

Register now for AHA in Las Vegas May 17 - 20

January 2018

issue 1.05

# Jefferson Humanists

Jefferson County Colorado Chapter of The American Humanists Association [www.jeffersonhumanists.org](http://www.jeffersonhumanists.org)

## CURRENT PROGRAMS

### January Program

#### Origin of the Dog: A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing?

Dr. Robin Starr, DVM

January 28, 2018, January Jefferson Unitarian Church, 14350 W. 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Golden, CO 80401

**T**he former *Canis familiaris* is now known as *Canis lupus familiaris*, recognizing that the dog is a subspecies of gray wolf, *Canis lupus*. However, the dog has evolved striking differences from the wolf in both behavior and structure. Learn about the death of the alpha wolf - and that dogs' social behavior is characterized by family relationships and cooperation, NOT a constant struggle to be top dog.

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**D**r. Starr grew up in California, graduated as a veterinarian, and immediately left for Colorado. She had a varied career, owning a small animal practice in Colorado Springs, working in the veterinary pharmaceutical industry (SmithKline Beecham Animal Health), doing veterinary medical writing, and heading a non-profit organization that trained service dogs. She earned her BS and DVM at the University of California at Davis and a Masters of Education at Pennsylvania State College in Malvern. She's now retired and volunteers for the Colorado Mountain Club (teaching Wilderness Trekking School) and at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in the Zoology Lab. She takes OLLI courses (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute), sponsored by Denver University, to stretch her mind and combat brain rot. She shares a home with two dogs from Safe Harbor Lab Rescue, Cody the Nosy and Autumn the Bashful.



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Harbor Lab Rescue, Cody the Nosy and Autumn the Bashful.

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

**S**tarting with the January, 2018 program Jefferson Humanists will have a slightly different Sunday program schedule. Still the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday, but we will be meeting at 4:30pm. The program will include a brief Humanist Moment before the program begins. So we hope to see you at 4:30pm, on Sunday, January 28, at Jefferson Unitarian Church. RSVP only for dinner at JH Meet-up, or email JH President Matthew Elisha [mrelisha@msn.com](mailto:mrelisha@msn.com) or call 303 432 8694.

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### A Message from Barb Bailey, Jefferson Humanists Past President

Hello good Jefferson Humanist members,

This is a "sort of" good bye message. I am finishing my term as president of our fine, growing organization although I will of course maintain my membership. In fact I will start a new role very shortly. I will be the volunteer coordinator. So I am saying good bye to my former role and hello to the new one.

It has been a joy, a pleasure, and interesting to meet with and visit with many of you. I plan to continue that. And certainly, if you are so inclined, I would like to talk with you about volunteer opportunities within JH. I can promise you that your experience with us will only be enhanced if you have some extra time to share with us. There will be opportunities available to fit whatever time you might have available.

Your new president, Matthew Elisha, is an outstanding leader and has been an excellent member of our board. If you haven't had time to meet and visit with him, please do so soon. I know that he will welcome the opportunity. And our new board has truly committed members. We are fortunate to have them. I look forward to seeing you all again soon.



## February Program Preview

*The Current State of Journalism in Our Society* by Dr. Lynn Schofield Clark, University of Denver

Lynn Schofield Clark is Professor and Chair of the Department of Media, Film and Journalism Studies and Director of the Estlow International Center for Journalism and New Media at the University of Denver. An ethnographer who has studied and worked with diverse U.S. families and young people for more than 15 years, Clark is interested in how the everyday uses of digital, mobile, and social media shape peoples' identities and aspirations, particularly in the context of widening income inequality in the United States. She teaches courses in journalism, media and intersectionalities, and media studies.



### Seasonal Celebration: Good Bye 2017, Hello 2018

On December 30, 52 Happy Humanists celebrated the season with music (quartet Pitchblend, soloist Tom Poole, and pianist Jonathan Hofmann); door prizes (thank you Matthew Elisha); great food (thank you Pam); and conviviality. People were very generous as well, donating 153 toiletry items to help people experiencing homelessness. Thanks to all who pitched in to help. Your editors wish you a happy, healthy, and humanist 2018.



