



ETHICAL VIEWS

December 2016

Vol. 131, No. 4

Newsletter of the Philadelphia Ethical Society



Sunday Platforms

Sunday Ethical Education for Kids (SEEK): *In December we will have a special children's program once, on December 4. There will be no special children's program or child care on the other Sundays in December.*

Sunday, Dec. 4, 11:00 AM
Freethought and Free Press
in Trump Times

Hugh Taft-Morales, Leader,
Philadelphia Ethical Society



As political uncertainty clouds the horizon, how should freethinkers and humanists prepare for Trump times? Even though the president elect is not particularly religious, he won a majority of evangelical, Catholic and Mormon votes. Perhaps they liked Trump's promises to ban Muslims, put conservatives on the court, and allow tax-exempt organizations to endorse candidates. As the Ethical Society once again decorates a Tree of Knowledge in our lobby, however, Hugh Taft-Morales worries more about Trump's hostility to a free and fair press. It's time for freethinkers to rise again to defend this crucial Constitutional right.

and right after the platform
on Sunday, Dec. 4, 12:15 PM:
TREE OF KNOWLEDGE

Come help decorate the Tree of Knowledge in our lobby after Platform. We join our friends from the Freethought Society for this celebration of openness, freedom of conscience, and knowledge. Everyone is welcome. If you have a book cover you want to contribute to the tree, email a scan of it to

Hugh at leaderhugh@phillyethics.org

or bring him TWO color copies of your book cover by Dec. 4 and we will try to laminate them that day so they can adorn our tree! This year we add the Tree of Knowledge for Young Freethinkers, featuring books for young readers and selected labels by them.



Sunday, Dec. 11, 11:00 AM
Who Decides How You Will Die
Barbara Mancini, Advocate

In 2013, 93 year-old Joe Yourshaw was dying. He had prepared carefully for the end of his life by discussing his wishes, completing an advance directive, appointing a healthcare proxy and enrolling in home hospice care. Yet his careful planning devolved into a nightmarish ordeal where he was subjected to unwanted medical treatment in defiance of his wishes, and his daughter, Barbara Mancini, endured a yearlong criminal prosecution for "aiding an attempted suicide." Her case sparked outrage and condemnation in the media. Barbara will discuss her legal case, and show how dying can be fraught with unanticipated perils.



Barbara Mancini has been a nurse for over 30 years. She lives in Philadelphia with her husband, Joe, and their two daughters. In 2013

she was arrested and prosecuted in Pennsylvania on the charge of aiding the attempted suicide of her dying 93-year-old father after handing him his prescribed morphine four days before his death. Barbara's prosecution lasted a year, during which time it garnered national attention, and it was roundly criticized throughout the media

Barbara was interviewed about her case on television's *60 Minutes*, and National Public Radio. She has become a vocal advocate for improved end-of-life care and medical aid-in-dying.

Sunday, Dec. 18, 11:00 AM
Winter Solstice Festival
Richard Kiniry, Leader
Emeritus, Philadelphia
Ethical Society

All are welcome to our Winter Solstice Platform, PES's traditional celebration of warmth and light that helps us get through the cold and dark of winter months! Words of wisdom, music, and candles will help kindle hope and inspiration.



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LEADER'S COLUMN



*Hugh Taft-Morales,
Leader,
Philadelphia
Ethical
Society*

Coming to Grips with Trump Times

Writing this Leader's column so soon after a stunning election result is challenging. The *vast majority* of Ethical Culturists had hoped for a different outcome. For a community that embraces the inherent worth of every person, it is hard to confront the fact that our President-Elect leveraged his way into the White House using bigotry, misogyny, and fear of "the other." For a community that tries to use reason and create relationships to build our future, it is hard to accept Trump's effective use of rabid emotional appeals and tribalism.

As I struggle to process it all personally, I am called to be steady as the Leader of your Ethical Society. It's metaphorically like I'm driving our community bus through a storm, trying to move us down the road of progress, but feeling like I want to pull over and wait it out. Sadness, anger, denial, and confusion swirl around, splattering like heavy rain upon my windshield. They make it very hard to see the road in front of me. Besides, the shock of it all makes me wonder if our nation has taken a wrong turn. Who knows what hairpin turns, steep ravines, and closed bridges lie ahead?

It's also challenging because this column will be published three weeks after I submit it, and that seems a long way off right now. By then we will all have read and heard thousands of words of explanation, consolation, and calls to action. I

probably will have already shared with you – through emails, phone calls, and in person – advice that will go beyond the words I write now.

