



# ETHICAL VIEWS

March 2019 Vol. 133, No. 7 Newsletter of the Philadelphia Ethical Society



## Sunday Platforms

**Sunday, Mar. 3, 11:00 AM**  
*What Do You Really Own Anyway?*

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



What is it to “own” something? Is it just to have exclusive access to, or control over, a resource? How did the concept of “ownership” arise? Is it true

that “property is theft?” How have the concepts of property and money evolved so as to de-emphasize the shared resources and relationships that don’t fit so easily into the concept of “ownership”? Hugh Taft-Morales explores different ways that members of the Philadelphia Ethical Society can approach “owning” our community and our mission.

**Sunday, Mar. 10, 11:00 AM**  
*The Tobacco Industry: Behind the Smoke and Mirrors*  
**Ryan Coffman, Philadelphia Department of Public Health**

This talk focuses on the tobacco industry’s extensive prior and current history of deception and manipulation to promulgate the tobacco epidemic domestically and globally. It will reference real internal industry quotes from litigation and actual campaigns the industry has launched to target vulnerable populations. This

presentation will expose the source of the tobacco epidemic and pandemic.

Ryan Coffman, MPH, CHES, CTTS-M

is the Tobacco Policy and Control Program Manager for the Philadelphia Department of Public Health. In this role, he seeks to reduce smoking by adult and youth throughout the city by enforcing presently constituted policy. They use mass media campaigns and clean indoor and outdoor air laws as well as other systems and environmental strategies.



**Sunday, Mar. 17, 11:00 AM**  
*Solitude: The Art of Being Alone*, **Hugh Taft-Morales, Leader, Philadelphia Ethical Society**

Human beings are social creatures. Social media seduces us into more and more communication with others, some in person and a lot virtually. But most people need to be alone sometimes, without electronic distractions and conversation. Many find solitude a source of inspiration, creativity, and renewal. How can we better appreciate the place of solitude in our lives? Does being alone have to result in loneliness? What inner resources might we better access by finding some time to ourselves? Meditate on these questions alone, and then come explore some answers with Hugh Taft-Morales.

**Sunday, Mar. 24, 11:00 AM**  
*The Role of the Office of Engagement for Women in Advancing a Social Justice Agenda*, **Jovida Hill, Mayor’s Office of Engagement for Women**

Jovida Hill, Executive Director of the Mayor’s Office of Engagement for Women, discusses her office and the Philadelphia Commission for Women and the role they play in advancing the administration’s commitment to diversity and inclusion. Since the office was created in 2016, they have tackled issues of sexual harassment, street harassment, wage equity, fair workweek and minimum wage legislation, human trafficking, domestic worker’s bill of rights, and dignity for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women.

A former journalist and filmmaker with more than 200 videos and films to her credit, Hill joined the Kenney administration in 2016 as the Administrator in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion before being appointed to the Office of Engagement for Women. She is the former chair of the Philadelphia Black Women’s Health Project and Scenic Philadelphia (formerly SCRUB), and a founding member of the African Sisterhood and the Women Gather Conference.

*Platforms continued on page 3*

*Sunday Ethical Education for Kids (SEEK) will meet during platforms on March 3 and 17. If you have questions, please contact Nick Sanders, [nick@phillyethics.org](mailto:nick@phillyethics.org)*

# LEADER'S COLUMN

## *The Challenge of Environmental Stewardship*

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

The Overbrook Environmental Education Center (OEEC) has been engaging area high school students in their Overbrook Youth Environmental Stewardship (O'YES) Program. The O'YES program is sponsored by the PA Department of Environmental Protection and supported in-part by a generous donation from a PES member and others. All students in this program learn about the built and natural environment from the program's curriculum ([www.oyesphilly.org](http://www.oyesphilly.org)), commit to weekly service, and participate in service-learning projects on their own time.

Currently, O'YES cohorts are working on "Visual & Environmental Literacy," a project in which students use graphic images and videos to communicate important concepts about the environment where they live, learn and play. On April 12 and 13, students are coordinating culminating activities to display their works.

On April 12, the OEEC is the host site for an invitation-only Environmental Justice Round-Table. Pennsylvania Secretary of Environmental Protection Patrick McDonnell is scheduled to attend with his staff. The Secretary will participate in a discussion with stakeholders from local environmental

organizations. O'YES students will share a video they are creating that presents some of what they've learned about environmental justice.

