by Fliers	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Doesn't use	21	28.095	19.2377	4.1980	19.338 to 36.852	25.000	14.000	19.000 to 33.000
Use	8	29.875	23.1420	8.1819	10.528 to 49.222	23.500	31.500	5.000 to 75.000

I had expected the percentage of active members in this category to be higher, more in line with the smaller rural group phenomenon earlier described. Though the upper level of CI is higher for flier users, there is almost imperceptible difference in median scores.

Percent Active members and “Newsletter”

Insufficient data for comparison.

Percent Active members and “Mailings”

Insufficient data for comparison.

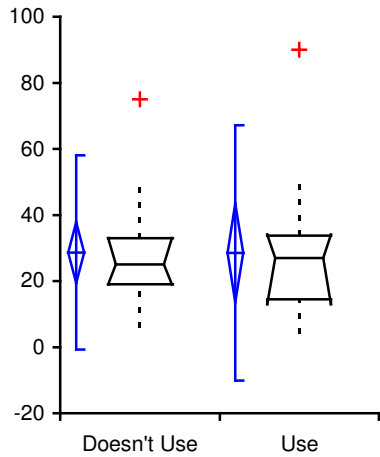
Percent Active members and “Affiliations”

Insufficient data for comparison.

Percent Active members and “Radio”

Insufficient data for comparison.

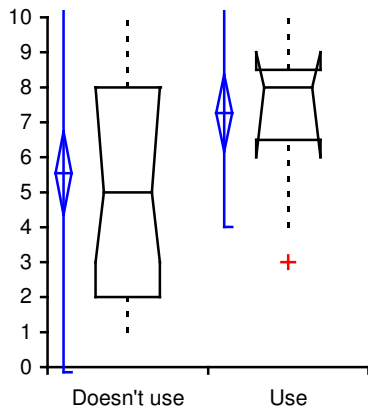
Percent Active and “Word of Mouth”



%active by WOM	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Doesn't Use	17	28.647	17.8604	4.3318	19.464 to 37.830	25.000	14.000	19.000 to 33.000
Use	12	28.500	23.4811	6.7784	13.581 to 43.419	27.000	19.250	13.000 to 34.000

No significant differences noted here.

Local activism and “Public Activities”



Local Activism by Public Activities	n	Mean	SD	SE	95% CI of Mean	Median	IQR	95% CI of Median
Doesn't use	35	5.543	3.4585	0.5846	4.355 to 6.731	5.000	6.000	3.000 to 8.000
Use	15	7.267	1.9809	0.5115	6.170 to 8.364	8.000	2.000	6.000 to 9.000

I was curious to see if there was any relationship between the use of public activities for advertising (such as booths at fairs, or street festivals, parades, or volunteer opportunities). Those that do advertise themselves in such ways do seem to rate Local Activism just a bit above the averages, and above those groups that don't use such publicly active advertising methods.

As far as use of types of advertising goes, I would recommend:

1. Use more than one form of advertising.
2. Use newspapers or other print media.

What respondents reported as best experiences in participating with their groups:

Stopping separation of church and state violations, ensuring religious and non-religious freedom, protests, etc. - the victories in both the social and legal circles.

Getting on the news debunking some local nonsense, like Bigfoot stories (we offered a \$50,000 reward to anyone who would bring him in).

Making new friends

They are very good people and very good friends.

Camaraderie and some good discussions

Seeing people who almost cry when they discover the group because they thought they were the only atheist in the world.

Meeting other people of like minds.

Meeting interesting people

Meeting others of like mind and being able to be open about our concerns regarding religion.

Meeting people with similar point of view

Meeting wonderful people.

The meetings help people to clarify their views about religion and non-religion.
The meetings also provide an excellent social outlet for non-religious people.

Building social network and learning opportunities.

Strength and friendship in numbers.

The support of our members and their willingness to donate generously to keep our activism going.

Finding others of a like mind.

Meeting other freethinkers, Sharpening my reasoning skills, Learning how to be a leader

I think the success of our HumanLight program is the most important development. Please see our website (www.humanlight.org)

By far, meeting with other atheists to build a local community has been rewarding. We're now no longer suffering from isolation or invisibility; I am still a voice for the local atheist community.

Our best speakers have drawn audiences of 50 or more and favorable comment.

Great discussions, good Friendships

Establishing a community of humanists and freethinkers

Creating atheist community

Learning about a lot of subjects "communion" with people

But, on the other hand, when things work right, and there is a good lively crowd, it's always a lot of fun. Some of the public protests where we've had a big turnout were great.

Helping get information out to other freethinkers that they might never have heard of without our help.

The best experience has been seeing this group grow to what it is now after 4 years of really seeing a lot of people throw themselves into it.

Having a place to meet and talk to others who have similar beliefs each month

The comfortable atmosphere for free expression and the great people!

Best is chance to get media attention and educate people

I would say the best experience was the networking and the overall improvement of community understanding of the Atheist life stance.

An invited US Congressional candidate showed up to a meeting as a guest.

