



ETHICAL VIEWS

January 2020 Vol. 134, No. 5 Newsletter of the Philadelphia Ethical Society



Sunday Platforms

Sunday, Jan. 5, 11:00 AM
Memorial Sunday – Gratitude for Those Gone
Hugh Taft-Morales, Leader,
Philadelphia Ethical Society



On the first Sunday of each year we remember with gratitude the important life lessons and inspiring memories left to us by those who have died. Members of the audience are encouraged to share how those no longer with us continue to help us live more fully, joyfully, and ethically. Join Hugh Taft-Morales for this moving annual tradition.

Sunday, Jan. 12, 11:00 AM
Democracy and Truth in Crisis
Sophia Rosenfeld, Walter H. Annenberg Professor of History
University of Pennsylvania



Sophia Rosenfeld, author of *Democracy and Truth: A Short History* (Penn Press, 2019) will explore why truth seems to be under siege in

so much of the world today, how we got to this point, and what we might be able to do about it. Prior to coming to Penn, Sophia Rosenfeld was

professor of history at the University of Virginia and Yale University. She currently serves as Vice President (for research) for the American Historical Association, and co-editor of the journal, *Modern Intellectual History*. She is the recipient of numerous fellowships including those from the Guggenheim Foundation and the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton. In addition to *Democracy and Truth*, she is the author of *Common Sense: A Political History* (Harvard, 2011), and *A Revolution in Language: The Problem of Signs in Late Eighteenth Century France* (Stanford, 2001), as well as numerous scholarly articles.

Sunday, Jan. 19, 11:00 AM
“Somebodyness” and Inherent Worth Hugh Taft-Morales, Leader, Philadelphia Ethical Society



In honor of Martin Luther King Jr., Hugh Taft-Morales explores “somebodyness” – a term that King used to ground his dedication to advancing civil and human rights. How is this concept similar to, and different from, other approaches to individual human beings? How does it compare to Ethical Humanism’s commitment to the “inherent worth” of every person? Come explore this foundation of Ethical Culture while honoring Martin Luther King Jr.

Jan. 26, 11:00 AM *How Ethics and End Of Life Intersect*
Laura L. Barry, Visiting Nurse Association, Philadelphia, PA



End of life may not be easy to embrace, yet the appropriate and timely use of hospice may minimize conflict and dilemmas. Hospice provides collaborative

support, crucial conversations and guidelines enabling you and your loved ones to approach the end of life with grace and peace. Join Laura L. Barry for discussion and education regarding making informed choices as it relates to end of life. Learn about types of hospice care and the best last gift that can be given.

Laura L. Barry, M.B.A. and M.Msc (Masters in Metaphysics) has worked in hospice for almost a decade. She was trained by the George Washington University Institute for Spirituality & Health, a global program and curriculum designed to support inter-professional spiritual care in healthcare. Laura sits on the Ethics committee at Roxborough Memorial Hospital. She currently helps educate physicians, staff and facilities on the benefits of palliative and hospice care. Laura will also address her “accidental” transition to hospice.

And next month . . .
Sunday, Feb. 2, 11:00 AM
“Mr. Republican Rolls in his Grave”

LEADER'S COLUMN

AN UPCOMING INTERFAITH JOURNEY

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

On January 7 and 8, I will be in Philadelphia, but I will not be doing Ethical Society work at 1906 Rittenhouse. I will be at the Comcast Collaboration Studio on Oxford Street to participate in the launch event for the **Interfaith Peer Learning Network**, a project of *Interfaith Philadelphia*. This organization strives to promote



**Interfaith
Philadelphia**

social harmony and inter-religious understanding while standing in solidarity with our diverse neighbors. I will continue this collaboration throughout May via on-going video conferences.

This group of a few more than a dozen educators and social leaders will rely on a self-guided tool created by Interfaith Philadelphia, the *Passport to Understanding*, to explore new ways to deepen cross-cultural and interfaith relationships. While I am uncertain what will grow out of my experience in this initiative, I hope it will deepen my commitment to Ethical Culture and give me skills to navigate the interfaith world and spread our humanist message to Philadelphia.

More specifically, I have three hopes regarding being a part of the Interfaith Peer Learning Network. First, I hope to learn how PES can

better contribute to, and benefit from, our interfaith coalition, POWER. I believe there is little we can do to make Philadelphia better than to help POWER grow in membership and effectiveness. A small number of Ethical Society members pour their heart, mind, and body into POWER initiatives that are raising consciousness and raising wages for the working class of our city. If we are to continue our involvement in POWER, we need more members to get involved. I hope my time in the Peer Learning Network will show me how best to encourage membership participation.

