



Ethical Views



May 2016

Vol. 130, No. 9 Newsletter of the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia

Sunday Platforms

Ethical education classes for 5 to 12 year olds during Platform on Sunday May 1.



Sunday, May 1, 11:00 AM
The Fragility of Goodness
Hugh Taft-Morales,
Leader, Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia

In her book *The Fragility of Goodness*, philosopher Martha Nussbaum explores the perils of trying to live ethically. Striving to be moral in an unpredictable world can be rewarding but also risky. Why does the quest for a good life make us vulnerable to being hurt? What is goodness, and how do we nurture it in ourselves? Why is living an ethical life worth the risk? Hugh Taft-Morales searches for answers to these questions and more.

**BE GOOD
FOR GOODNESS
SAKE!**

Sunday, May 8, 11:00 AM
Good Without a God: How Humanists Work with Both Theists and Anti-Theists
Maggie Ardiente, American Humanist Association

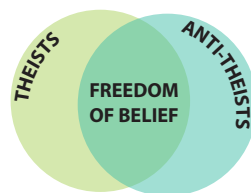
When it comes to discussions about religion, humanists are often caught in the middle between theists and anti-theists – willing to work with people of faith on issues of common ground while taking a critical stand against dangerous religious ideas. With the number of religiously unaffiliated Americans predicted to increase dramatically in the

coming years, humanism can play a unique role in attracting not just atheists and agnostics, but people who identify as “spiritual but not religious” or the millions who identify with a traditional religion yet don’t believe in a god. Maggie Ardiente, director of development and communications at the American Humanist Association, will share insights and experiences in balancing relationships with theists and anti-theists toward the common goal of protecting our fundamental freedom to believe – and not believe.



Maggie Ardiente is the director of development and communications at the American Humanist Association and senior editor of <http://thehumanist.com>. She has appeared on Fox News’s *Spirited Debate*, and has been quoted in *The Washington Post*, NPR, and the *Huffington Post* in the discussion of humanism and the growth of nonbelievers in the United States.

She graduated with a B.S. in sociology from James Madison University and served as Vice



President of the JMU Freethinkers, a student group for atheists, agnostics, and humanists. She is a Class 15 graduate and board member of The Humanist Institute, administrator for the Institute for Humanist Studies, and a former board member of the Secular Student Alliance.

Sunday, May 15, 11:00 AM
Members’ Platform – *What Ethical Culture Means to Me*

Leader Hugh hosts some members as they share their reflections about Ethical Culture. We will explore different ways people draw personal meaning from Ethical Culture and from their association with the Ethical Society. In addition, since on this day 140 years ago Felix Adler founded the first Ethical Society in New York, Hugh will frame these personal reflections within the context of the history of Ethical Culture.

Sunday, May 22, 11:00AM
Why Is The U.S. In Bed With Saudi Arabia and What Can We Do About It
Medea Benjamin, American Humanist Association, Heroine Award 2016

Saudi Arabia is one of the key U.S. allies in the Middle East yet it's a country with tremendous internal oppression and has used its military to crush democratic uprisings in neighboring countries. Saudi Arabia is also the source of



(Continued next page)

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1, 3 - Sunday Platforms
- 2 - President's Column
- 4 - Happenings
- 5 - Announcements
- 7 - Calendar, May Birthdays
- 8 - Sunday Services

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



"2026"

Nick Sanders –
President, Ethical
Humanist Society
of Philadelphia

Ten years from now, what is our Ethical Society likely to be? Maybe a better question – to be proactive – is: “What do we think it *should* be in 2026?” What would we like it to look like ten years from now? What is our vision for our Ethical Society?

Every ten years or so, we take up the issue of planning for the five-to-ten-year future for our Society. The last time was 2003-4. Previously, it was addressed in 1992-3. I was not around during the time between the two projects, so I do not know how insightful or productive that 1992-3 planning was. I joined the Society in 2003, and I do know about that latter effort. Within six months of joining, I was asked to become a member of the “Long-Range Planning Committee.” I was to be one of two on the committee who were bringing the perspective of a newbie to the Society. By early summer of 2004, our Long-Range Planning Committee provided the Society’s Board of Trustees the results of its nine-month-long effort. Reflecting on that 2003-4 effort, I am disappointed that (1) there was no actual plan to follow up on our 2003-4 results and (2) there was no vision of the Ethical Society that would emerge as a result of following the plan.

