Jefferson Humanists President’s Message

George Floyd’s Life Matters

By Matthew Elisha

Humanism and Its Aspirations holds that humanists “are committed to treating each person as having inherent worth and dignity, and to making informed choices in a context of freedom consonant with responsibility.”

George Floyd, who was killed in a senseless act of brutality by a Minneapolis police officer, deserved to be recognized for his inherent worth and treated with dignity. His assailant should have made the responsible choice and not restrained Floyd with a knee to the back of his neck, an action that police and law enforcement experts agree is not warranted in any circumstance. He should have recognized George Floyd’s distress as a fellow human and acted accordingly. He did not, and should be accountable for his actions, just as we would hold accountable any person who might stand on 5th avenue and shoot another.

The death of George Floyd, a black man, by law enforcement, has become an all too common problem. Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Freddie Gray and Tamir Rice are just a few of the too many other black men that have lost their lives after police encounters. Every time an incident happens, we see outrage and protests, followed by political promises to change the system and still it happens again.

Confucius says, “Repay injury with justice.” George Floyd deserves justice for his murder, and his memory needs to be honored by stopping these unnecessary deaths in the future. Peaceful protest has a (Continued on page 2)
Communicating During Covid-19

By Nancy Bolt

How do you communicate with others during Covid-19? I find that different family and friends have different preferences and we must adjust how we stay in touch through multiple mediums.

Zoom (or go-to-meeting or some similar virtual platform) is constant. Sometimes three or four a day and all must be downloaded, and you must figure out how to adjust sound, video, share screen, chat, and more and more and more. And groups that used to meet monthly, now meet weekly, so we can share our thoughts and feelings or go to webinars that teach us how to do new tasks or be entertained. Zoom fatigue quickly sets in.

There is one advantage to zoom that I like. You see people up close and personal with their names attached. For groups that used to meet infrequently and their names in small print hung the middle of their belly buttons, now I can finally figure just who everybody is. Now I just have to remember!

In our family, two of Bob’s kids want to do a zoom meeting once a week. It is a joy to have three generations in one spot each week. Our teenage grandkids actually share what's going on in their lives and we get to watch our six month old great granddaughter grow up before our eyes (first laugh, first time eating with a spoon, first waving with her hand, first tooth, soon her first crawl.) Usually we see them once a year, now every week.

The other method is those who prefer by phone. Bob’s daughter is in prison and a weekly phone call is all she is allowed. Two of my brothers, our son, and several friends just like to call and talk. No appointment, the phone just rings “how are you doing?”

My five sisters all want to text. One set up a text list and every day we check in that way.

Others want to share their lives on Facebook and we are expected to respond in kind…..with photos.

And a few are willing to meet mask to mask, six feet apart, bringing us food and wine.

My preference. All the above. I was complaining about zoom fatigue to my online women’s group and they asked if I wanted to meet with them less often. I said that there are Zooms I have to do and Zooms I want to do. I wish I could do less of the first and more of the second.

How do you want to communicate during Covid-19? ▲
Maeve Conran, the News Director for KGNU Community Radio in Boulder/Denver, spoke at the May 24 virtual meeting. Maeve talked about the current situation as it relates to news, fake news and the weaponization of news for political purposes. During this highly politically charged season leading up to the presidential election we are being bombarded with “Fake News”.

“Fake news was defined in 2017 by Dictionary.com as “false news stories often sensational in nature, created to be widely shared (online) for the purpose of generating ad revenue via web traffic or discrediting a public figure, political movement, company, etc.” It has largely been associated with Donald Trump, but fake news has persisted for more than 200 years. The term “Fake News” appears more than a century ago and false reporting has been around for since the 1790’s.

• Why Does Fake News Go Viral?
A 2018 study by MIT found that the truth simply cannot compete with hoax and rumors. Fake news and false rumors reach more people, penetrate deeper into the social network and spread much faster than accurate news stories. An example is” Pope Francis shocks world and endorses Donald Trump for President.” This was discredited but persisted for many weeks.