In the next weeks I will have read and listened to the words of others, gaining valuable inspiration and a better map for moving forward. Certainly, hearing over the next weeks from so many of you, the members of Ethical Culture, will educate me the most. Already I appreciate the diversity of our reactions, from those who have given up all hope to those calling on us all to redouble our efforts to make a better world. There is no single way to process the beginning of Trump times, though I hope that when the immediate squall of feelings subsides we will meet where people seek the highest.

In the last months of her campaign, Hillary Clinton echoed Michelle Obama's refrain, "When your opponent goes low, we go high." While she at times played rough politics, in her concession speech she was dignified and respectful. She asked us all to try to heal the nation and build a better future. She did not put herself in the center, stressing that, "Our campaign was never about one person or even one election, it was about the country we love and about building an America that's hopeful, inclusive and big-hearted."

"Hopeful, inclusive and big-hearted" – with so much hateful rhetoric still in the air, that's a tall order for us, right now. But I do believe it's a big part of how we need to be. It's one way that we can try to bring out our best. If we allow our wounds to fester, leading us to spew the hateful rhetoric used too often during this campaign, we could lose our moral center. And, pragmatically, we will lose whatever chance we have of influencing those soon to be in control of the executive branch. Hillary is not naïve. She knows how destructive hate can be. So, within

her realistic pragmatism, she makes room for hope. As she counsels us, "Donald Trump is going to be our president. We owe him an open mind and the chance to lead." Should we take her noble advice? It might even be pragmatic advice – Trump is, after all, wildly unpredictable. Who knows what he will do?

But, if we do manage to muster up hope, inclusivity, and a big-heart, let us not be fools. We must get our best activist selves up off the floor and back to work. We must also be ready to speak truth to power should Trump try to honor his more horrific campaign promises. We cannot let him violate the Constitution. We must defend equal protection under law, and the basic civil liberties of freedom of conscience, press, and assembly. Personally, I intend to support more robustly an organization Ethical Culturists helped found a century ago: the American Civil Liberties Union. Channel your energy into the causes that you believe are most important in these Trump times.

What I most fear over the next four years is the erosion of our freedom of speech and press. President-Elect Trump has shown a remarkable disdain for this freedom. He intimidated and threatened reporters trying to do their job. While he has lied outright, he condemns those who disagree with his version of the truth. Down that road lies dictatorship. We can hope that this wildly unpredictable person somehow allows the better angels of his nature to guide him, but we must be vigilant, defending our right to free speech.

Before concluding this column, I want to offer some perspective involving privilege. Trump's presidency threatens me, but I am sheltered by a comfortable life and adequate resources. If you, like me, are so lucky, let us never forget others less privileged, including some of our

members. Trump times could well bring greater racism and oppression manifest in the militarization of law enforcement and the prison-industrial complex. Many may lose their newfound Affordable Care Act health coverage. Many fear harassment or deportation.

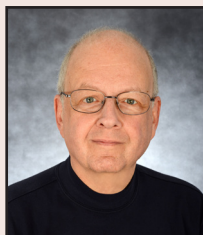
So for those of us who can avoid these immediate dangers, let's not use our privilege to escape Trump times, to another country or into cynical self-concern. Let's stay engaged and use our privilege to change a system of privilege run amok. Those feeling economically squeezed – many of whom voted for Trump – are justifiably angry with Wall Street. Something's not working for every one other than the super rich. Poor and middle class white men are not wrong that life has gotten harder for them.

Those of us relatively comfortable must help fix the system for the good of the 99%, especially the most marginalized: the poor, many women, and poor people of color. We must work in broad coalitions to bring out the best in our country. Let's put pressure on the future Trump administration. They must know we are watching. We cannot let them use their "mandate" to justify illegal activities and blatant cruelty.

I will do my best to drive our community bus through this storm. I will try to pull over only temporarily when we risk losing our way. But we should not stay on the shoulder simply because it's easier. In hopes of rallying us all to the cause, I leave you some final words from Clinton's concession speech: "...let us have faith in each other, let us not grow weary, let us not lose heart, for there are more seasons to come. And there is more work to do."

There is certainly more work to do.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



A Time for Healing

Bob Bueding

I purposely waited until the last minute to write this month's message to you. I was hoping we'd have some historic news concerning the election. I had hoped that when I woke up on Wednesday morning our country would have elected the first woman president, shattering the highest glass ceiling, but to my surprise we elected a candidate of question. Apparently our electorate was totally dissatisfied with the current state of politics in our country, hence the election of a political outsider. What lessons should we learn from this crazy election cycle?