Collier Sainsbury and Mary Jane Zimmerman



George Nickel, Lee Katx and Bob Hofmann



Jonathan Hofmann and Friend Angel



Treasurer Dave Beato receives service award from President Matthew Elisha



Quartet Pitchblende sings seasonal music



Jim and Rosalie Bole enjoying the singalong



Pam's Buffet was a big hit!



President Matthew proposes a toast

**And A Good Time Was Had by All!**



Jefferson Humanist Book Discussion Group  
(FROG: Freethinkers Reading Opportunity Group)



In January, the Jefferson Humanists reading group's book discussion topic will be **The Enlightenment**. Read a book written during the Age of Enlightenment, about an Enlightenment thinker, or one set in or about the time period. You can also watch a documentary about the era or a movie set during the time. Find out more and RSVP at <http://meetu.ps/e/Dymyp/vzfvv/f>.

You can find details about our upcoming books and topics on Meetup at [www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists](http://www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists) and on our website at [www.jeffersonhumanists.org/frog-book-group](http://www.jeffersonhumanists.org/frog-book-group). If you'd like to join the group and be added to our email list, contact FROG leader Matthew Elisha ([mrelisha@msn.com](mailto:mrelisha@msn.com), 303.432.8694).

**Date:** Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

**Reading Assignment:** Reading topic: **The Enlightenment.** Read a book about the Enlightenment (“the Age of Reason”, 1685 – 1815), written during that era or about a major enlightenment thinker. You can also watch a documentary or movie about the Enlightenment.

**Facilitator: David Smith**

**Location: Lakewood Library, 20<sup>th</sup> & Miller, Lakewood**

**Date:** Saturday, February 10th

**Time:** 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

**Reading Assignment:** *Lamb: The Gospel According to Biff, Christ’s Childhood Friend* by Christopher Moore

**Facilitator:** Traci Bickell

**Location: Lakewood Library, 20<sup>th</sup> & Miller, Lakewood**

**Upcoming schedule:**

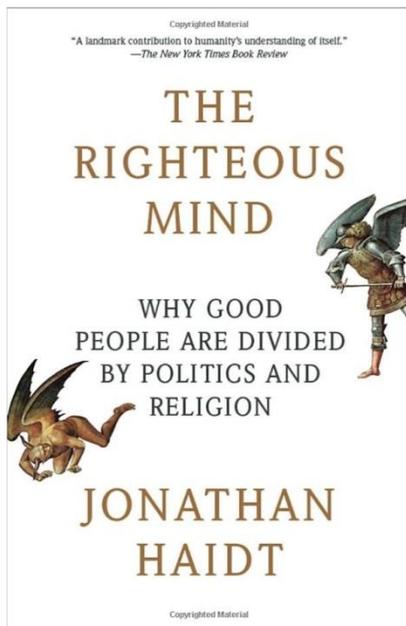
- March 10<sup>th</sup> – *The Political Mind: Why you can’t understand 21<sup>st</sup> century American politics with an 18<sup>th</sup>-Century brain* by George Lakoff
- April 14<sup>th</sup> – *Trust us, We’re Experts: How industry manipulates science and gambles with your future* by John Stauber

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*The Righteous Mind* by Jonathan Haidt

A report of the November FROG Group by Ralph Hughes

Jefferson Humanists’ “FROG\*” reading group had its largest meeting yet at December’s session, where we discussed Jonathan Haidt’s book, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*. Haidt (pronounced “height”) is a social psychologist who moved to the NYU-Stern School of Business after spending more than fifteen years at the University of Virginia. With colleagues in social psychology at the UV, UC (Irvine), and USC, he operates the website YourMorals.org, where people can test themselves to learn about their morality, ethics, and values, while also contributing to scientific research.



