

# Ethical Views



April 2015 Vol. 129, No. 8 Newsletter of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia

## Sunday Platforms

### April 2015

If you wish childcare during Sunday Platforms, please notify Nick Sanders at [nick@phillyethics.org](mailto:nick@phillyethics.org) or 215-662-5636 by the previous Thursday at 5:00 P.M. He will notify you by noon Saturday whether arrangements are in place.

### April 5, 11:00 AM

#### **Humanist Anti-Racist Activism** **Hugh Taft-Morales, Leader, Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia**



In the light of the "Black Lives Matter" movement, how can humanists

become more effective anti-racist activists? Liberal guilt and invisible racism have long paralyzed predominantly white progressive communities. Hugh Taft-Morales again examines this persistent challenge by exploring it within the context of humanism and our Ethical Culture history. What will it take to ensure that the worth of people of all colors be honored? Can we live up to President Obama's challenge at the foot of the Edmund Pettis Bridge? Are we "strong enough to be self-critical" so we can help "remake this nation to more closely align with our highest ideals"?

### April 12, 11:00 AM

#### **Why the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT] Matters**

#### **Peter Lems, Program Officer, American Friends Service Committee**

How do we hold the nuclear powers accountable? The struggle to abolish nuclear weapons is linked to movements for economic, social, and environmental justice and peace. The 2015 NPT Review Conference offers an opportunity to put pressure on the nuclear powers to achieve a nuclear-free world. The NPT is among the seminal treaties of the Twentieth Century. In exchange for their forgoing ever

becoming nuclear weapons states, the nuclear power signatories recognized the right of all signatory states to generate nuclear power for peaceful purposes and committed to end their nuclear arms race and to engage in "good faith" negotiations to eliminate their nuclear arsenals and to general and complete disarmament.



Peter Lems is a program officer for the American Friends Service Committee and co-coordinator of the Wage Peace Campaign, an effort to reduce US militarism and shift resources to meet human needs. Since 1988, he has worked for a variety of organizations focused on the Arab world, including the Palestine Human Rights Campaign, the Palestine Human Rights Information Center-International, and the Association of Arab-American University Graduates. He started working for the AFSC in 1999.

### April 19, 11:00 AM

#### **J. Robert Oppenheimer and Nuclear Agony** **Hugh Taft-Morales, Leader, Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia**

Today over 16,300 nuclear weapons make Russian, North Korean and terrorist aggression all the more alarming. Despite the end of the Cold War, nuclear weapons are still ready for launch around the world. Even a limited nuclear war would cause unimaginable suffering, something known only too well to the father of the atomic bomb, J. Robert Oppenheimer. Raised in Ethical Culture, taught by its founder Felix Adler, Oppenheimer felt impelled to serve his country and do good. His heroic efforts landed him on the covers of *Time* and *Life*. Soon, tormented by the horror of his own creation and persecution by his own government, Oppenheimer's life took a tragic turn. Hugh Taft-Morales explores this story in the context of current efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

### April 26, 11:00 AM

#### **Repentance, Redemption and Renewal, and the Merits of Prison Education**

#### **Marjorie Jones, author & historian**

In her talk Marjorie Jones will consider the benefits, to the public as well as to students, of higher education in prisons, and relate some of her experiences teaching history in two maximum security prisons, currently at Graterford for Villanova and formerly at Sing Sing in Ossining, NY, for Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, NY.



A graduate of Wheaton College, Norton, Mass., the Rutgers School of Law and the Graduate Faculty of the New School, Marjorie G. Jones is the author of *Frances Yates and the Hermetic Tradition* (2008), the first biography of the renowned British historian (translated into Japanese and Italian) and the forthcoming *Audubon of Botany: the Life & Times of Mary Vaux Walcott* (Schiffer Publishing). Recently she and her husband moved from New York to Philadelphia, where they live in Center City. <

#### QUOTE-UNQUOTE

"The only instrument that would enable an inspector to find out if a packing crate contained an atomic bomb is a screwdriver."