Made many friends, and I am closer to these friends than I am to most of my family

Fellowship

Sense of community

FELLOWSHIP AND SUPPORT

Getting to Meet Other Atheists

Our annual Charles Darwin Day event. Discussion at a book store café of Darwin and his accomplishments.

Showing dozens of local atheists that they're not the only non-believers in the heart of the Bible Belt.

Getting a chance to participate in all kinds of new experiences with interesting people, particularly the media stuff (TV, audio); Hearing people say that they never knew there were other atheists out there.

Best experience is meeting others who are free from religion like you.

As one of the four co-founders, it has been very rewarding to know that we have changed the lives of many hundreds of Freethinkers in the area and around the world by proving that Freethinkers deserve and should have a church of their own, without all the superstitious baggage of faith-based religions.

Growth of the chapter. We started out small and have increased steadily

Getting to know people with a similar out look.

Best experience—having a religious community to belong to.

Hooking up with folks like me who are atheists.

Meeting with others who share the same beliefs

Best experience is the friendship of non-superstitious friends who are not easy to find without the group. Our speakers include people of views opposed to ours.

Meeting like minded people

Personally - knowledge, followed close by community (able to meet with like minded individuals)

What respondents reported as worst experiences in participating with their groups:

Our failed attempt to start a Darwin Day - it was a total failure and set many people back on a willingness to try again.

Getting rained out of a festival

None

Getting involved with another local Humanist group which ended up in my husband getting sued for hurting someone's feelings. (Long story...)
The suit was dismissed, but not before it cost us personally a fairly large amount of money.

The same as most of these groups. Christian bashing and discussion of terminology such as atheist, humanist, freethinker, etc.

Watching George Bush and John Ashcroft shred the establishment clause.

One regular has dominated the conversation, thus causing another regular member to stop attending meetings.

Getting people to assume responsibilities for projects they recommend undertaking

Speakers not relevant to our interests

Meeting difficult people.

We allow the public to attend our meetings. Sometimes, religious whacko shows up and tries to put us down, tells us we're going to hell, etc.

Having a no-show speaker.

Former president who did not respect democracy and split off to form atheist cult.

The hostility of one of the leaders of another atheist group who opposes criticizing the religious right or admitting atheists are discriminated against, and considers what we do "destructive."

Being infiltrated by argumentative Biblethumpers.

Negative attitudes of some freethinkers

I think the first two years when sometimes myself and my co-conspirator were the only ones to show up for a meeting.

The worst part was trying to create a group and also adhere to the rules set up for me as a staff Member of American Atheists. The local atheists did not agree with the ideas or methods of AA's national leadership and I personally found that I could not "sell" memberships to the AA organization. Also, my involvement as AA Staff kept people AWAY from me: those people who already knew (as I do, now) That AA policy is that AA is an "anti-theism" group... Now, I have to start all over in the formation of an independent local group That is not necessarily an AA Chapter (per se, as AA no longer has chapters).

The discussion meeting was dying until we announced topics and selected a moderator.

Disappointing lack of active membership

All the work involved!

Arguments during discussions; minimal donations of labor/money

Not sharing load, blabber mouths

It's always a bummer when you go to the trouble of setting up some meeting or event, and hardly anyone shows. I've "guest-hosted" for both local groups a couple of times, when it almost fell-through.

Trying to get noticed by the general public. One newspaper editor asked me if the name of the group was "a joke."

The worst experience is has been those times what I was the only one advertising and planning events, and when only 3-4 people came to meetings.

Not having the resources to have a building of our own or the ability to advertise in the media.

Two separate issues with individual members where tempers flared and the person ended up leaving the group. It's uncommon, but painful when it happens.

Worst is trying to keep enthusiasm at a poorly attended event

The worst experience would be dealing with egomaniacs and complainers (people who do no work, but like to sit around and complain).

None

Dealing with religious people who want to be considered "freethinkers" and therefore part of our group

Complacency

OCCASIONAL CRAZY PERSON

Not Enough Interest in Political Action

The murder of one of our members in his home by a renter of his. [Not related to the group or being a non-believer]

Occasional political nonsense and gossip. Nothing recent, though.

Dealing with political stuff during board elections.

Worst experience is GETTING others who are free from religion motivated into ACTION. Not getting enough money for publicity - being stoned walled in publicity - by the local Public Radio. Stonewalling by business when attempting to BUY publicity.

The closed-minded reaction from other so-called 'Freethinkers' who dismiss our success because of the use of the perfectly descriptive and sensible word, 'Church,' in our name.

Haven't had any really bad ones!

Nothing comes to mind

Realizing that many members are happy to have the social interaction and are not nearly as interested as I am in reacting to issues.

TECHNICALLY, WE ARE A NON-THEISTIC RELIGION. PEOPLE HEAR THE WORD RELIGION AND WON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH US BECAUSE OF TRADITIONAL DEFINITIONS OF RELIGION.

Getting people to actively participate.

No bad experiences so far.

Frustration at lack of involvement of members

Petty battles between strong willed people