Haidt’s research examines the nature of the American moral universe, and how morality varies across our prominent cultural groups--progressives, conservatives, and libertarians. In *The Righteous Mind*, he presents several provocative metaphors, for example, the one we discussed at length at our FROG session: the “elephant and the driver.” This notion posits that people’s reactions to moral (and hence political) challenges are driven by their emotional backgrounds, which includes their upbringing, cultural experiences, and current social network. Only when given time and strong motivation will they apply reasoning to the situation. Hence, Haidt suggests our personal trajectories are controlled 99% by the elephant—a lumbering animal with poor eyesight that proceeds through inertia alone—and only 1% by the driver sitting atop the elephant.

This metaphor prepares readers for Haidt’s main assertion that people’s subconscious biases operate on six channels: caring, fairness, liberty, loyalty, authority, and sanctity. We all experience these concerns with different weightings. His research revealed that people who call themselves liberals are mostly concerned about issues in only three channels: caring, liberty, and fairness, whereas conservatives have equal concerns across all six. (See the book’s two key figures, copied below.) With this observation, Haidt begins to explain why people are divided by politics and religion:

Democrats often say that Republicans have duped [conservative] people into voting against their economic self-interest... But from the perspective of [this book's] Moral Foundations Theory, rural and working-class voters were in fact voting for their moral interests. They don't want...their nation to devote itself primarily to the care of victims and the pursuit of social justice.

Instead, they want a society that also speaks to priorities revolving around loyalty to one's country, respect for authority, and the sanctity of moral norms and social institutions. Haidt contends that until Democrats understand "the difference between a six-foundation morality and a three-foundation morality, they will not understand what makes people vote Republican."

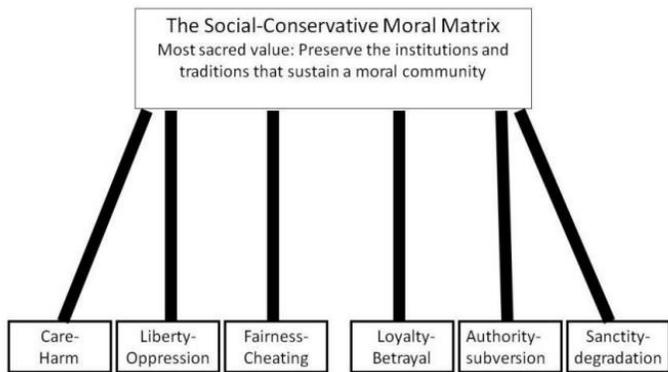


Figure 12.4. *The social conservative moral matrix.*

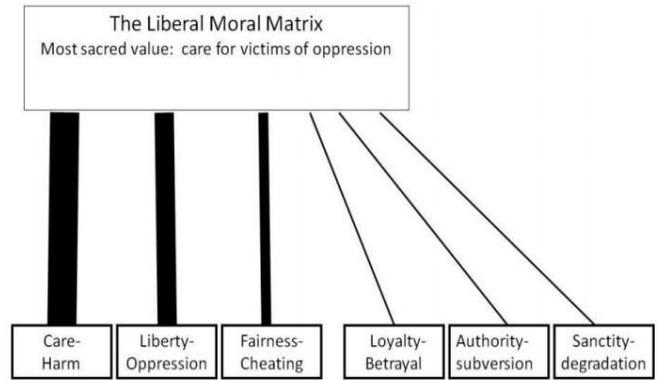


Figure 12.2. *The moral matrix of American liberals.*

We had mixed appraisals of the accuracy of this contention during our FROG discussion. Everyone found the six-channel analysis compelling, and several people mentioned that it conforms well with other important books, such as Arlie Hochschild's *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right* and J. Vance's *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*. However, Haidt's explanation seemed undermined by Roy Moore's popularity during his run for the Alabama Senate seat this year. In that race, we saw white evangelicals, who purport themselves to be hyper vigilant on issues of sanctity, fervently supporting a man who had been credibly portrayed as a frustrated pedophile. Using The Righteous Mind's moral matrices, we could not explain why these voters would so readily dismiss their cherished notions of sanctity, suggesting that Haidt will need to update his theory to include other dynamics, such as tribalism, into his explanation of our behavior.