We are now on the verge of another long-range planning effort. A task force has been working to prepare for it. I am sure you will be hearing more about this during the next year. And insofar as I am involved, I will strongly advocate for at least an annual follow-up to determine

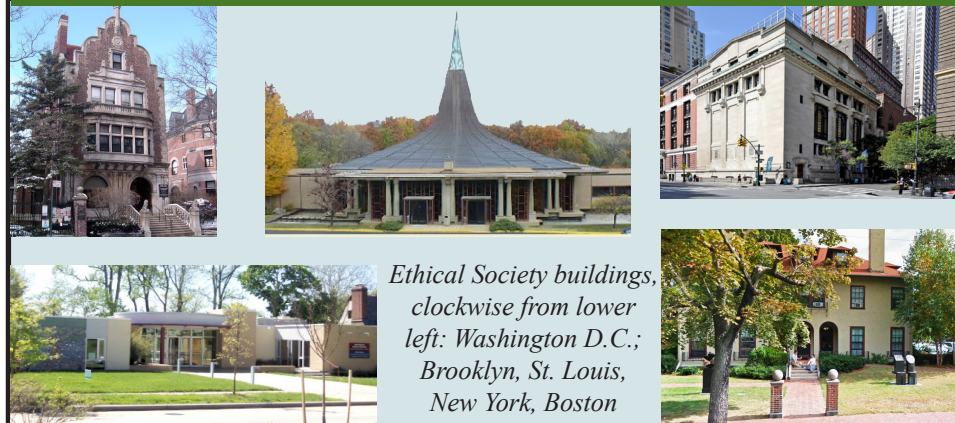
progress on whatever this next effort results in, and for the presence of at least one compelling vision of what the Ethical Society would look like as a result of follow-up on the planning.

While many would agree that follow-ups and related actions are essential, I believe that most might not agree about the importance of a vision. However, the function of the vision element of long-term planning is to motivate those who will need to be involved in accomplishing the goals of the plan. Members should be motivated by the vision, because their involvement is essential to

Rittenhouse Square. The persistent flooding on the Manning Street side of the basement finally undermined the building’s structure. The back wall fell inward, severely damaging the stage with the concert grand piano and destroying the kitchen above it, and most above that. No one was hurt, but the cost to rebuild was prohibitive, and the members of the Society’s Board of Trustees employed expertise to guide them through various developers’ proposals for purchasing our valuable property.

As a result of the sale of our property on Rittenhouse Square, we

WHAT MAKES A HOUSE A HOME?



*Ethical Society buildings,
clockwise from lower
left: Washington D.C.;
Brooklyn, St. Louis,
New York, Boston*

achieving the goals of the plan. In anticipation that we will need to come to some common motivating visions to accommodate plausible scenarios of events, several years ago I developed one scenario, which I call an “open to learning” scenario. I now believe it is not as plausible as I thought, because it required members’ willingness to devote themselves to building our Society beyond their own individual agendas. So I am proposing another plausible scenario, an “external force adaptation” scenario – one which takes into consideration that some basic disruption occurs in our way of doing things – one that will challenge us to devote ourselves to a better future for our Ethical Society.

Here is the scenario:

Almost nine years ago, we were forced to leave our beloved home on

were able to purchase a property in a Philadelphia neighborhood that was experiencing gentrification and to finance the renovation of the building that was there. Just in the past year we moved into the newly renovated building. Being involved with the developer in the design of the renovated spaces, representatives of our Board of Trustees have sought to recreate the program spaces of the Rittenhouse Square building – though all are now wheelchair accessible.