The student video is part of their Visual & Environmental Literacy project. OEEC Director Jerome Shabazz explained that "this kind of literacy involves the ability to capture and share environmental concepts through photography and art."

I will be recruiting some PES members to be interviewed for the video – either as simply members or as people with some competency, expertise and/or experience on environmental issues.



Students producing the video plan to address the following environmental areas: land use; air quality; water quality; environmental justice; and food equity. The video is designed to answer three main questions: 1) What's going on currently in these environmental areas, 2) why should we care about this issue, and 3) what can we do about the issue?

Throughout the O'YES program students have been encouraged to claim a group mantra, "Freedom is mine!" This phrase epitomizes the optimism and drive necessary for anyone to make a real contribution to environmental activism. Each interviewee will be asked to comment on their view on environmental justice and freedom. Maybe we can show the video at PES later in the spring!

At a community-wide "Environmental Justice and Community Wellness Fair" on Saturday, April 13, city, state and local organizations will provide resource information to the public to help residents understand what tools are available to help them become stewards of their environment and protectors of our biosphere. Let me know if you would like to attend this event at OEEC – we can carpool!

Speaking of being better environmental stewards, I am organizing a small task force to develop a PES Environmental Impact Statement to propose to the Board for adoption. The statement is a public declaration of environmental values and a guide to concrete practices. The statement could include guidelines about how we choose vendors. For example, what cleaning products do we buy and use in our building, and are they relatively less harmful to the environment and people using them?

Also, when we rent our building out for weddings, do we ask the renters to refrain from using balloons and confetti which some see as environmentally harmful? Do the caterers we hire use compostable packaging, cups, and utensils? Are our recycling containers used regularly and correctly? Are we making use of virtual meetings to limit the amount of driving to maintain our community life? Should people bring their own mugs for coffee time? Obviously there are many ways we could be more environmentally sensitive at PES and in our personal lives. Most of us know that we often fall short of our environmental ideals. I believe that together we can move forward with humility down the never-ending path towards environmental sustainability.



*Continued from page 1*

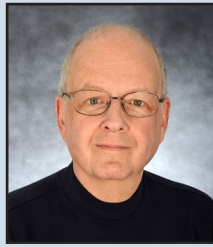
**Sunday, Mar. 31, 11:00 AM**  
***The Encampment for***  
***Citizenship: An Experience in***  
***Participatory Democracy***  
**Anne Klaeysen, Leader, New**  
**York Society for Ethical**  
**Culture**

The Encampment for Citizenship, founded in 1946 by Ethical Culture Leader Algernon D. Black and Alice ("Nanny") Pollitzer, a prominent civic leader, offered an opportunity for young adults of many religious, racial, social and national backgrounds to learn the principles and techniques of citizenship... through lived experience. Black believed that young people could be a positive force in their communities if they developed critical thinking skills, youth activism, leadership qualities, and the courage to break free from stereotypes. After a decade-long hiatus due to lack of funding, Encampment alumni reunited to offer this experience to a new generation. Learn about their exciting plans for this summer in California.

Anne Klaeysen has served as Leader of the New York Society for Ethical Culture since 2008. She is also the Humanist Chaplain at New York University and Ethical Humanist Religious Life Adviser at Columbia University, and teaches at Union Theological Seminary and the Center for Education at the American Humanist Association. Anne holds a Doctor of Ministry degree in pastoral care and counseling from Hebrew Union College.



## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



*Bob Bueding, President,  
Philadelphia Ethical Society*

### *My Journey*

In January I wrote my message about my journey in life. As I told you then, my adoptive parents were both Jewish, though neither of them practiced their faith. My father came from a wealthy German family – his father was a diamond merchant. He himself was a scientist and an atheist. My mother was a Russian Jew, probably agnostic.

I was 22 years old when I married my Catholic wife. After 28 years I decided to explore Catholicism. I went through a year of formation (RCIA) and was baptized and confirmed in 1997. For fifteen years I practiced the faith. Doubts set in, but I didn't want to leave the Church without

much deliberation. Finally, unable to accept the basic faith tenets of Catholicism, I decided to withdraw.

So here I am, an Ethical Humanist. How did I get here? I have a friend who lives in my building in Center City and she's a member of the Ethical Society. She knew I was a photographer and let others know of my work. I was asked to photograph the installation of Hugh Taft-Morales, the new Leader of the Society. I went and did the photography and was treated to hear Hugh's platform. There was music and singing – a real Sunday Service. Many of the Society members made me feel at home with their warm welcome.