\*Free-thinkers Reading Opportunities Group

## Humanist Perspectives - What Should We Do About Runaway Oligarchy in the U.S.? With Ralph Hughes

Saturday, January 20, 2018, 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Every 3rd Saturday of the month

Jefferson Unitarian Church

14350 W 32nd Ave · Golden

From I70, take the 32nd Ave/Youngfield Exit in west Wheat Ridge and go west on 32nd Ave for about a mile on the left in east Golden. We'll meet in the Mills Building behind the church.

**A**s the billionaires in the current administration dismantle decades of progressive institutions, it certainly seems that the wealthy now rule the U.S. and that they are crafting a scary future for the rest of us. But we, the 99%, do not have to accept this fate passively.

During its January and February meetings, JH's Humanists Perspectives discussion group will consider the current state of the U.S. economy and political system in order to discern what the humanist agenda in this arena should be. For 45 minutes or so each time, we'll step through the highlights of a seminar that JH's

Political Action Taskforce chair, Ralph Hughes, has begun teaching around the Denver metro area. In January, we'll ask ourselves "Has an oligarchy taken over the U.S. and what will life be like for the rest of us if they continue unopposed?" We'll look at how the oligarchy was beaten back during the Progressive Era in the early 20th century and then consider whether it is incumbent upon humanists to get involved and work against the oligarchy. In February, we'll look at a dozen ideas for making our politics and economy less rotten, then ask which of these ideas should AHA and its chapters start pursuing in earnest.

Ralph, who will lead the discussion, is a Stanford-trained economist and a retired IT consultant. He has been a JH member since 2016.

After Ralph's talk, we'll take a break and then watch several amazing short videos that portray aspects of Humanism, followed by discussions and socializing.

Please RSVP through this Meetup (<https://www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists/events/ngrkdpyncbbc/>), to Jim Bole [randjbole@gmail.com](mailto:randjbole@gmail.com), or Tom Kellogg [kellogg52@gmail.com](mailto:kellogg52@gmail.com), so we have an estimate of food and drinks required.

The Jefferson Humanists Chapter of the American Humanist Association is very pleased to offers a regular explorations series on 3rd Saturdays, 10-12 AM, at Jefferson Unitarian Church (JUC). Each session will be slightly different and include several segments to showcase aspects of Humanism through a presentation, videos, movies, forums, and explorations, followed by discussions. We will include time for participants to socialize and get acquainted, in keeping with our chapter goal of building community.

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## **Humanist Heathen Happy Hour Colorado Plus Brew Pub**

Wednesday, January 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm  
6995 W. 38<sup>th</sup> Ave, Wheat Ridge  
A few blocks east of Wadsworth on the north side



Lots of craft beers on tap and a full bar. Good food. Just add some Humanists and it's a party. Check out their website at <https://www.coloradoplus.net/>

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**Social Responsibility with Jefferson Humanists**  
**by Carole Hughes**

*January 18, 2018 6PM*

***Social Responsibility Committee Meeting***

I've asked over the past few months for suggestions for future Jefferson Humanist projects. Several JH members have responded with ideas for a variety of possible activities, so let's have a discussion to decide which of these projects we'd like to undertake as a group. Should we gather stuffed animals to donate to Children's Hospital? Should we do our part to clean up streets in our community? Are there knitters interested in making hats to distribute to a homeless shelter? What about working with a group of teens on a joint charitable project? Let's prioritize the many worthwhile ways for us to collectively contribute our time and resources. Please RSVP to Carole Hughes at [cathug51@yahoo.com](mailto:cathug51@yahoo.com) or 303 234-1304 if you're interested in attending the January 18 meeting.

*February 3, 2018*

***Join Jefferson Humanists as we Pack Groceries for Families in Need***

We're set to pack groceries for the Action Center on **Saturday, February 3, 2018 from 9 AM until Noon**. Those of us who helped with this project in October really enjoyed it, so we're repeating it. We'll be working at a warehouse near the Action Center. Warm clothing and closed-toe shoes are required. Children and teens are welcome to join us, but the limit for our group is twenty, so if you're interested, please contact Carole Hughes at [cathug51@yahoo.com](mailto:cathug51@yahoo.com) or call at 303 234-1304 no later than January 25.