• News Deserts--Fake News or No News:
Many rural communities are now news deserts. Since 2004 over 1800 papers have closed up shop leaving many areas without accurate coverage of local events. Lack of news coverage has transformed many areas into “News Deserts” where poverty rates are above the national average, corruption is high and voter turnout is low. Colorado currently has seven counties without a local paper.

• Impact Of The Loss of Local News:
Local governments do not thrive when local news dies. They (local news papers and such) are often the watchdogs of governmental activities and when that disappears local governments often do not represent the people who elected them as well. On line news services often focus on national news neglecting the local areas even more.

• How To Spot “Fake News”
The above image offers some general approaches to spotting fake news.

Some Solutions:
Media Literacy—Know what is Fake; know the difference between Editorial, Commentary and news reporting

• Support local news initiatives:
Pay attention to the business of news: Media consolidation, deregulation of News and the Internet, and who owns the news (only a few owners for the major news sources)

Maeve’s Power point presentation will be posted on the Jefferson Humanists website and will contain links to many of these topics and more details about this topic.▲
Join us for this month’s question, "Should there be checks on immigration into the United States?" Our country has been built by immigrants from all over the world and several times in our history, there have been increased checks on immigration, often for xenophobic reasons. Should the country be more welcoming to immigrants? In this time of uncertainty, we can explore the real threats to our well being as well as the imagined threats to the security of the country. This is a great opportunity to discuss the real problems of open and easy travel, understanding what constitutes a real threat and what constitutes an imagined threat.

PLEASE BE SURE TO RSVP on Meetup if you plan to attend https://www.meetup.com/

The aim of argument, or of discussion, should not be victory, but progress." ~ Joseph Joubert

Jefferson Humanists
Monthly meeting preview for June
Zoom—Sunday, June 28

Title - Dreamers: Making college a reality

What is it like to be a Dreamer/DACA student in our community during these challenging times? Gregor Mieder (Director of Immigrant Services at MSU Denver) and Estefani Peña-Figueroa (Program Staff Assistant & recent MSU Denver graduate) will describe how current immigration policies impact young, undocumented immigrants and the unique challenges they experience in pursuing their educational goals. Participants will hear Dreamer student stories and learn about of how Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver) and community supporters are helping these amazing young people make their college and career dreams a reality. Do not miss this presentation!

Estefani was featured in an article in the Denver Post on 5/25/20. She was featured as an impressive 1st generation DACA student graduate.

Check back later for more information https://www.jeffersonhumanists.org/
Humanist Happy Hour has been well attended lately. We welcome you to join in for a toast and some laughter. We need each other like bread needs butter and although we may be apart, we still need connections to others.

Have a beverage, get comfortable, and tell your favorite funny story. And remember connections keep us vital and spur other interesting conversations.

You must RSVP before each meeting start time to see the Zoom link. For smart devices, the meeting ID is the number string in the link.

For questions or concerns about Zoom, email tomk@jeffersonhumanists.org.

For June 3 Humanist Happy Hour, go to this link for the Zoom login https://www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists/events/270892237/

For June 10 Humanist Happy Hour, go to this link for the Zoom login https://www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists/events/jwjqsrybcjbnb/▲

Humanist Trivia Night
Friday, June 5 @ 7:00 pm
See how much you know about Humanism.
Host Tom Kellogg

Open a beverage and join in. We'll start with a toast and introduction to each other, then get into the main event, a virtual Humanist/Atheist trivia contest. The questions will be displayed on your screen with four (4) possible answers. Categories include famous Humanists/Atheists, Science, politics, history, famous quotes, and more. Each participant can play as an individual or a team at home. Answers are submitted anonymously using chat and the rules will be explained.

The winner will receive worldwide recognition for being totally awesome.

There are only 10 spots available, so please only RSVP if you plan to be there. You must RSVP before the meeting start time to see the Zoom link. https://www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists/events/270823681/▲

The one and only rule: Please don't Google the answers while playing.
That is not playing fair.
FROG will be settling back into its regular time slot in June and resuming the previously announced schedule (which is posted on the JH website). For now, we will continue to meet over the internet via Zoom.