I've been a member now for almost seven years and I couldn't be happier. I've made so many new friends and I'm able to be part of a group that works every day to make our world a better place.

If you're interested in what Ethical culture is, why not come by and attend a Sunday platform? You'll be in for a real treat, fantastic speakers, wonderful music, a chance to learn and grow. Come join us to build a better world.

~ Bob Bueding

[bbueding@phillyethics.org](mailto:bbueding@phillyethics.org)

**Pledge Luncheon**  
 Sunday  
 3/3/2019

**Philadelphia Ethical Society**

### **PES MEMBERS**

**It's here!**  
**March 3rd**  
**Send your**  
**RSVP to**  
**Bob**

[bbueding@phillyethics.org](mailto:bbueding@phillyethics.org)  
**or Vince**  
[vincer333@aol.com](mailto:vincer333@aol.com)



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Sunday, Mar. 3, 7:00 pm**

**INTRO TO ETHICAL HUMANISM -**

**In the PES Auditorium**

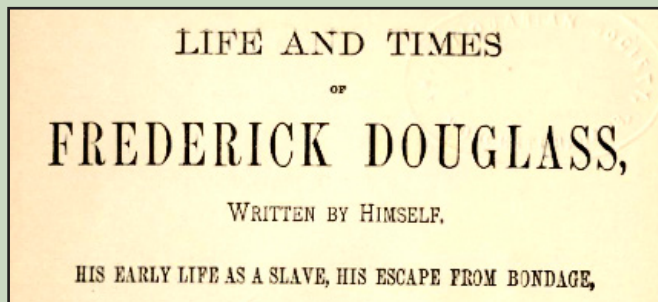
Want to know more about Ethical Humanism and the Philadelphia Ethical Society? Come to the next Introduction to Ethical Humanism where we will mix great conversation with some wine and cheese. Please RSVP to [LeaderHugh@phillyethics.org](mailto:LeaderHugh@phillyethics.org)

## 400 YEARS PROJECT TOPIC

**Monday, Mar. 4, 7:00**

**BOOK DISCUSSION ON  
*LIFE AND TIMES OF  
FREDERICK DOUGLASS,*  
Join Hugh Taft-**

Morales as we delve into one of the most impressive historical figures of our country's history. All invited, but try to read the book first! (supplements February 19th discussion.)



**Tuesday, Mar. 5, 6:00 - 8:00 pm**

**ETHICAL EVOLUTION**

Are you striving to live closer to your ethical ideals? Do you want to express your values through action? Come to "Ethical Evolution," a support circle led by Hugh Taft-Morales that offers tools and support to help you bring out your ethical best. An Ethical Evolution introduction will occur from 6:00-7:00PM. If you have already come to an introduction session (as have Steve Gold, Erik Younge, John Marshall, and Kate Esposito), come at 7:00PM for a larger discussion of personal progress. All interested can share a casual dinner afterwards at 8PM at a nearby eatery.



**Sunday, Mar. 17, 2:00 - 4:00 pm**

**WALK IN MY SHOES: A Screening and Discussion with Theater of Witness Artistic Director Teya Sepinuck and Philadelphia Police Inspector Altovise Love-Craighead** Hugh Taft-Morales will be hosting a screening and discussion of this remarkable film. Created and performed with Philadelphia police and community members of color, it explores societal wounds and the sharing of true stories and visions for the future. The event is free, but donations encouraged will be split between Theater of Witness and EMIR Healing Center. Please attend and bring your friends.

**Monday, Mar. 18, 7:00 pm**

**COMMITTEES, PROJECTS, AND YOU!**

Are you a new or longtime member of the Ethical Society who wants to be more involved with our programs? Do you want to find out more about our committee work and projects? Do you have ideas you want to share about how to bring out the best in our community life? Come for a casual conversation with Leader Hugh Taft-Morales. This is just an exploration - no commitment need be made! Desserts will be available. RSVP to [LeaderHugh@phillyethics.org](mailto:LeaderHugh@phillyethics.org)

**SATURDAY, APRIL 13 - OEEC FAIR** Mark your calendar for the "Environmental Justice and Community Wellness Fair" at the **Overbrook Environmental Education Center** at **6134 Lancaster Avenue**. City, state and local

organizations will provide resource information to help residents understand the tools available to become stewards of their environment and protectors of our biosphere. Email [LeaderHugh@phillyethics.org](mailto:LeaderHugh@phillyethics.org) if you would like to attend or volunteer to help out at this event

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

**VICTIM**

by Henry Pashkow

Ethical Humanists abhor violence. But what if it seemed as if there was no choice?