***Donate Toiletry Items at Monthly JH Chapter Meetings***

JH members have generously brought these items to Chapter Meetings since August. Thanks! Please keep bringing personal hygiene necessities (shampoo, conditioner, soap, toothpaste, floss, toothbrushes, lotion etc.) to Chapter Meetings and we'll see that they are donated to The Action Center, a local non-profit organization that provides basic human needs and pathways to self-sufficiency for residents of Jefferson County and the homeless. The Action Center each day serves up to one hundred families of various sizes, and most of the participants request personal hygiene items. Any size toiletries will be appreciated...travel sizes are great for individual clients, and larger families find the larger sizes useful. Bathroom tissue and disposable razors are also helpful. Look for the donations box at the Chapter Meetings.

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**JPAT Sets Clear Targets in Its Anti-Corruption Campaign**  
**by Ralph Hughes**

JH's Political Action Taskforce (JPAT) has a clear agenda identified for the new year, much of it stemming from our 2017 work with the American Anti-Corruption Campaign (AACC). The AACC revolves around several notions:

- We can't fix much about our society as long as corruption among our legislators makes enriching the donor class more important than the broader interests of the American people.
- It is relatively easy to get cities and counties to pass resolutions banning political corruption. (See [www.anticorruptionact.org](http://www.anticorruptionact.org) for sample resolution language.)
- Once passed by the larger local governments within a state, you can get the state legislator to vote for an anti-corruption statute, as happened already in South Dakota.

- Once enough states have anti-corruption statutes, their representatives and senators to the U.S. Congress can be convinced and shamed into passing the similar legislation at the federal level.

At this time, the anti-corruption campaign has achieved sixty wins—one state, three counties, and the rest cities across the country including traditionally red states such as North Carolina and Florida.

Because political corruption concerns all citizens and can unite people on both the right and left, JPAT volunteered to be the Jefferson County chapter of *Represent.Us*, the national coalition coordinating the AACC. (See their logo copied in this article.) According to *Represent.Us*, a chapter can effectively begin discussing a resolution with a city government when it has collected signatures numbering three percent of the electorate in that town’s last mayoral election. That guideline makes our goals for 2018 very clear: We will strive to gather the following number of signatures on an AACC petition for the following cities in Jeffco:

• Arvada	(pop. 34,391):	1032
• Edgewater	(pop. 855):	26
• Golden	(pop. 8,779):	263
• Lakewood	(pop. 40,877):	1226
• Littleton	(pop. 26,826):	804
• Wheat Ridge	(pop. 7,995):	240

These targets are very modest counts, and achieving them will position JPAT to begin the important and interesting work of negotiating the language for anti-corruption resolutions with city councils.

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### **Jefferson Humanists Board Actions Submitted by Edna Miller, Secretary**

**At its meeting on December 14, 2017, the JH board took the following actions:**

- Discussed ideas from the membership committee to investigate providing college credit to students who attend Humanists meetings; work with JUC Family Promise program for families that are homeless; and hold an online auction to raise money. The first two ideas were approved and the third referred to the JH Executive Committee
  - Approved a scholarship program to send JH members to the American Humanist Association annual conference. A policy on providing the scholarships will be discussed at the January meeting.
  - Updating the bylaws was assigned to Matthew Elisha who will do the updating and provide a digital version for the website.
  - Heard a request from Barb Bailey that Officers and Committee Chairs suggest how a volunteer could help their work.
  - Decided to prepare a new budget in January after all the pledges and new memberships and renewals are in.
  - Approved the organization of a membership directory with a disclaimer about commercial use.
  - Discussed database member and email policies.
  - Discussed forming a Coordinating Council of Board and Committee chairs
-

## A New Year... Another Year Older

by Mari Cowley

Okay, here we are at the beginning of another year and I'm just thankful to have made it. Over the past several months I've written about some pretty serious issues that we've faced as a nation and individually, so I thought I'd switch focus and touch on something less stressful.... or at least I hope it's less stressful.