We share our new home with a publicly chartered preschool and a pediatrician’s office. These exclusive-space rentals, and ones for others who rent space in our building for events, are administered by a management firm that we employ to provide cleaning and maintenance in the building, in

addition to relating to the renters. While we had a stressful couple of years after we moved from our home at 1906 to being tenants at the Friends Center, we have rebounded. Before the wall collapse, the Society had 90 members. Initially, as we began to have platforms and other programs in Friends Center, attendance dropped off and membership went down to 70. However, by the time we were settled in our new home, the Society had 125 members. Our interaction with kindred souls employed and visiting for events at the Friends Center – especially well-coordinated social concern actions and events with other organizations there – interested some of the Friends Center contacts in joining our Ethical Society. With some current members who had children, a half-dozen or so of them formed the core of our increase in members with families. Further, we built on this core when we moved into our new building – with its preschool and pediatrician renters' families.

Although this “external force adaptation” scenario for ten years from now is too specific to be expected to come about exactly as depicted, I offer it as a specific vision of a type of future:

1. Something bad happens that prevents us from staying at 1906.

2. Because 1906 is a valuable location, we are able to gain a substantial amount of money to restart ourselves.

3. Though there is an initial negative impact, carefully adapting to the changes provides opportunity for growth.

Plausible scenarios such as this one are valuable in planning for our future. I believe that the long-term planning that members may next year be invited to participate in would benefit from members' thinking more concretely about how our Ethical Society should develop.

Continued from page 1

the extremist Wahhabi ideology that has bred groups like al-Qaeda and ISIL. It's important to examine the U.S.-Saudi Alliance. More and more Americans are starting to question this toxic relationship, especially in light of the recent killing of a Shia cleric that has led to increased tensions in the region. Come listen to Medea Benjamin, co-founder of **CODEPINK** and author of an upcoming book on Saudi Arabia, analyze these issues.



Medea Benjamin is the co-founder of the women-led peace group CODEPINK and the co-founder of the human rights group Global Exchange. She has been an advocate for social justice for more than 40 years. Described as "one of America's most committed – and most effective – fighters for human rights" by *New York Newsday*, and as "one of the high profile leaders of the peace movement" by *The Los Angeles Times*, she was one of 1,000 exemplary women from 140 countries nominated to receive the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the millions of women who do the essential work of peace worldwide.



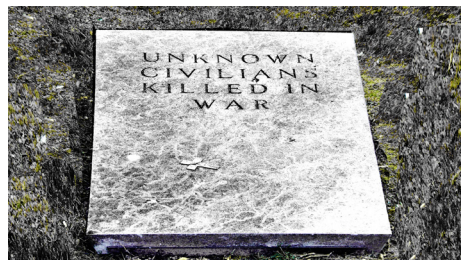
She is the author of eight books, including *Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control*, and her articles appear regularly in outlets such as *The Huffington Post*, *CommonDreams*, *Alternet*, *The Other Words*, and *TeleSUR*.

Sunday, May 29, 11:00 AM Toward an Ethical Humanist Celebration of Memorial Day Pat McGeever, Facilitator

The original purpose of Memorial Day was to remember U.S. military personnel who had died in wars. Such a memorial, worthy in itself, leaves out of account all the civilians who have also died in these wars. This year, EHSOP will simultaneously memorialize both the military and the civilian war dead, both the Unknown Soldier and the Unknown Civilian. Participants are invited to memorialize individual soldiers or civilians or both in comments following a brief talk by Pat.



Yorktown Battlefield marker, Virginia



Grave of Unknown Civilians, Coventry

You may forward written copies of your comments to Betsy Lightbourn elisalight726@gmail.com to be read aloud, or you may read or extemporize the comments yourself, much as we do in other memorial services.

Pat McGeever is professor emeritus of political science from Indiana University, where he taught for over 30 years. His Ph.D. in political science is from the University of Pennsylvania. Besides serving on EHSOP's Education Committee, he founded and chairs the local Hearing Loss Association of America chapter, organizes EHSOP's annual playwriting contest, and does some playwriting himself.

HAPPENINGS

NEWS FROM THE ETHICAL ACTION COMMITTEE'S ANTI-RACISM SUBCOMMITTEE

Sylvia Metzler writes:

At the Whites Confronting Racism workshop that I attended last month (see <http://www.phillyethics.org/newsletters/ev16-04.pdf> Ed.) we learned about “dog whistles.” These are code words that politicians and others use with the intention to provoke strong emotional responses in their target audiences. Of course they defend this practice as benign but are usually successful in stirring up racial resentment and fear. Remember Willy Horton and welfare queens? The “whistles” are often tied to economic issues: illegal aliens and freeloaders versus the silent majority and hardworking taxpayers. What color faces do you associate with these terms? How about “the makers and the takers”?