Geoffrey Canada wrote about growing up in grinding poverty in the South Bronx in the 1950s when violence was rampant and inescapable. His mother was raising him and his three brothers by herself. He was four years old when one day his two older brothers, John and Daniel, age five and six respectively, came home from the playground, John without his jacket. Geoff and his two-year old younger brother weren't allowed to go because they had to cross the street to get there.

Their mother began questioning John and Daniel as to what had happened to the jacket. John said a boy from the playground took it. He'd get beat up if he tried to take it back. Getting beat up in the South Bronx war zone could entail real physical harm. She fixed her gaze on the two older boys as her questioning intensified. John said everything he could think of to keep from having to go back there and fight. There was fear in the eyes of both his older brothers as their mother went into a slow boil.

She first turned her fury on Daniel. "That's your younger brother," she said. "You can't let people take your things. I do not have money for another jacket."

The two boys were speechless. John blinked, his mouth slightly open, eyes wide with alarm. Their mother exploded. "You go back there and get that jacket. And Johnny you go with him. And if you come back without it I will beat you ten times worse than what that little thief could do to you."

They did.

Geoffrey Canada's book, *Fist Stick Knife Gun*, was published in 1995. The people he wrote about lived by the rules of the street.

It was open season on victims.

Mr Canada is an American educator and social activist who during his career has counseled an approach that would not include violence. He's met with many

children as young as six whose parents in similar situations told their children to get something and bash the thief's head in. The parents were invariably single women raising children in an urban war zone, and they'd been victimized time and again. The governing institutions did nothing to protect the child, and the children were scared and scarred, and looked to their parents to provide protection they could not provide. The parents felt they had no alternative but to fight.

Mr. Canada was subsequently put to the test of his convictions when he lived in segregated Boston in 1976. The city was under court order to desegregate its schools back then, and most children were being bussed. A little white girl on the bus started bullying his six-year old daughter Melina, and raked her face with her long fingernails, leaving a set of four bloody trails. Rage welled up within him when he first saw it.

Reason prevailed at first. He demanded extra security from the bus company and the school, but they had neither the money nor the resources to provide it. He demanded assurance that his daughter wouldn't be attacked again; but got no more than a weak promise that they would do their best. He asked to meet the other girl's parents, but no one showed up. He wanted the girl suspended, but they couldn't suspend a girl who was only seven years old herself. He tried to convey to them a clear sense of how precious his daughter was to him, and yet could not get them to guarantee the security he wanted for a six-year old black girl going to public school in deeply segregated Boston.

Now there was little choice. He sat his daughter down and told her never again to let any boy or girl hit her without fighting back. He was very specific about what to do and when to do it. He'd grown up knowing how to fight.

You will not be a victim.

His daughter finished her school years with no love for violence, but she never again became a victim.

The seven-year old white girl was also a victim. She was a victim of the racist culture she'd grown up in.

What do we have to say to people faced with these choices?



# PAST EVENTS

PES honored with a visit from a very a special guest

On February 17, 2019, Kevin Douglass Greene, the great-great-grandson of Frederick Douglass, attended and spoke at a platform entitled "Learning from Frederick Douglass," given by Leader Hugh Taft-Morales.



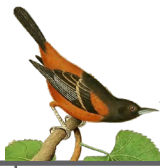
*Photo by Bob Bueding*



*Photo by Bob Bueding*



*Photo by Stan Horwitz*



# MARCH 2019



Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
<b>3</b> 11:00 AM - <i>What Do You Really Own Anyway?</i> Hugh Taft-Morales 12:00 Noon Pledge Luncheon 7:00 p.m.: <i>Intro to Ethical Humanism</i>	<b>4</b> 7:00 PM Book discussion on <i>Life and Times of Frederick Douglass</i>	<b>5</b> 6-8PM Ethical Evolution	<b>6</b> PES MEETING: 6:30 PM Education Committee	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> <i>Daylight Saving Time (DST) begins</i> 11:00 AM <i>The Tobacco Industry:</i> Ryan Coffman	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> PES MEETINGS 5:30 PM Finance Committee 6:30 PM Ethical Action Committee	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> 9:30 AM: End Racism Task Force <a href="mailto:Sylmetz2@gmail.com">Sylmetz2@gmail.com</a> 11:00 AM <i>Solitude:</i> Hugh Taft-Morales 2-4 PM Film: <i>Walk in My Shoes</i>	<b>18</b> 7:00 PM Committees, Projects, and You!	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> PES MEETING: 6:30 PM PES Board of Trustees	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 11:00 AM <i>The Role of the Office of Engagement for Women in Advancing a Social Justice Agenda</i> Jovida Hill	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> PES MEETING 5:30 PM Building Committee PES MEETING 6:30 PM Camp Linden Committee	<b>28</b> 7:00 PM Amnesty International Meeting	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> 11:00 AM <i>The Encampment for Citizenship: An Experience in Participatory Democracy</i> Anne Klaeysen						

## MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 4 JAMES COOKE
- 4 TERRY MARTIN-MURLEY
- 9 GARRY O'ROURKE
- 20 HUGH TAFT-MORALES
- 23 SUSAN D'ALESSIO
- 26 RUTHANN DUBB
- 28 JOHN MARSHALL

## QUOTABLE

*Happiness isn't something you experience; it's something you remember.*

Oscar Levant

**Spring Celebration** - At our April 21 Sunday celebration of Spring, we will focus on "the springtime of our lives and in nature" – youth and springtime! To make that day even more fun, we have two requests:

- First, please bring in a **photo of yourself as a child, with your name written in pencil on the back** and give it to Hugh or Betsy by **April 14**. We'll have a contest to see who can guess the identity of the most people.
- Second, if you have poems or short writing about children and springtime that you think might be appropriate to read during this platform, send them to Hugh at [LeaderHugh@phillyethics.org](mailto:LeaderHugh@phillyethics.org)





## SUNDAY SERVICES

11:00 A.M.

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

*Executive Editor*, Henry Pashkow  
*Copy Editor*, Betsy Lightbourn  
*Web Master, Copy Editor*, Nick Sanders  
*Layout*, Celeste Hardester  
*Production*, Cheryl Desmond

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**PES Board of Trustees**  
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John Marshall-Secretary  
Kate Esposito  
Susan O'Connell  
Michael Black-Smith

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## Coffee Hour Coordinators



March 3 - Kate Esposito  
Last names: A-E  
March 10 - Ken Greiff  
Last names: F-K  
March 17 - Garry O'Rourke  
Last names: L-Q  
March 24 - Harry Thorn  
Last names: R-Z  
March 31 - It's your chance!

## 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.

## Flowers Coordinated by Sally Redlener



March 3 - From Vince Russo  
"Dedicated to the Philadelphia  
Ethical Society."  
March 10 - From Bob Bueding-  
"Happy Birthday, Liz"  
March 17 - From Sally Redlener -  
"Happy St. Patrick's Day birthday to  
Nicole from Mom"

March 24 - From Javad Mohsenian -  
"Happy Persian New Year and First  
day of Spring"

March 31 - Weather is what you get;  
Climate is what you expect! Happy  
Birthday, Al Gore

For suggestions regarding this  
newsletter, contact Henry Pashkow  
[hpashkow@gmail.com](mailto:hpashkow@gmail.com)

## Wider Community

What other presenters  
are doing at the  
Ethical Society Building in March

- **A special tribute to the music of  
composer Andrea Clearfield**  
with Michal Schmidt (piano), guest artists,  
and Group Motion dance. The program  
will present chamber and vocal works  
composed in the last twenty years.  
Sunday, March 10, 3pm. Tickets available  
at the door, more info at [http://www.  
michalschmidt.com/calendar.php](http://www.michalschmidt.com/calendar.php)

- **The Baker's Dozen, a cappella**  
singing group from Yale University,  
presented by the Yale Club of Philadelphia.  
Thursday, March 21, 7pm. Tickets available  
at the door.



## March 31, 2019, 3:00 pm at PES FINE ART MUSIC WAR OF THE ROMANTICS, PART 2 Battle! Mind Over Music - A Story in Concert

This season's focus on the foundational dispute  
over the meaning of classical music, to listeners and  
musicians alike, will reach its apex in this March  
performance. Storytellers Gerhard Denhoff, played  
by PES member Robert Edwin Steinfert, and  
Eduard Hanslick, played by Joseph Barron, will lead  
the audience through this compelling story. This  
concert will feature *Brahms Piano Quintet in F minor*  
for string quartet and hugely Romantic piano works  
by Liszt and Wagner. [www.fineartmusic.com](http://www.fineartmusic.com)