--J. Robert Oppenheimer in a closed Senate hearing in 1946, when asked if a few people could smuggle into New York City the parts necessary to build a nuclear weapon. Quoted in "Break-In at Y-12," Eric Schlosser, *The New Yorker*, March 9, 2015, p. 47.

#### Page #

#### In This Issue

- 1 Sunday Platforms; Quote-Unquote
- 2 Leader's Message
- 4 A Dark & Stormy; Music @ Ethical
- 5 Announcements
- 6 The Faucet's on Fire!
- 7 Calendar
- 8 Sunday Services

## Leader's Message



### *Activist Reflections and Appeals*

Hugh Taft-Morales

It was an inauspicious start of the Philadelphia City Council hearing about increasing the minimum wage in Philadelphia to \$15 per hour. Such an increase faces tremendous opposition, and the fire alarm that disrupted the start of the hearing did not bode well. I cast aside any superstitious concerns, however, and remained with the crowd milling about outside of City Hall in light morning rain on March 4.

My spirits were brightened when I ran into EHSOP member David Ralston, who works at City Hall. I visited him at Commissioner Singer's office where he works to assure free, fair elections. If his work does lead to truly free and fair elections, and if – as Singer's website urges – the electorate is engaged and informed, we will be closer to having made a better world. In the meantime, increasing the minimum wage is important.

When we finally did get settled back into the hearing room with the Committee on Commerce and Economic Development, I was heartened to see it filling up with supporters of the wage hike. The petition pushing this effort (\*see excerpts below) offered many reasons why such a change is needed. There were union representatives, economic policy think-tank analysts, socialist and radical activists, and Pastor Greg Holston of [New Vision United Methodist Church](#), one of POWER's inspiring speakers whose testimony brought cheers from the crowd.



It was because of POWER, the interfaith social justice coalition the Ethical Humanist Society joined last year,

that I attended the hearing. A notice from Kate brought this opportunity to my attention. My crazy commuting schedule often has me out of town or wrapped up in EHSOP activities, so I thought I would add to the numbers attending the hearing in support of a living wage in Philadelphia.

In last summer's newsletter I praised Mayor Nutter for raising the minimum wage for subcontracted Philadelphia workers to \$10.88 per hour and guaranteeing that this wage floor will go up to \$12 per hour this year. In the light of the Black Lives Matter movement and the systemic injustice that spurred it, however, I have become convinced that more radical change is needed -- such as a boost from \$12 to \$15. Given the state of our society, with economic disempowerment breeding urban blight, \$15 is not even that radical.

Since praising the \$12 wage last year, I have learned, once again I am afraid, how deep the suffering is in many of our cities. The outrage following the deaths of Michael Brown, Eric Garner and Tamir Rice came from deep despair and disappointment in our system. And the anger is not just about police policy. It's about many things, including the continued systemic economic oppression of the poor, especially poor people of color.



As with Occupy, a sudden coalition of divergent groups is rising up in unison for a common cause: social justice. Fair wages, education, civil rights. I hope that, unlike Occupy, it's a wave that does not break on the rocks of social indifference and corporate media bias. I hope that somehow the 99% will stick together and effect change. Too often the solidarity needed for real change gets fractured.

As I was signing in for the hearing, I was reminded of the fragility of coalitions. A member of the carpenters' union in line behind me was talking aloud about the importance of the \$15 minimum wage. One of the security guards, perhaps

already a little testy given the chaos of a fire alarm and the general economic pressure of life, shot back, "Your \$15/hour is going to make us all broke" In reply the carpenter said, "Oh, I see, so I can't feed my children?" I wonder to myself why low-wage security guards and carpenters end up competing when corporate CEOs are richer than ever.

This is why I am again asking our members to come together in our commitment to POWER. Please consider how you can support the work of POWER. I am not asking you to shave your head, as did member Sylvia Metzler at the D.A.R.E. Rally on Martin Luther King Day. I am just asking you to join Kate Esposito, Steve Bremner, Marta Guttenberg, Linda Benowitz, and many other members who have stepped up to help us nurture this bold and brave interfaith effort. Do whatever you can; talk to Kate to see how to help.