Ladies (you men too) what do you see when you look in the mirror? Do you see wrinkles and gray or graying hair? Our society has become so youth oriented we've lost sight of something very important. I actually don't mind getting older since the only other option we have is to get dead. Not much of a choice! But every wrinkle tells a story. Do we celebrate those stories or do we expend a great deal of effort (and money) to eradicate them? The increasing aches and pains, the memory failures - sure, I could do without those. As for the actual adventure of aging, in and of itself... It's a good one.

When you were a kid did you ever roll your eyes when you heard an adult claim he or she was "turning twenty-nine again?" Didn't it seem sort of dumb? After all, everyone in the room knew it wasn't true, but they played along. Of course, the claimants were rarely male. Even then it seemed to me that there was something unfortunate about a woman being older than the magical number of twenty-nine. Somewhere along the way I decided I would openly and joyfully celebrate every age I had a chance to be. Even today at the age of seventy-one, I'm damn thankful for every day I wake up above ground!

The younger me might have been brainwashed by the fantasy writings of George MacDonald (a major influence on C.S. Lewis, Francis Hodgson Burnett, Maurice Sendak, Oswald, Madeleine L'Engle to name a few) since traces of his ideas appear in their works, too.

MacDonald's stories have numerous wise elderly people in them and particularly admirable old, wise women. One of the recurrent observations in these tales is that the *agedness* of these women has made them beautiful. Beauty and old age are wrapped up together - along with the long term effects of physical labor: cracked, chaffed, and calloused hands are signatures of rugged beauty.

I know I'm not the only one who enjoys being a mature woman. But we have to stay vigilant against the sneaky and insidious cultural encouragement to pretend to be younger than we really are. I do support keeping physically fit, and staying interested in a broad spectrum of cultures and experiences. But I do resist the inculcation to actively pretend to be younger than I am by waging war on wrinkles and hair color, giving up comfort for age-defying fashion, or affirm that it is a faux pas to be honest about our age.

As a kid, I thought such behavior was simply stupid; as a young adult, I thought it was a sell-out to social pressure, and as a mature female I find it sad and disheartening. If you color your hair, get a facelift, or tummy tuck the important question is, "why do you it"? Do you do it to please someone else, or do you do it because it makes **YOU** feel good?

Now as a supposedly mature seventy-one year old, I see it as a systemic contagion that is relentlessly (and very successfully) cultivated for commercial gain. It fits so neatly into the narrative that we are not enough without purchased assistance: for young girls, industry pressures them at every juncture to look older, and then suddenly, without pause, the pressure shifts to make every effort to look younger - never to be whom we actually are. It's an infection difficult to withstand and is so deeply insidious it is culturally abnormal to resist. Now I do get my nails done because it makes ME feel good and yes, I've colored my hair. I like variety and honestly my hair has been every color in the rainbow; now I'm going for the silver gray look, which thanks to Mother Nature, is pretty darn easy!

There are all sorts of quotes in the Bible regarding signs of being an elder, such as the following: “Gray hair is a crown of splendor” and “Wisdom comes with long life understanding.” Yet Sunday morning services is a prime time to observe how much more persuasive are the texts of Clairol, L’Oreal, and Olay. Even when we are moved to celebrate the unique beauty of a creviced, creased, character filled face by framing it on a wall, displaying it in a table book or sharing it on Facebook; we still put effort, money, and angst into preventing us from ever looking like that ourselves.

As I watch friends around me age, some are increasingly unprepared for the inevitable coming stages, desperate to deny the manifest reality. To label it anything else is deceitful. We are incessantly bombarded - from TV, magazines, movies, advertising - with advice to lie about who we are something (some age) that we are not. The pressures (financially, emotionally, etc.) to succeed in perpetuating this lie aside, how can it be all that healthy to participate in?