The first problem I see is that many of our elected officials have no idea of how to work together and don't understand the art of compromise. The other problem I see is that so many politicians don't work for their constituents, but do things to enhance their own agendas. The concept of "the common good" has been lost in our government functions. We must recapture it. Each of us has a responsibility to restore faith in our community. How do we do that? What can I do?



On the home front, we continue to make improvements to our building at 1906. When you're at the Society, walk up to the second floor and look at the Weston and Collier rooms. You'll see that the floors have been refinished, the new paint and refinished floors make these rooms shine. In the months to come we will refinish the floors in the auditorium and assembly rooms. Also in the works is new lighting above the outside signage "Ethical Society" at the front entrance of our building. There are also items you don't always see which require improvement or repair; one example is the replacement of our hot water heater at a cost of nearly \$2,000.

I would also alert you to our upcoming 2017 Pledge Luncheon; the theme this year will be "Shining our Light." The luncheon will take place on Sunday, January 22, 2017, immediately following our platform. Once a year we ask our membership to make a pledge for the upcoming year. Our membership has always been generous. The pledges go to supporting our society, building improvement and repairs, programs, Camp Linden and other activities. In addition, we will have some matching grants to help boost your gifts to the Society. Please be on the lookout for your invitation. I'm hoping you will be able to attend; your past contributions have been greatly appreciated and I hope you'll be able to continue your generous support.

It's already December! I hope the New Year will be a year of continued growth and good health and I hope to see you all at our programs and our Pledge Luncheon on January 22, 2017.

– Bob

bbueding@phillyethics.org



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Saturday, December 3, 7:00 PM

PES presents a screening of *NOTHING BUT A MAN*

The Philadelphia Ethical Society Presents
The Critically Acclaimed Film:

Nothing But A Man

with post film discussion

Starring Ivan Dixon and Abbey Lincoln
Written by Robert M. Young and Michael Roemer
Directed by Michael Roemer

RSVP at EventBrite
phillyethics.org

**Saturday
December 3rd
7:00pm**

1906 S Rittenhouse Sq
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-735-3456

Suggested Donation \$5 to benefit the POWER Live Free Action Team
for more information visit powerinterfaith.org

The Philadelphia Ethical Society is showing the black and white film *Nothing But A Man* as a fundraiser for the Philadelphians Organized to Witness, Empower and Rebuild (POWER) Live Free Strategy Team. (More information: www.powerinterfaith.org) A suggested donation of \$5.00 will be requested at the door. The film stars Ivan Dixon and jazz great Abbey Lincoln, and was directed by Michael Roemer who co-wrote the film with Robert M. Young. There will be a post-film discussion. Reservations can be made on EventBrite: Nothing But A Man.

Sunday, December 4, 12:15 PM

Come help decorate the Tree of Knowledge in our lobby after Platform. We join our friends from the Freethought Society for this celebration of openness, freedom of conscience, and knowledge. Everyone is welcome. If you have a book cover you want to contribute to the tree, email a scan of it to Hugh at leaderhugh@phillyethics.org or bring him TWO color copies of your book cover by Dec. 4 and we will try to laminate them that day so they can adorn our tree! This year we add the Tree of Knowledge for Young Freethinkers, featuring books for young readers and selected largely by them.



Sunday, December 4, 7:00 PM
– **Introduction to Ethical Humanism**

Newcomers and visitors are encouraged to attend an Introduction to Ethical Humanism. Hugh Taft-Morales, Leader of the Philadelphia

Ethical Society, will offer a brief presentation and host a discussion from 7:00-8:30 PM. Come learn about Ethical Culture's unique brand of humanism and what it could mean to you during a relaxed 90 minutes. Please RSVP to leaderhugh@phillyethics.org

FINAL CAPITALISM IN CRISIS EVENING WILL BE:

December 5, 7:00 PM

Why Not Socialism?

Joseph Schwartz, is a progressive political activist, Professor of Political Science at Temple University and leader in the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) www.dsasusa.org

Given the recent election results, come consider this radical alternative!