It's not easy, of course. It's not easy to make room in our schedules. It's not easy to navigate the theistic flavor of POWER events. And it's not easy to dive into a multiracial coalition committed to social justice but wrestling with the demon of racism. This last roadblock is why POWER leaders encouraged all members to gather in small groups in homes to talk about race and to feel more inspired and confident to engage in this important work. So EHSOP is organizing some house-meeting discussions about race. Jeff and Ruthann Dubb will host one and Elisabeth Leonard, another. See below for details. Email Hugh to reserve one of the limited spots!



Last month I attended a diversity workshop for clergy, organized by POWER. (Ask Kate and Marta about their experience at a similar workshop for lay leaders.) Personally I did not learn any new information per se at these workshops. Having served as a diversity director for a couple of years and taught U. S. history for over 25 years in schools, I think I "get it" intellectually. I already get the history of racial

*(Continued on next page)*



(Continued from previous page)

oppression in the most powerful nation on earth. I already *get* multiculturalism, critiques of multiculturalism, and intersectionality and inclusion. But at this workshop I loved the passion of so many colleagues urging us to get off our butts now, so to speak, to demand economic, social and racial justice.



The MLK D.A.R.E. Coalition is offering another opportunity to do just this at 1:00 PM, April 4. Sylvia Metzler and Marta Guttenberg attended the planning meeting for a large anti-poverty march demanding the \$15.00 minimum wage, the right to unionize, and full employment. The group will march down Broad from Girard to W. Jefferson in front of the Opportunities Industrialization Center for a rally.

This march will occur on the anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King in Memphis. King was in Tennessee to stand in solidarity with black sanitation workers. It inspired POWER organizers to declare: "As King courageously went to Tennessee to demand better working conditions for Black sanitation workers, we will demand a minimum wage of \$15.00 an hour and the right to unionize with full employment."

I strongly believe that POWER is the best bet in town for a small organization like us to be a part of something big! To be a part of something big, we need *more* volunteers to step up. We need people who will organize. We need people who will show up to march. We need people willing to bear witness to a city and a nation that for whatever reason does not live up to its ideals. Be a part of making real brotherly (and sisterly) love and equal justice under law!

<>



\*Excerpts from RESOLUTION NO. 141039 of the Philadelphia City Council:

*WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia is one of the poorest major cities in the United States where nearly 30 percent of Philadelphians live below the poverty line and 50 percent make less than \$15 an hour; and*

*WHEREAS, Some of the poorest neighborhoods in Philadelphia are experiencing poverty rates as high as 57 percent; and*

*WHEREAS, The overall median income in Philadelphia has dropped 13.5 percent since 1999; and*

*WHEREAS, The top one percent of income earners in Pennsylvania received more than half of the total income increases in the past 30 years; and...*

*WHEREAS, 75 percent of minimum wage workers are over the age of 20, of which one quarter are parents and a majority are the primary providers for their families; and...*

*WHEREAS, Low wage work disproportionately affects women, people of color, immigrants, LGBTQ individuals and members of the disabled community; and*

*WHEREAS, Increasing the minimum wage in the City of Philadelphia will benefit workers at all income levels, union and non-union workers; and*

*WHEREAS, Philadelphians have been protesting, striking and petitioning to demand increasing the minimum wage to \$15; and*

*WHEREAS, Newly elected Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf supports increasing the minimum wage from its current rate of \$7.25 an hour; and*

*WHEREAS, President Barack Obama has advocated for and encouraged raising the minimum wage to improve the quality of life throughout the United States; and*

*WHEREAS, The current federal and state minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour does not adequately provide a living wage for workers and is insufficient with the rising cost of living in the City of Philadelphia; now, therefore, be it*

*RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby authorizes the Philadelphia City Council Committee on Commerce and Economic Development to hold hearings regarding increasing the minimum wage to \$15 an hour in the City of Philadelphia.*

## A Dark and Stormy at 1906 Marta Guttenberg

March 1 was a dark and stormy afternoon, outdoors and in the Auditorium at the Ethical Society. This was appropriate for the third concert in the series Music at Ethical, whose theme was "Oppression and Transcendence." The audience transcended bad weather. Pianist Rollin Wilber transcended the flu. Violinists Jonathan Moser and Megumu Kajino, violist Geoffrey Baker, and cellist Lucia Strother transcended their temperature-and-humidity-sensitive "old technology" instruments. All this was before the music started!