If you want to learn more about this practice, please look at the four minute video I recently emailed to EHSoP members. In case you missed it, it's on YouTube here: <https://youtu.be/caarVAS40jQ> If you have any questions, or would like to get involved in the Anti-Racism Subcommittee, please contact me at sylmetz@juno.com.

– Thanks. Sylvia.

**WE MUST
TALK ABOUT RACE TO
FIX ECONOMIC INEQUALITY**

Two notes:

1 – The book cited in the video is “Dog Whistle Politics: How Coded Racial Appeals Have Reinvented Racism and Wrecked the Middle Class” by Ian Haney López.

2 – Please see the Announcements section for details of Wednesday lunchtime “Black Lives Matter” discussions.

– Ed.



Philly Ethical Society members gathered on the green in front of Independence Hall at the opening rally of Democracy Spring.

A PHILLY SEND-OFF FOR DEMOCRACY SPRING MARCHERS

From the Democracy Spring website www.democracyspring.org :

From April 11th-18th, thousands of people took mass nonviolent action on the steps of the U.S. Capitol to give Congress a choice: either end the corruption of big money in politics and ensure free, fair elections or arrest hundreds of people, day after day, simply for demanding an equal voice.

1,300 arrests later, our message is clear: the American people will no longer accept the status quo of big money corruption and voter suppression.

Betsy Lightbourn writes:

On Saturday, April 2, more than a dozen Philly Ethical Society members gathered on the green – a stone's throw from Independence Hall –



★
**DEMOCRACY
SPRING**
★

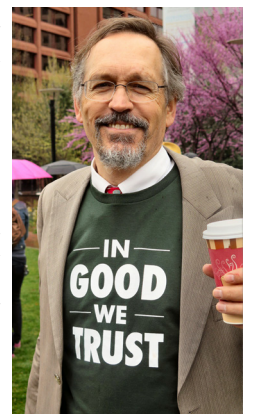
at the opening rally of Democracy Spring to offer a rollicking send-off in inspirational words and music to the marchers who would be our boots on the ground all the way to Washington, D.C. for a weeklong peaceful protest where thousands would gather and hundreds, including Ethical Culturists, would be arrested.

At the Philly beginning, our own Leader Hugh was one of three clergy speakers highlighting the event. After providing a historical perspective, with references to stark inequality during the Gilded Age, he reminded this age's 1%ers that “a vibrant democracy can ask people to share.”

Hugh continued to speak with urgency, “democracy is not just a voting system but a way of life that respects every individual, and that way of life is in danger now.”

The march needs to continue in all cities across the country not just today, but through the next year and the next decade.

All photos by Betsy Lightbourn



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wednesday Lunchtime Discussions of "Black Lives Matter"

When: Every Wednesday, noon-1:00 PM

Where: Leader's Office, 1906 Rittenhouse

Why: Because "Black Lives Matter"

Bring your own lunch!

Sunday, May 1, 7:00 PM

– Introduction to Ethical Humanism

Come for the last Intro to Ethical Humanism of the program year. Come discuss the history, philosophy and living presence of Ethical Humanism. Leader Hugh Taft-Morales will make a brief presentation and answer questions about our inspiring alternative to traditional religion. Members and newcomers welcome - bring your friends!

RSVP to LeaderHugh@phillyethics.org

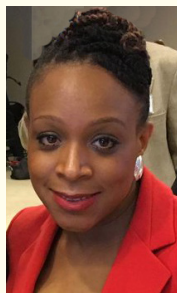
Monday, May 2, 7:00 PM

**Ethics on the Square series
continues:**

***Capitalism in Crisis!* –**

**The Environment and
Economics: Local, Sustainable,
and Self-Reliant**

Hugh Taft-Morales interviews Jamie Gauthier, Executive Director of the Sustainable Business Network (SBN) of Philadelphia, a 400+ member business organization working to build a just, green and thriving economy in the Greater Philadelphia region. Through SBN, independent businesses educate policy makers and the public and about how local businesses can become financially sound contributors to their communities and the environment. Ms. Gauthier will discuss Philadelphia's notoriety in this realm and talk about the work ahead for SBN.