Second, on a more personal level, I hope my time with the Learning Network will support my looking into how humanists best process the existentially challenging topic of mortality. While traditional theistic faiths have well-known methods of framing the fact that we will all die, humanist approaches are diverse, developing, and not well known. I hope to hone my own approach to this, which you can get a sense of by watching my talk, "Be Honest with Death." (<https://vimeo.com/188516684> or <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Azl6CJtwDss>)

Third, and related to the challenge

of mortality, I want to further my work in explaining how Humanists can engage with "spirituality" and "inspiration" in ways that give their lives more meaning while respecting evidence, reason, and the limits of human knowledge. I want to live a life full of awe and wonder without succumbing to supernaturalism or "magical thinking." I want to celebrate the mysteries of life. And I want to live in a way that such inspiration animates my conviction to ethical behavior. There are many down-to-earth reasons why spiritual quests are such powerful parts of human culture. I want to offer non-supernatural ways to engage in a similar quest – one that offers forms of transcendence that harmonize with science and inspire ethical work.

I am grateful to the Ethical Society for paying the tuition to be a part of the Network. I know that these three hopes are a lot to ask of my upcoming brief time with the Interfaith Peer Learning Network. I will be satisfied if one of the three hopes are realized. Then again, I am open to unexpected ways in which this experience will affect me. I'll report back more about my experience in a future newsletter. For now, I just wanted to explain why I won't be in my office on January 7 and 8.



Father and son engaged in an eternal dialogue on death. This monument at Certosa, Bologna monumental cemetery is dedicated to anthropologist Fabio Frassetto (1876–1953) and his son, killed during the Second World War. Created by sculptor Farpi Vignoli in 1968. The full sculpture is shown with the January 5th platform.

**From the PES
Ending Racism Task Force:**

**ONE YEAR TO
THE DAY**

submitted by Kate Esposito

It occurred to me about a month ago that when we observe Martin Luther King Day this month on Jan. 20, the day will be exactly one year prior to the Presidential Inauguration. (Are you scared? Yeah, me too!)

As we know, the Voting Rights Act signed by President Lyndon Johnson on August 6, 1965, guaranteed the right to vote for Black citizens who, especially in the South, often risked their lives to cast their ballots. On May 17, 1957 Dr. King addressed 25,000 civil-rights activists who had gathered for the Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom saying, "The denial of this sacred right is a tragic betrayal of the highest mandates of our democratic tradition. And our most urgent request to the president of the United States and every member of Congress is to give us the right to vote."

On that hot August day as he stood overlooking LBJ signing the Act more than eight years later, he knew that he had helped achieved full citizenship rights for his people. What he couldn't have known was how difficult it would be to achieve the full measure of the Act as the decades would pass.

So, here we are some 55 years later, anticipating the Iowa Caucus, an odd form of an electoral process on February 3, and the New Hampshire Primary on February 11. Both of these states have heavy majority white populations (Iowa 90.7% and New Hampshire 93.2%) according to the U.S. Census Bureau, July 1, 2018 estimates. Historically, these two states, whose combined population is 4,512,603, have significant influence on who eventually wins the Democratic

nomination. According to *FactCheck*, since the Iowa caucus and New Hampshire primary came to national prominence as the first two contests in the modern presidential nomination system in 1972, the only Democratic candidate to lose both and go on to win the presidency is Bill Clinton. Of the eight major Democratic candidates in 2008, Obama surprised the political world when he won the Iowa caucus. The rest, as they say, is history.

As of this writing, Sen. Kamala Harris has suspended her presidential campaign. Sen. Cory Booker has barely qualified for the next debate stage by raising enough money, but has not polled well enough. He says he is resolute about staying in the race. Julian Castro did not qualify for the last debate and his future viability remains questionable. Then there is former NYC Mayor and billionaire Michael Bloomberg who is circumventing the debate process entirely, instead personally financing a huge media presence in expensive markets. So, even before the first primary, the proud boasts of the Democratic Party about the diversity and talent of the field have already been diminished by the stark realities of a rigged system.