The ambitious, illustrative musical program started with music by Dmitri Shostakovich. Shostakovich was oppressed and suppressed by the Soviet regime in Russia, but fought back and had the last laugh in his music.

Piano music by Beethoven proved that genius could transcend deafness. Samuel Barber's String Quartet in B minor, incorporating the famous "Adagio for Strings," showed that classical music could transcend and come to portray any grief. Music by English/American composer Rebecca Clarke proved that excellent music could be produced even when the composer is "marginalized." Robert Schumann's Piano Quartet (written in 1842, the year in which he monomaniacally created almost his entire chamber music output!) demonstrated brilliance and exuberance in the face of mental illness.

This program asked a lot of the players and the audience. A lovely post-concert reception, attended by musicians and audience, was the necessary restorative.

Two more concerts in the series remain. On April 19, 2015: Of War: Composing for Mankind... Sanity sought through music, and on June 14, 2015: In Concert with Nature. Fasten your seatbelts!



**SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 2015, AT 3:00PM**  
**OF WAR: COMPOSING FOR MANKIND . . .**  
*Sanity sought through music*

Composers are affected by and often find inspiration from wartime, in ways both personal and nationalistic. This concert's theme brings musical works together that speak infinitely for humanity.

FEATURING: Samuel Barber's *Dover Beach*, based on the Matthew Arnold poem, for baritone and string quartet; Dmitri Shostakovich's most personal String Quartet #8, *dedicated to the victims of fascism and war*.

PLUS MUSICAL WORKS by Chopin, Poulenc, Alan Hovhaness, Komitas Vardapet (the "savior of Armenian music"), Alexander Arutiunian, and Pavel Haas (his *Study for Strings*, transcribed for string quartet, written in Terezin, 1943, accompanied by the Nazi propaganda film made for the Red Cross).

Each concert brings together compelling works of classical music with ideas about related cultural and human influences, to explore "what inspired composers that still inspires us." Directly after each concert, a short discussion about the performed works is held, followed by a reception.

### PERFORMED BY

JONATHAN and MARY MOSER, *violins*; GEOFFREY BAKER, *viola*; LUCY STROTHER and CARLOS JAVIER, *cello*;  
ALEX LEVICOFF, *baritone*; ROLLIN WILBER, *piano*

JUNE 14 - "IN CONCERT WITH NATURE"

*Musical inspirations from our natural world*

~ ~ ~

THE ETHICAL SOCIETY BUILDING - 1906 S. Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia, PA 19103

ADMISSION: \$25 general; \$15 for students, seniors & EHSOP members

[www.FineArtMusicCompany.com](http://www.FineArtMusicCompany.com)

# Announcements

April 5, 5:00 p.m.

Roy Zimmerman

## "The Faucet's on Fire!"

See flyer next page.



**Tuesday, April 7, 7:00 PM, home of Jeff and Ruthann Dubb OR Sunday, April 19, 6:30 PM, home of Elisabeth Leonard**

*Discussions on Race and the "Black Lives Matter" Movement*

Join Hugh and members of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia at one of these discussions. Jeff and Ruthann Dubb will host the first one, and Elisabeth Leonard the second. Email Hugh to reserve a place at one of these discussions. 10 person limit.

## Ethical Humanism 201 with Richard Kiniry

**Thursdays April 2, 9, 30  
7:00-8:30 PM**



This three-part workshop is offered as an opportunity for members of the Society to go deeper into Ethical Humanist philosophy. Leader Emeritus Richard Kiniry will offer his version of that philosophy and participants can develop their own approach to EH as a way of living.