WANTED:

Words of Inspiration.. for the
Winter Solstice Celebration
on Sunday, December 18

Each year the Winter Solstice Celebration at the Ethical Society presents a program of music and readings (poetry and short prose selections) as we move with the season from darkness into light. To keep the Celebration evolving, we introduce some new readings each year, and we are soliciting members' submissions. The readings should in some way fit one of the following themes:

- *Nature*
- *Light (physical and/or intellectual)*
- *Community (our lives together in dark days)*



The deadline for submission to the Society Office (Education mailbox) is Sunday, December 4. No submission will be accepted after that date. On December 11, members and friends will be invited to select and sign for the item they would like to read at the Solstice.

Thursday, December 8, 5:30-8:00 PM

Human Rights Day 2016:
The Right to Education

Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) speaks to the right of all people to a quality education. As this struggle plays out across the world, and here in Philadelphia, UNA-GP is dedicating its annual recognition of the UDHR, signed in 1948, to this fundamental right.

The United Nations Association, Greater Philadelphia chapter, has organized a program for this purpose at the Philadelphia Ethical Society. **Andrea Townrow** from Women's Campaign International will speak on their work educating future leaders around the globe.

www.womenscampaigninternational.org

Local leadership perspectives on this struggle will be provided by Philadelphia City Councilwoman Helen Gym as well as representatives of POWER (Philadelphians Organized to Witness, Empower and Rebuild) <http://powerinterfaith.org>, a grass-roots, interfaith group with a strong presence in the fight for fair funding for all of Pennsylvania's school districts. The program is free with light refreshments and cash bar.

PLEDGE



Save the Date – Sunday, January 22, 2017 – Pledge Luncheon

Mark your calendar for a most important annual event at the Philadelphia Ethical Society: **January 22 at high noon**, right after a shortened platform service. We're having our **Community Pledge Luncheon** to celebrate and recommit ourselves to growing Ethical Culture in Philadelphia! Come for a delicious lunch courtesy of the Pledge Team.

Currently: Collier Gallery, Ethical Society Building: The Artwork of Nastaran Saboori

Nastaran Saboori, or Nasy, was a graphic artist before she moved to the U.S. from Iran. Nastaran's illustrations are based on Iranian literature. She loves Iranian literature, specially works by Nizami and Rumi. Her dissertation was on Seven Beauties written by Nizami Ganjavi in 1197 CE. Over the last 18 years Nasy has worked on her dissertation and illustrations.

WHAT'S GOIN' ON? *A look at some other public events at the Ethical Society Building in December*

A Depth Psychological Approach to Suffering, a public symposium with Lionel Corbett, MD. Friday, December 9, 7:30 PM. Tickets and info: <https://www.universe.com/events/a-depth-psychological-approach-to-suffering-tickets-CKT7DZ>

Christmas In Philadelphia, A Holiday Concert Event, presented by The National Marian Anderson Historical Society. Sunday, December 11, 4:00 PM. Tickets and info: <http://marianandersonhistoricalsociety.weebly.com/>

Sea Tangle: Songs from the North, with Maren Montalbano, mezzo-soprano. Wednesday, December 21, 8:00 PM. Info: <http://marenmontalbano.com>

HAPPENINGS . . .

INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING GATHERING AT THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY, RITTENHOUSE SQ.

Ethical Society members, including Nick Sanders, Vince Russo, Betsy Lightbourn, Nina Diamond, John Marshall, David Ralston, and Bob Bueding and his wife Liz, attended the Center City Residents Association Interfaith Thanksgiving program on Tuesday, November 22.

In the beautiful sanctuary of Church of the Holy Trinity Episcopal we gathered with members from Leyv Ha-Ir,

First Unitarian, the Shambhala Center and nine other communities. We shared Buddhist, Christian, Humanist, Islamic, and Jewish readings. Leader Hugh played two of his own instrumental compositions during the collection, all of which went to the Bethesda Project, a shelter for Philadelphia's most vulnerable. Main organizer, Rev. Donna Maree



concluded the evening by noting how, during a time of anxiety and rising bigotry, it was uplifting to see such a diverse group of people to come together in harmony.

CONFRONTING RACISM

This is the first monthly column generated by the Confronting Racism Task Force. We hope these writings will help raise our level of awareness, and generate positive actions to challenge racism in ourselves and in our country. If you want to be involved in the Task Force or this column feel free to speak to Sylvia Metzler – sylmetz@juno.com

PES member **Linda Richardson** writes: For more than a year, the Ethical Action Committee and the Subcommittee on Racism have developed discussions on race and forged the congregational response to Black Lives Matter.