I think most of us would agree that there are problems with how we elect a president. Does the electoral college favor smaller, rural, whiter states? Do the financial and polling data, the qualifying quotas for debates, discriminate against candidates of color? Do the white male billionaires, who fund their own campaigns, push out others just by virtue of their ability to sway public opinion with high production value messaging? What about horribly gerrymandered districts, often based on race, that virtually insure the election of certain candidates? Will voter suppression efforts and court rulings canceling

important monitoring provisions of the Voting Rights Act affect future outcomes of elections? (Although the House has voted to reauthorize the Act with stronger enforcement provisions, only one Republican, Brian Fitzpatrick from PA voted to support. The Senate will, in all likelihood vote against it.)

Have they already done so? What happened to Stacey Abrams' bid in her run for Governor in Georgia? What if folks can't make it to the polls because they have to work two jobs? Oh, and let's not discount the efforts by the Russians, and now maybe others, to inject fake news, conspiracy theories and toxic opinions that are often racist in nature, into the electoral information stream, which can poison the whole process and change outcomes. And let's hope they don't actually hack into any systems, changing vote tallies.

So, as we observe Martin Luther King Day this year, we owe it to his memory, and all those who fought for and died to gain the right to vote, to make sure we all VOTE, and encourage others to overcome barriers that suppress the vote. We can register people who have historically been disenfranchised, work to increase turn-out on election days, disabuse false information, encourage thinking that voting does indeed matter despite all of the problems with the system. And think about what steps we can take to fix the electoral process that would make this democracy one that works for everyone.

It is time for national legislation that will encourage voter participation, eliminate barriers, and guarantee electoral fairness and integrity. Not what we have today, a system that discriminates and discourages people from voting. A system that Dr. King would want us to fix.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

All events in PES building unless otherwise noted

Sunday, Jan. 5, 7:00pm *Intro to Ethical Humanism*

Hugh Taft-Morales hosts a small group discussion of Ethical Humanism's history, philosophy, and current manifestation here at 1906 S. Rittenhouse Square. After a

30-minute presentation, guests can ask questions and share their own efforts to live a life closer to their values. RSVP to LeaderHugh@phillyethics.org but you can also just show up!



Monday, Jan. 6, 6:30pm-8:00pm – Pot-luck Social Gathering with Hugh

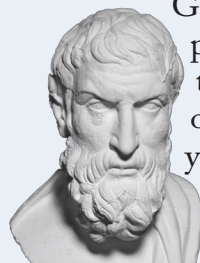
Join Hugh and PES members for an informal



potluck at the home of Jeffrey and Ruth Ann Dubb. Please RSVP by January 4 to jeffrey.dubb@gmail.com. If we get more than 15 RSVP's we'll move the event to the Ethical Society - we want all PES members to feel welcome to attend. This is basically a social event, though Hugh will offer a guided one-on-one topic at some point in the evening, just to mix things up!

Sunday, Jan. 12 and 25, 4:00pm *Philadelphia Stoics discussion*

Join the Philadelphia Stoics at 4:00PM on January 12 and 26. They will continue discussing, "A Handbook for New Stoics." Come explore the lessons and practical exercises in A Handbook for New Stoics: How to Thrive in a World Out of Your Control – 52 Week-by-Week Lessons by Massimo Pigliucci and



Gregory Lopez. In preparation for the meeting on January 12, you are strongly encouraged to do the reading and try the practices

for Weeks 11 and 12. For the January 26 meeting, please do the reading and practices for Weeks 13 and 14.

Sunday, Jan. 19, 2:00pm - 4:00 pm Film Presentation: *The Beginning of the End of Nuclear Weapons*

This 56-minute documentary film about efforts to bring a nuclear weapon ban treaty into international law is told through the voices of leading activists. Come learn more about this humanitarian initiative that successfully challenged the dominant security narrative. It shows what can be done to help

bring the treaty into force and eradicate nuclear weapons.

The Philadelphia Ethical Society welcomes as a co-host the Greater Philadelphia Branch of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. We thank all those who have helped by sponsoring this event, including the Brandywine Peace Community, Granny Peace Brigade Philadelphia, and Germantown Monthly Meeting Working Group for Nuclear Weapons Abolition. Learn more at <http://theendofnuclearweapons.com/event/philadelphia-usa/>



Continued on page 5

ANNOUNCEMENTS continued

Monday, Jan. 20 Honoring Martin Luther King Jr.