For a hundred and forty years the Ethical Culture Movement has been evolving through the challenges of philosophic and ethical advancements. Now that we are Ethical Humanism, there is much in that philosophic evolution that offers us things to talk about. This three-part workshop will first examine that intellectual history and the core beliefs we hold dear. Then we will focus on what those ideas mean in our personal lives and in the area of social justice.

Ethical Humanism offers a sensible but inspiring understanding of life's journey. It has a history situated on the fringe of religion and its approach is of use to both the confused and to the know-it-alls. This workshop, designed for the curious, whether Society members or newcomers, will offer an opportunity to examine the philosophy of Ethical Humanism while questioning the "big issues" such as God, faith and morality. We will relate the philosophy to practical ideas: economic and social justice, capitalism vs. socialism, the environment, abortion and minority rights.

**Free for members.** \$15 for all three classes for non-members. Register directly with Richard by emailing him at [rlkiniry@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rlkiniry@sbcglobal.net) no later than Sunday, March 29.

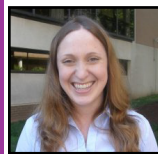
## Sunday, April 5, 7:30 PM Introduction to Ethical Humanism

Leader Hugh Taft-Morales and members discuss the history and philosophy of Ethical Humanism, followed by Q & A and wine and cheese! Visitors new to the Ethical Society are encouraged to attend. RSVP to [lead.erhugh@phillyethics.org](mailto:lead.erhugh@phillyethics.org).

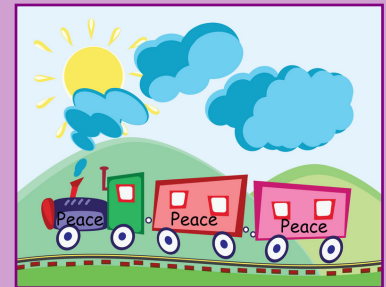


## Monday, April 6, 7:00 PM Human and Animal Subjects in Medicine and Science

The "Bioethics without God" series continues as Hugh Taft-Morales discusses ethical issues surrounding the use of subjects in medical and scientific research with two experts from the University of Pennsylvania:



Dr. Megan Singleton, Associate Director for Human Research Protections, and Dr. James A. Serpell, Director, Center for the Interaction of Animals and Society. Is the good created by such research worth the potential risks it can cause? How do we balance "the common good" that might be served by such research against individual interests in privacy and autonomy? How does such work affect relationships between human beings and other animals?



## Sunday, April 26, 9:30 AM: Peace train departs 30th St. Station for NYC

Join Peace and the Planet for a march to UN headquarters in Manhattan. We will gather at 30th Street Station and take the 9:30 AM SEPTA train to the Trenton Transit Center, where we will meet additional supporters and take the 10:30 AM New Jersey Transit train to Penn Station, New York City. There we will assemble at 17th Street in Manhattan to march to UN headquarters beginning at 1:00 PM. Our message to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) nations' representatives meeting there is very simple: NO MORE NUCLEAR WEAPONS! We will return to Philly in the late afternoon. For more information, contact Elisabeth Leonard ([elisabethleonard1@gmail.com](mailto:elisabethleonard1@gmail.com)). Join us!



A photograph of Roy Zimmerman, a man with glasses and a dark shirt, playing an acoustic guitar and singing into a microphone. He is smiling and looking upwards. The background is dark with red curtains.