At my age, I fully understand how hard getting older is. I understand the urge to fight aging as long as possible. I understand the physical aches and fragilities, the social and sleep-impeding inconveniences, the memory and concentration challenges, and worst of all, the relinquishment of independence.... whether needing others to drive you everywhere, to help you dress, to open a bottle top, or to cut up your food: yes, I know that “getting old” can be very hard in many ways.

But I do know that along with these challenges come some riches that exist only because of the challenges; the rough road to becoming a gracious recipient of help; the enforced graduation from a sympathetic to an empathetic ear; the necessary realization that if it truly is more blessed to give than to receive, then each refusal to an offer of help is a denial of that blessing to someone else and each acceptance a facilitation of benediction. I do know those who continue to reject reality, who become increasingly bitter or fearful, who mourn every day for what they once were - embodies the accumulations of malcontent, just as society has “trained them up to be.” Such as these are unaware that refusing to accept help when it is needed (a guiding arm, a hearing aid, a wheelchair) is not a triumph over aging, but rather a burdening upon those who care for you, and that it denies them your full potential in participation or in presence.

These contrasting models of “seniority” remind me how humility and honesty in aging benefits everyone. I want to age like the elders who were in my life. Yes, some were fragile, some were dependent and some were tired - but they chose to bless those around them again and again with their words, their love, their stories and their grace. All of this, even with their dependence.

I am so thankful that as a young person I learned the beauty of agedness, the elegance of work-worn hands and the wisdom gained from life-long experience. I am even more grateful for the men and women throughout my life who have proved “the goodness of aging” to be a spiritual truth: modeling graceful, joyful aging - living well in the moment they have been given despite (and sometimes through the means of) the accompanying challenges; experiencing honestly who we are rather than trying to look or act something other than who we really are.

Those who remember the past in a manner - rather than cultivating a deepening dissatisfaction - that enriches their present and exemplifies Lady Wisdom in the opening chapters of Proverbs. They attest to the understandings yet to come, that *only* come, by getting older. I am an elder, and I hope that with the coming years, I will have the chance to become a little wiser with each passing year, a little more understanding, and a little more storied.

With the new year, be joyfully, delightfully, and decidedly just as you are: wondrously aging, each and every day; spiritually content that “twenty-nine” only happened once; increasingly beautiful, *because* you are becoming increasingly old.

## AHA Conference Summary Notes – June 2017

by Bob Hofmann

Your Newsletter editors, Bob Hofmann and Nancy Bolt, attended the 2017 American Humanist Association conference in Charleston, South Carolina. The AHA conference is an intellectually challenging, humanistically educational, and just plain fun as you get to network with other atheists and humanists from around the country. The next AHA Conference is in Las Vegas, Nevada on May 17 – 20. The Jefferson Humanist Board is again offering scholarships. Watch for more details in the February JH Newsletter.

Here are some of the highlights of the Charleston AHA Conference.

**Growing Humanism in Your Local Community:** Rachael Berman, AHA Grass Roots and Celebrant Program Coordinator and Fred Edwards, Director of Planned Giving.

Rachel provided an excellent overview of community engagement with suggestions that local chapters staff booths in local festival to spread the word of Humanism. Fred discussed how to measure the success of a local chapter suggesting funds raised, number of members, attendance at chapter events, published items, media exposure, credibility and respect, and activism in the community. He suggested that a local chapter have goals and measureable objectives and that chapters focus on their goals as they plan activities. Are time and money being spent towards goals? He also suggested that 5% of a chapter's budget be spent on advertising of some kind.

**What Do You People Want? A Positive Vision of Secularism** by Rob Boston, Director of Communications, Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

This program focused on challenges to the First Amendment, mostly regarding separation of church and state and mostly at the public school level but also at local government. There are increasing challenges to the Johnson Amendment (that prevents churches from supporting or funding specific political candidates) that need to be fought.

**What Does More Inclusive Humanism Look Like?** A forum with Diane Burkholder, Community Organizer; Dr. Robin DiAngelo, Professor of Education, University of Washington; Desiree Kane, Multimedia Journalist; Sincere Kirabo, AHA Social Justice Coordinator.