Monday, May 16, 7:00 PM – *The Magic of Science: Collision of the Sacred and the Secular*

The Greater Philadelphia Thinking Society and the Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia co-sponsor a guided discussion of "The Magic of Science: Collision of the Sacred and the Secular." Join Sandy Catz, Hugh Taft-Morales, and facilitators from the Thinking Society as we discuss the human attraction to superstition and "magical thinking" – whether it involves mundane personal habits, use of alternative medicines, or listening to political demagogues and fearmongers selling their oversimplified political solutions to social problems. Before we can act more consistently rationally, we may need to recognize our irrationality – especially our propensity for magical thinking.

Wednesday, June 1, 7:00 PM – Reading/book signing: *Rittenhouse Writers: Reflections on a Fiction Workshop* by James Rahn

James started Rittenhouse Writers' Group twenty-eight years ago and it may be the longest-running independent fiction workshop in America. He first rented space in the Ethical Society's Collier Room and continues to hold classes there. Join him and other group members to celebrate his powerful memoir, which also includes ten stories by past and present students – some of whom have national reputations. Read more at www.pauldrybooks.com/products/rittenhouse-writers

James will host a small group conversation exclusively for Ethical Society members sometime in June about his newest book and the craft of writing in general. Look out for details in next month's summer edition of Ethical Views. Details to be announced.

Mark your calendar: Sunday, May 15, 12:45 PM

. . . after some coffee and with some special treats:

Our Ethical Society's 2016 Members' Meeting

Elect Officers and Board Members,

Vote on Governance changes,

and

Hear and thank your Society lay leaders and their teams.

Is it Ethical to have fun?

You betcha, especially at the EHSOP Service Auction



• Cocktail & Dinner Parties

• Sing Alongs with Hugh



• Theater Tours

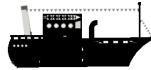


• Garden Tours



• Museum Visits

• Boat Rides on Schuylkill



• Ice Cream & Games Events



• and many more, including popular items from last year
... plus some new and unusual ones!

If you haven't signed up yet, now is the time:
Auction Display and sign up sheets are in the Assembly Room, or contact
our Service Auctioneer, Sally Redlener at 215-360-9008 sredlener110@gmail.com
ALL PROCEEDS GO DIRECTLY TO EHSOP.



Saturday, May 21, 8:00 PM
The Ethical Society Building

*This is a one-evening-only recital, with
no Sunday afternoon performance.*

In RECITAL:
Pianist Pawel Chęciński

Program:
Enrique Granados – Allegro de Concierto
Claude Debussy – L'Isle Joyeuse
Frederic Chopin – the four Ballades:
G minor, F major, A-flat, F minor
Franz Liszt – Sonata in B minor



Fine Art Music Company is honored to present a very special recital by Polish-born pianist Pawel Chęciński, Juilliard-trained, world-renowned performer and teacher for our very own Kasia Marzec-Salwinski, who studied under Chęciński for several years in Chicago before coming to Philadelphia.

Pawel Chęciński made his first major appearance outside of Poland at the Moscow Conservatory. His reputation as an outstanding and highly original interpreter of the music of Chopin secured his premiere performance in the West, which took place at Wigmore Hall in London, England. His U.S. debut occurred at Carnegie Recital Hall in New York, which led to performances in places such as New York's Lincoln Center, Philadelphia's Academy of Music, and Chicago's Auditorium Theatre and Orchestra Hall. He has been a featured artist on the Dame Myra Hess Concert Series in Chicago and on the Phillips Collection recital series in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Chęciński performed an all Szymanowski concert in New York as a centennial celebration of the composer's birth, and a commemorative recital of works written for and dedicated to Artur Rubinstein. He was the soloist at the inaugural concert of Chicago's Symphony II orchestra. Pawel Chęciński performed what is believed to be the Chicago premiere of Chopin's Fantasy on Polish Airs with orchestra. In 2005, he appeared at Orchestra Hall to once again bring this composition to the Chicago concert stage.