# the FAUCET's on FiRe!

**Ethical Society of Philadelphia**  
1906 S. Rittenhouse Square

**Sunday, April 5 - 5 pm**  
\$18 general / \$15 students, seniors

Roy Zimmerman brings the sting of satire to the struggle for Peace and Social Justice. His funny songs about fracking, torture, creationism, same-sex marriage, guns, marijuana, abstinence, ignorance, war and greed have been heard on Showtime, HBO and NPR, and he's shared stages with Bill Maher, John Oliver, Ellen Degeneres, Kate Clinton and George Carlin. "... a latter-day Tom Lehrer."  
- Los Angeles Times

# roy zimmerman

# April 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>5</b> 11:00 AM <i>Humanist Anti-Racist Activism</i> - H. Taft-Morales 5:00 PM The Faucet's on Fire! Roy Zimmerman 7:30 PM <b>Intro to Ethical Humanism</b> Hugh Taft-Morales			<b>1</b> <b>Meetings</b> 6:30 PM Education Committee 7:45 PM Ethical Action Committee	<b>2</b> 7:00 PM <b>Ethical Humanism 201, Class #1</b> R. Kiniry	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 1:00 PM Anti-Poverty March, Broad/Girard
	<b>6</b> 7:30 PM <b>Bioethics Without God</b> Hugh Taft-Morales et. al	<b>7</b> 7:00 PM Discussion J&R Dubb	<b>8</b> <b>Meetings</b> 5:30 PM Finance Committee 7:00 PM Communications Committee	<b>9</b> 7:00 PM <b>Ethical Humanism 201, Class #2</b> R. Kiniry	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
			<b>15</b> <b>Meeting</b> 6:45 PM. EHSOP Board of Trustees	<b>16</b> 6:30 PM <b>Hearing Loss Assn.:</b> P. McGeever	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>12</b> 11:00 AM <i>Why the Non-Proliferation Treaty Matters</i> Peter Lems	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>				
11:00 AM <b>19</b> <i>J. Robert Oppenheimer &amp; Nuclear Agony</i> Hugh Taft-Morales 3:00 PM <b>Concert: Sanity thru Music</b> 6:30 PM Discussion Elisabeth Leonard	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> <b>Meeting:</b> 6:45 PM Camp Linden Committee	<b>23</b> 7:00 PM  <b>Amnesty International</b> Ron Coburn.	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> 11:00 AM <i>Merits of Prison Education</i> Majorie Jones	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 7:00 PM <b>Ethical Humanism 201, Class #3</b> R. Kiniry		

## April birthdays

14 Aissia Richardson  
20 Henry Pashkow  
21 Kate Esposito  
22 Christian Hayden  
29 Nina Diamond



***Ethical Views*** is published monthly  
except July and August.

*Editor*, Pat McGeever  
*Layout*, Janice R. Moore  
*Production*, Ingrid Schafroth  
*Web Master*, Bob Moore

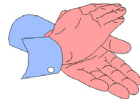
**Ethical Humanist Society  
of Philadelphia**

Hugh Taft-Morales, Leader

**Board of Trustees**

Nick Sanders, President  
Garry O'Rourke, Vice-President  
Jeffrey Dubb, Secretary  
Leonard Weeks, Treasurer  
Bob Bueding  
Marta Guttenberg  
Betsy Lightbourn  
John McCormick  
Sally Redlener  
Linda Richardson

(215) 735 - 3456  
office@phillyethics.org  
www.phillyethics.org



**SUNDAY SERVICES**

**Hosts - Coordinated by  
Leslie Williams**



**April 5- Terry Martin-Murley and Lyle  
Murley**

**April 12 - Garry O'Rourke and Don  
Munson**

**April 19- Sharon Wallis and Leonard  
Weeks**

**April 26 - Ken Greiff and Lelah Marie**



**Flowers Coordinated  
by David Ralston**

**April 5 - Nina Diamond, celebrating  
EHSOP!**

**April 12 - Garry O'Rourke**

**April 19 - Nick Sanders, "Earth Day  
Forever!"**

**April 26 - Pat McGeever, "Celebrating  
oatmeal in the morning"**



**Coffee Hour Coordinators**

**April 5 - John McCormick**

**April 12 - Ken Greiff**

**April 19 - Garry O'Rourke**

**April 26 - Harry Thorn**

***Ethical Humanist Society  
of Philadelphia***

**1906 South Rittenhouse Square  
Philadelphia, PA 19103**