This group described their own personal experiences in dealing mostly with discrimination:

- White versus "People of Color"
- Economic development versus indigenous rights i.e. Standing Rock
- LGBTQ versus societal attitudes

**Navigating Humanist Sexuality** by Greta Christina, author and board member of Foundation Beyond Belief. Adults have the responsibility to say yes about sex. Children do not have the power to say yes and are incapable of saying no to an adult authority figure. Silence, however is the same as no.

**The State of Humanism Meeting**, Chaired by Becky Hale, President

Each member of the AHA staff provided an overview of the activities in their areas of responsibilities.

**Climate Change** by Carl Coon

Opening with a video message from France: The most important issue today is climate change.

Nancy Bolt questions AHA stance on climate change. Coon concurs and says AHA Board needs to make it a priority.

**Choosing Death** by Beth Kliggic:

This program began with an example of cruel death in a hospital setting. Of 100 people, 5 of them will spend 10 times as much in end of life care as the other 95. Quote from Dottie Lamb: "We have a duty to die and let our kids lead a reasonable life"

**AHA Legal Actions.** by David Niose; Director, AHA Legal Center

David provided an overview of how legal action is initiated, carried out, and discussed recent results. Mission: Promote and protect Humanists values in the legal system.

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## **Me Too! Two**

**L**ast month we published two articles from women who expressed their own experiences with sexual harassment. Our Humanist Question of the month was:

Please read the two articles on harassment of women that are in this newsletter. Every day, there are more stories that bring awareness to this issue. As a Humanist, what is your reaction to our articles? What else might you share? We would like to hear from men and women.

We received one article that we want to share with you. Because of its length, we will publish it in two parts.

### **Me Too! Two: My Experience by Darlene**

I agree that when no one is listening, one stops talking. Being ignored is quite disrespectful and undeserved. Every person deserves to be treated with respect.

I've experienced a lot of discrimination based on simply being a woman. It kept me from having a successful career, because I believed what the culture told me, and I observed the attitude of people in positions of power. No matter what my talents, I was shoved into crappy jobs designated for women.

When applying for a crappy job one time, the interviewer asked me what my husband thought of my working or of my applying for the job. Of course, he wouldn't have asked that of a man. I told him that I wouldn't be there if my husband and I didn't agree on such things, but when I heard that, I figured I wasn't going to be considered for the job anyway because I was married, and married women shouldn't be in the workplace. What my husband and I discussed between ourselves was our own personal business, wasn't it? Did we have to have some man decide these things for us? He also told me that there were certain questions on the form that the law said I didn't have to answer but answer them anyway. These were personal questions that until recently had been allowed to be asked of women but things had started to change.

Later, after I had gotten a degree in architectural design and drafting as well as a degree in construction management (along with only one other female in my classes), I went to work for a construction company as a (then called) draftsman. I was young. There was an older guy probably in his sixties in the drafting room, and he came on to me, even though I was married. I simply told him no. The next thing I knew, I was called in to the boss's office and fired because this person, Homer, had complained to the boss that I needed constant help and was taking up too much of his time, which was completely untrue. I didn't offer the boss the truth of what had happened because I figured he wouldn't believe me. And he had not asked for my side of the story.

At one point my husband told me he wanted to go to law school. So we planned on that, and I went to the law school to a meeting of the "law wives." This man spoke to the assembly about our role. He told us that if both the husband and the wife were going to law school, that this would cause problems and that the wife should drop out, especially if she were getting the better grades. This infuriated me. I was tempted to stand up and say something

strong, but because I'm an introvert and my husband was to be a student there and it's very embarrassing to do something like that, I didn't stand up or say anything. I wish I had, though.

Growing up, I was made to feel that if I wanted a career, especially in a "man's" field, that I would be the only female in the world that had ever had such thoughts and that it would be impossible for me to get any hiring person to consider me for anything except the traditional jobs for women. And even those were often closed to me when I was married, because I was married.

*To be continued in February*

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## January Membership Question

**Who is your favorite humanist or atheist and why? It could be someone living or dead.**

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## Next Jefferson Humanist Newsletter Deadline – January 22

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