I have been a member of the Ethical Society for a few years and have had a long-term relationship with the Ethical Society since my parents joined in the early 1960's. I got married in the society and my oldest daughter had her naming ceremony at the society. As new members then, there were three active African American Families, plus individual members. Those families such as the Lemons, the Waters and a single parent Lois Kucksinovitch had children in the Sunday School.

Our relationship with racism in the Ethical Society was both individual and programmatic. Once, a member asked my mother if she could hire her to sew her clothes, not knowing that my Mother was a great seamstress, but assuming that that was what she did for a living as a Black Woman. My sisters and I would be asked if we knew people's maids or childcare workers, and once a member brought us a bag of her discarded second hand clothes. My mother with grace and dignity always responded to these individual experiences, although some of us older teenagers were both offended and outraged.

As we moved into the late 1960's and early 1970's, the Young Adult Group of the Ethical Society would have guest speakers and once invited members of the Black Panther Party to speak. My siblings and I were active members of the Young Adult Group and I was a co-chair of the group. The diversity of speakers on the platform then and now was minimal; however, the Black Panthers and their social service programs were of interest to us. We lived Ethical Values and felt that this was a legitimate issue for the youth. One of my brothers and his friend sold the Black Panther newspaper and,

while not members, had extensive contacts with the party. We organized a meeting and invited the Panthers to speak. At the Board meeting, we reported out our plans and were met by the Board and membership with opposition. We were asked to disinvite our speakers and the Young Adult group waged an educational campaign to have our meeting. After getting the final decision to disinvite the group, many members of the Young Adult group including all of my siblings left the Ethical Society. Except for rare occasions, they have not been back.

During the years I was very active and served as Treasurer, very often if I made a statement or had an idea, it would be met with silence. A few minutes later another member would state the same thing and it would be very well received. I am not going to go into every little experience I have had, but wanted to give a personalized view of how others are viewed by many members.

Examining both individual and collective ways that racism affects us all is the first step in making our society a diverse community.

DECEMBER 2016

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 <div>7:00 p.m. Screening: <i>Nothing But a Man</i></div>
4 11:00 a.m.: <i>Coming to Grips with Trump Times</i> Hugh Taft-Morales <div>7:00 p.m.: <i>Intro to Ethical Humanism</i> Hugh Taft-Morales</div>	5 <div>7:00 p.m. <i>Capitalism in Crisis: Why Not Socialism?</i></div>	6	7 PES MEETING 6:30 p.m. Education Committee	8 <div>5:30 p.m. Human Rights Day 2016: <i>The Right to Education</i></div>	9	10
11 11:00 a.m. <i>Who Decides How You Will Die?</i> Barbara Mancini	12	13	14 PES MEETINGS 5:30 p.m. Finance Committee 6:30 p.m. Ethical Action Committee	15 <div> 7:00 p.m. Amnesty International Meeting</div>	16	17
18 <div>11:00 a.m. <i>Winter Solstice Festival</i></div>	19	20	21 PES MEETING 6:30 p.m. PES Board of Trustees	22	23	24
25 <i>Merry Christmas!</i>	26	27	28 PES MEETING 7:00 p.m. Camp Linden Committee	29	30	31

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1	Bill Coffey
10	Ron Coburn
14	Richard Kiniry
21	Bertha Stovall Waters
23	Bob Moore
25	Susan Brotherton

A note from your Leader:

Thanks to the marvels of modern medicine, Hugh Taft-Morales hopes to be up and walking, dancing and doing yoga. Two hip replacement surgeries will greatly reduce his availability for Ethical Culture work during the months of December-February, though he does hope to offer some platforms during January. Thanks to all of you who volunteer to fill in for me regarding various duties!



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 John Marshall**
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 John Marshall.



Coffee Hour Coordinators

Dec 4 - John Marshall
Dec 11 - Ken Greiff
Dec 18- Garry O'Rourke
Dec 25 - Ghost of
Christmas Yet to Come



Flowers Coordinated by David Ralston

Dec 4 - Nina Diamond

Dec 11 - Garry O'Rourke,
"Peace on Earth"

Dec 18 - Irene Putzer, "In
loving memory and honor of
the deceased members of
my family"

QUOTE - UNQUOTE

"Patriotism is not enough. I
realize that I must have no
hatred or bitterness towards
anyone."

*- Edith Cavell, First World
War British nurse celebrated
for saving the lives of soldiers
in Brussels from all sides
without distinction. Spoken
shortly before her execution
by the Germans in October,
1915, for assisting over 200
Allied soldiers in escaping
from occupied Belgium to the
neutral Netherlands.*

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

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