From Hugh Taft-Morales: In the morning, from **8:30am – 11:30am**, come find out what the 24th annual Greater Philadelphia Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service is all about. Organized by Global Citizen, this huge service and information fair takes place at Girard College. I will offer rides to three other PES Members, first choice to those who haven't been there yet. Please let me know if you want to join me or meet us there. For more information, see the Global Citizen website: <https://globalcitizen365.org/>
From 2:00-4:00pm, a POWER event. Come to the Bible Way Baptist Church (1323 N. 52nd St at Master Street) for *A People's Hearing on Bail and Pre-trial Punishment*, hosted

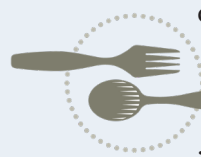


**PHILADELPHIA
COMMUNITY
BAIL FUND**

by the Philadelphia Community Bail Fund, the Philadelphia Bail Fund, #215Jail Coalition, POWER Interfaith, Live Free, ACLU of PA, Media mobilizing Project and the Youth Art & Self-empowerment Project.

Wednesday, Jan. 22, Noon Ethical Lunch – On Good Behavior

January's topic: *Manners and Morals*
 Everyone is invited to bring a lunch and join Hugh Taft-Morales in discussion. The philosopher and politician Edmund Burke defended manners as fundamental to our



ethical lives. He claimed that, "Manners are of more importance than laws. Manners are what vex or soothe, corrupt or purify, exalt or debase, barbarize or refine us . . ." Is there a connection between the erosion of civility and unethical behavior? Come for a short talk and an interactive discussion.

POWER AND DISCIPLINE

Sunday, Jan. 26 2:00pm

Think Ethics – Thoughtful conversations about philosophy: Power and Discipline Join Alex Gutierrez, a senior at Haverford College, back for more philosophical conversations! How does power work? What role do institutions and individuals play in the production and transfer of power? Most importantly, how can we Ethical Society members navigate

the landscape of power?

Explore these issues through the lens of the great post-structuralist social philosopher Michel Foucault. Free and open to the public.

Penn's Village

Sunday, Jan. 29, 2:00pm

-3:15pm Learn about Penn's Village with Jane Eeley, hosted by Hugh

Taft-Morales Penn's Village invites members of the Ethical Society, along with our neighbors and friends here in Center City, to a presentation and discussion about a great way to meet the needs of older adults in our communities. Jane Eeley, Executive Director of Penn's Village, will share how Penn's Village can partner with you and other volunteers to help older adults continue to live in their homes as long as possible. Ms. Eeley and Hugh Taft-Morales, Leader of the Philadelphia Ethical Society, will explore the joys and challenges of building communal solutions to our shared journey through our older years. Light refreshments will be served. For more information about Penn's Village, their website at <https://www.pennsvillage.org>.

RICHARD KINIRY Leader Emeritus

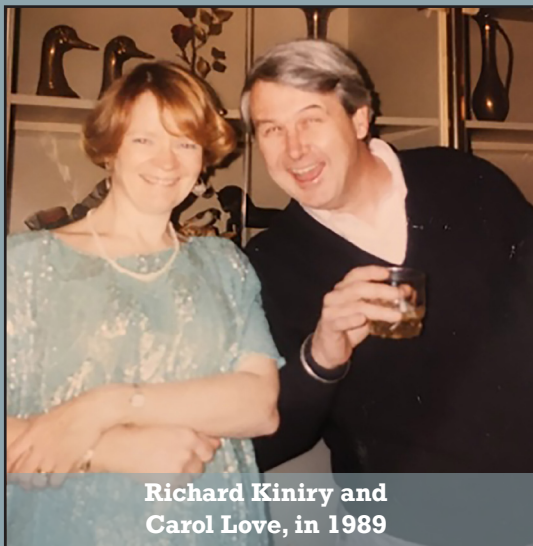
We are sorry to share the sad news that our Leader Emeritus, Richard Kiniry, died on the evening of December 18th, 2019.
He went peacefully.

His family would like to hold a memorial service at the Philadelphia Ethical Society on a date to be determined.

Richard gave the Philadelphia Ethical Society, and indeed, Ethical Humanists across the country, many ideas to consider on their own ethical journey. Among them were these words, created in 2003 by the National Leaders Council of the Ethical Culture movement, led by Richard Kiniry and Curt Collier:

It is a chief belief of Ethical religion that if we relate to others in a way that brings out their best, we will at the same time elicit the best in ourselves. By the "best" in each person, we refer to his or her unique talents and abilities that affirm and nurture life.

We use the term "spirit" to refer to a person's unique personality and to the love, hope, and empathy that exists in human beings. When we act to elicit the best in others, we encourage the growing edge of their ethical development, their perhaps as-yet untapped but inexhaustible worth.