On June 13 we will be discussing *The Little Book of Atheist Spirituality*, by Andre Comte-Sponville. In this powerful book, the internationally bestselling author presents a philosophical exploration of atheism—and comes to some startling conclusions. According to Comte-Sponville, we have allowed the concept of spirituality to become intertwined with religion, and thus have lost touch with the nature of a true spiritual existence. In order to change this, we do not need to reject the ancient traditions and values that are part of our heritage. Instead, we should rethink our relationship to these values and ask ourselves whether their significance comes from the existence of a higher power or simply the human need to connect to one another and the universe.

Comte-Sponville offers rigorous, reasoned arguments that take both Eastern and Western philosophical traditions into account, and through his clear, concise, and often humorous prose, he offers a convincing treatise on a new form of spiritual life.

To join this discussion, you must RSVP several days in advance to Meetup at https://www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists/events/270281977/. The next book to be discussed is *The Lathe of Heaven* by Ursula Le Guin, on July 11. We will have a guest facilitator! See the announcement in next week’s Newsletter. Until then, Happy Reading! ▲
Saturday, June 20, 2020 at 7:00 pm

Zoom Online Event: JH Humanist Perspectives - Mini Film Festival of Amazing Short Videos

By Jim Bole and Tom Kellogg

This is a favorite semi-recurring format, now in its virtual debut. We'll be showing a series of incredible short secular videos through Zoom, 5 to 15 minutes long, followed by discussions. Each film fest will feature famous people such as Richard Dawkins, Neil deGrasse Tyson, Seth Andrews, Carl Sagan, Christopher Hitchens, Madalyn Murray O'Hair, George Carlin, Aron Ra, and more, along with topics such as politics, evolution, science, history, heathen comedy, and more.

**Here is the tentative lineup schedule:**

**Two videos about science**
- Science in America - Neil deGrasse Tyson
- Richard Dawkins - The Beauty of Science

**Discussion**

**Featured celebrity - two videos of Madalyn Murray O'Hair**
- Madalyn Murray O'Hair (segment of a documentary)
- MMO documentary movie trailer "Good Riddance"

**Discussion**

**Comedy segment - two heathen comedy shorts**
- Creationist Cosmos
- George Carlin - Religion is Bullshit

**Discussion**

You must RSVP before the meeting start time to see the Zoom link. [https://www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists/events/270823239/](https://www.meetup.com/JeffcoHumanists/events/270823239/)

For smart devices, the meeting ID is the number string in the link.

The Jefferson Humanists Chapter of the American Humanist Association is very pleased to offer a regular explorations series on 3rd Saturdays, 10 to Noon, currently online. 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.

We need your help to tell us what topics you would like to see explored at upcoming Humanist Perspectives programs. Let us spend a few minutes discussing this. Which past presentations did you like that we can expand on? Maybe you have seen some good Humanist videos to show. We are also looking for people to get involved with HP and help put presentations together as well as co-host sessions.

Email [tomk@jeffersonhumanists.org](mailto:tomk@jeffersonhumanists.org) with your thoughts.

Become a member and connect with like-minded people.

Checkout our Website, Meetup, Facebook page and Instagram from the link below.

[https://www.jeffersonhumanists.org/](https://www.jeffersonhumanists.org/)

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**The Jefferson Humanists’ mission** is to expand an ethical and life-affirming Humanist Community devoted to science, reason, inclusion and social responsibility. Through community building, lectures and social activism we expand our members’ awareness, gain an understanding of the issues facing the world and provide learning opportunities through guest speakers on a variety of topics.
Change is happening. Be on the forefront of what this means to you. Watch the Jefferson Humanist website as it becomes enhanced with you, the user, in mind. On the Home Page find Frequently Asked Questions, News, Calendar, Newsletter along with Become a Member and Pay Dues. Under the About heading check out Leadership (pictures) and History. Under the Resources heading check out Archives. There you’ll find many items of interest such as Past Speakers, Board and Council Meeting Minutes and previous Newsletters. [https://www.jeffersonhumanists.org/](https://www.jeffersonhumanists.org/)

Coming to you on CPR will be a clip about Jefferson Humanists. Later, we will announce the exact times this will be available. Colorado Public Radio is available in Denver at [90.1 FM (CPR News)](https://www.jeffersonhumanists.org/)

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