Our final concert of the season is
Music Across Latitudes,
- Ivy Hall on Friday, June 3rd, at 8:00pm
- Ethical Society on Saturday, June 4th at 8:00pm.



MAY 2016



Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1 11:00 a.m.: <i>The Fragility of Goodness</i> Hugh Taft-Morales 7:00 p.m.: <i>Intro to Ethical Humanism</i> Hugh Taft-Morales	2 7:00 p.m.: <i>Capitalism in Crisis: The Environment and Economics</i> Jamie Gauthier	3	4 Noon <i>Black Lives Matter</i> MEETING: 6:30 p.m. Education Committee	5	6	7
8 11:00 a.m.: <i>Good Without a God</i> Maggie Ardiente	9	10	11 Noon <i>Black Lives Matter</i> MEETINGS 5:30 p.m. Finance Committee 6:30 p.m. Ethical Action Committee	12	13	14
15 11:00 a.m.: <i>What Ethical Culture Means to Me</i> Hugh Taft-Morales 12:45 p.m.: 2016 Members Meeting	16 7:00 p.m.: <i>The Magic of Science</i> Co-hosted by EHSoP and the Greater Philadelphia Thinking Society	17	18 Noon <i>Black Lives Matter</i> MEETING 7:00 p.m. EHSoP Board of Trustees	19	20	21 8:00 p.m. Musical at Ethical: In Recital: Pavel Checinski
22 11:00 a.m. <i>Why is the U.S. in Bed with Saudi Arabia</i> Medea Benjamin	23	24	25 Noon <i>Black Lives Matter</i> MEETING 7:00 p.m. Camp Linden Committee	26 7:00 p.m. Amnesty International Meeting	27	28
29 11:00 a.m. <i>Toward a Humanist Memorial Day</i> Facilitated by Pat McGeever	30	31	JUNE 1 7:00 p.m. Rittenhouse Writers Workshop & Book Signing	2	3	4 8:00 p.m. Musical at Ethical: Music Across Latitudes

QUOTE - UNQUOTE

"We are aiding in laying the foundations of a mighty edifice, whose completion shall not be seen in our day, no, nor in centuries upon centuries after us. But happy are we, indeed, if we can contribute even the least towards so high a consummation. The time calls for action. Up, then, and let us do our part faithfully and well. And oh, friends, our children's children will hold our memories dearer for the work which we begin this hour."

— Felix Adler, founding address to the New York Society for Ethical Culture, May 15, 1876

MAY BIRTHDAYS

1	Jim Cummings
7	Pat McGeever
7	Nick Sanders
7	Denise Shamro
14	Marta Guttenberg
20	Doris Dabrowski
21	Scott Pleune
28	Bob Kay



SUNDAY SERVICES

11:00 A.M. SEPTEMBER
THROUGH JUNE

Ethical Views is published monthly
except July and August.

Editor, Steve Bremner
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**Hosts Coordinated
by Lelah Marie, Host**
Sunday hosts greet
and orient members
and visitors and make a
valuable contribution to
the community. If you'd like to help
out, please contact Lelah.
Thanks to our estimable March
hosts:

Henry Pashkow, Ken Greiff,
Sandy Coffey, Garry O'Rourke,
Sharon Wallis, Leonard Weeks,
Bob Bueding, and Sally Redlener.



Flowers Coordinated by David Ralston

May 1 - Nick Sanders,
"Happy Birthday, dear
Molly Sayvetz"

May 8- Bob Bueding, "For the
continual growth of the Ethical
Society"

May 15 - Sylvia Goldman

May 22 - Susan O'Connell,
"To Bob, for supporting me through
thick and thin"



EHSOP provides summer camp,
without cost, to low-income inner
city children from Philadelphia.



Coffee Hour Coordinators

May 1 - John Marshall
May 8 - Ken Greiff
May 15 - Garry O'Rourke
May 22- Harry Thorn

For suggestions regarding this
newsletter, contact Steve Bremner:
stevebremner@fastmail.fm

Ethical Humanist Society of Philadelphia

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