Richard Kiniry and
Carol Love, in 1989

PAST EVENTS

The Annual Tree of Knowledge Celebration



Hugh Taft-Morales, Margaret Downey, (founder of the Freethought Society), Christian Hayden, and Betsy Lightbourn were among the many who hung book covers of some of their favorite free-thinking titles.



JANUARY 2020

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1 <i>Happy New Year!</i>	2	3	4
5 11:00 AM <i>Memorial Sunday</i> Hugh Taft-Morales 7:00 PM: <i>Intro to Ethical Humanism</i>	6 6:30-8:00 PM – Pot-luck Social Gathering with Hugh	7	8 PES MEETING: 6:30 PM Education Committee	9	10	11
12 11:00 AM <i>Democracy and Truth in Crisis</i> 4:00 -5:30 PM Philadelphia Stoics Discussion	13	14	15 PES MEETINGS: 5:00 PM Finance Committee 6:30 PM Ethical Action Committee	16	17	18
19 9:30 AM: End Racism TF 11:00 AM "Somebodyness" Hugh Taft-Morales 2- 4:00 PM Film: The Beginning of the End of Nuclear Weapons	20 Honoring MLK, Jr. 8:30- 11:30 AM Day of Service, Girard College 2:00-4:00PM Hearing on Bail, 1323 N. 52nd St.	21 7:00 PM <i>Effective Altruism</i> Monthly Social	22 12:00 noon Ethical Lunch – On Good Behavior discussion PES MEETING: 6:30 PM PES Board of Trustees	23  7:00 PM Amnesty International Meeting amnestyeastpa.org	24	25
26 11:00 AM <i>How Ethics and End Of Life Intersect</i> 2:00 PM Think Ethics 4:00 -5:30 PM Philadelphia Stoics Discussion	27	28	29 2:00 PM Learn about Penn's Village PES MEETINGS: 5:30 PM Building Committee 6:30 PM Camp Linden Committee	30	31	

A Note from Nick Sanders, Chair of the Ethical Action Committee:

Collection Money Goes Beyond Support of Our Ethical Society –

Although our Sunday morning collections are primarily for the support of our Ethical Society, we also occasionally have special collections for, or share half of the cash collected with, other good causes. During the last four months of 2019, those collections provided:

- \$150 to Mercy Corps for its well-regarded hurricane relief in the Bahamas
- \$175 to POWER for its work on climate justice in Philadelphia
- \$500 to M.A.N.N.A for its provision of custom nutritious meals for those at risk from serious illness
- \$125 to Books Through Bars for its costs in responding to book requests from persons in prisons.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 8 Rhoda Forte
- 10 Carol Love
- 11 Sandy Goffey
- 14 Lyle Murley
- 21 Ken Greiff
- 30 Lelah Marie



SUNDAY SERVICES

11:00 A.M.

Ethical Views is published monthly
except July and August.

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Coffee Hour Coordinators



Jan. 5 - Kate Esposito
Last names: A-E
Jan. 12 - Ken Greiff
Last names: F-K
Jan. 19 - Garry O'Rourke
Last names: L-Q
Jan. 26 - Harry Thorn
Last names: R-Z

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.



On masthead: Martin Luther King, Jr., four-foot bust by Zenos Frudaki (2010), in MLK Memorial Park at the Library in Chester, PA.

Flowers Coordinated by Sally Redlener



Jan. 5 - In memory of Richard Kiniry, Leader Emeritus
Jan. 12 - In celebration of birthdays of all the great people born in January
Jan. 19 - From Sylvia Goldman - "To my dear son Ron's birthday this very day."
Jan. 26 - From Sally Redlener - To my parents Jerry & Grace with January birthdays

For suggestions regarding this newsletter, contact Henry Pashkow
hpashkow@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE: Sunday, March 1st, 2020, 12:00 noon - Membership Pledge Luncheon



Focus in on March 1st! Come for lunch, laughs, and learning more about supporting the Philadelphia Ethical Society. This catered affair will help us see our future as Philadelphia's home for congregational humanism. Hugh promises some more bad jokes!

Do you enjoy *Ethical Views*?

As a reader of *Ethical Views*, you know that the Ethical Society produces many excellent programs, platforms, and other activities—including this newsletter. But did you know we rely on membership and public support to fund all of our outreach activity? As you make your annual charitable donations, won't you consider making an annual giving contribution to support this work?



For email and online readers, the donate button takes you directly to the PES link where you may donate securely through your by credit card or Paypal. If you prefer, mail your donation to PES
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