

# VALUES & ETHICS:

FROM LIVING ROOM TO BOARDROOM

JASON A. MERCHEY

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*The ideals that have lighted my way have been **kindness,**  
**beauty, and truth.***

~ Albert Einstein

## P R E F A C E

I'm gratified you picked this book up!

I was the originator and host of an inventive and invigorating radio program called *Values and Ethics: from Living Room to Boardroom*, which was broadcast live on World Talk Radio. A decade ago, WTR.com was the world's largest Internet-based radio station in terms of listeners. I recorded 89 shows in the 2005-2006 time period, at the studio in San Diego, California – which happened to be a 20 minute drive from my house.

I'm proud to have had these one-of-a-kind dialogues with such remarkable individuals: experts, thought leaders, activists, authors, social entrepreneurs, freethinkers, professors, scholars, mothers, theorists, survivors, and businesspeople. I think the shows are important and significant because I was interacting with a unique and highly-capable group of guests about topics we both found **compelling**. No participant ever asked me how many listeners I had, requested payment, or insisted on the rights – they simply wanted to speak about a topic they loved, and get some publicity. In general, I felt the guests were very **generous** with their time and were of the highest levels of **erudition** and **earnestness**.

Indeed, many of my **discussion** partners are very “**high caliber**” in my mind; they represent true **success**. Since I am a “junior philosopher,” and kind of a nerd, I found some of the guests who agreed to speak with me to have the “**gravitas** equivalent” of a Michael Jordan, Susan Sarandon, or Jerry Seinfeld. I'm not sure if they made a lot of

money or were “famous,” but many have started companies, marshaled resources creatively, organized others, defended doctoral dissertations, published books, overcome obstacles, joined think tanks, started websites, developed ideas, professed to college students, made big decisions, lived their lives in **fulfilling** and/or **honorable** ways, and influenced others in a **positive** and **generative** way.

In general, I enjoy talking about topics besides the weather. In that category, perhaps the apex would be **values** and **virtues**. The Queen, of course, is **wisdom**. Plato referred to these phenomena as *forms* – things as they are, not what they appear to be; what lies behind the veil. Immanuel Kant, likewise, wrote about *noumena*. Socrates, Plato’s immensely influential teacher, was famous for **investigating** values by engaging in spirited and penetrating **discourse** as he visited the ancient Athenian *agora*. Thus, when discussing **dignity** or **truth**, **happiness** or **love**, we are trying to get at *the nature of* something important. What a privilege it was to discuss these heady and, in ways, awesome concepts with great thinkers in their fields. Note: when a **value** or **virtue** is mentioned, I boldface it in the text. Not religiously, but once per page per mention is what I was aiming for.

Having transcribed less than 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the dialogues, I expect this will be one of three volumes centered on values and **ethics**. I consider this the third in the *Values of the Wise Series*, with *Building a Life of Value* as the beautiful flagship; *Living a Life of Value* as the weighty, heavy-hitter; and this book as a superbly unique complement to the first two. I published four books that were simply quotations in the 2003-2005 time period. Grouped according to one of 28 *values of the wise*, cohered as sets of two or three values, they made one hell of a read, but didn’t quite have the panache or **substance** of those which I set aside as components of the subsequent ones.

Though the original four books were, in my humble opinion, sharp works, each comprised of over a thousand great quotations on **values**, **virtues**, **ethics**, and **wisdom**, my patron and advisor Ruth Westreich suggested that to really make an impact, she would recommend

including “more of yourself in the books.” Hence, in *Building a Life of Value* I included some of my opinions about what these values were really about, and in *Living a Life of Value* I used essays by many **wonderful** and **notable** writers as the structure, and only decorated it with quotations.

However, in the present work, though I do provide apt quotations for your **edification**, there is “more of myself” in it. I admit to putting in quite a bit of shaping and editing of the off-the-cuff, unscripted interviews – for the benefit of both the guest and myself. I also have thought a bit about these topics over the last decade, taken a few more classes, and read well over a hundred books. There are times when I add to my responses just as there are times when I subtracted from my responses. It is in the spirit of good dialogue and in completeness. There is indeed “more of myself” in here.

At times, I feel a bit low-caliber, especially compared to what my mother and father **achieved** in life, professionally. And when I think of the high comparative career success of virtually all of the 170+ guests. However, I realized having proofread this book that I *am* an expert: I have developed a unique ability to find an idea, **learn** something about the context and background, investigate it, **dialogue** with a more **educated** other about it, find quotations that bolster my point of view (or provide useful context and contrast), organize it, proofread it, and disseminate the results.

In addition to cost and the schedule I was yoked to, there were also **creativity**, **spontaneity**, **courtesy**, and **erudition** required – not to mention finding qualified, interested guests and lining it all up. Transcribing 500 pages by hand, proofing it, laying it out, and going through the challenges of self-publishing was a mountain of work, but it finally came to fruition. With logistical, creative, and guest-procurement requirements (and the \$600 in studio fees per month) it was, in all ways, a big commitment. But, a big **commitment** followed through upon will likely become a big **accomplishment**.

I once had a psychologist offer that the first two books in the *Values*

*of the Wise Series* are “like having done two doctoral dissertations” (I think he meant because of the **vision**, **industriousness**, **creativity**, **stick-to-itiveness**, and **research** involved). It may seem gauche to talk in this manner, but considering I had a self-esteem problem in my adolescence, and perhaps still to this day, I feel earnestly proud to **realize** the caliber of this book – both from the “effort” perspective and the “finished product” one.

Sometimes, I would think, “I wish I had a book in me, but it seems like everything has already been written.” Or, “That movie was great; why didn’t I think of that!” However, with this work, it is truly **unique** and no one in the world could have produced this book. I don’t mean to place myself on the level of a Jonas Salk or Marie Curie, but this whole project was, from beginning to end, me following my heart and **working** hard and **creatively**. I’m so pleased I kept the dialogues safe during my more “capitalistic” period (2007-2016). I went back to school in 2016 seeking greater **fulfillment**, and one day it struck me: what a shame it is to have nearly 100 great dialogues on **values** and **ethics** not receiving their due consideration. The book (and two follow-ups) I was **searching** for but not finding within in fact existed for a decade and I overlooked them.

I hope you enjoy reading these dialogues as much as I enjoyed engaging in them. They remind me of a time in my life that, somehow, seems very distant. In fact, more than a few interviewees I have come to realize have since passed away. I have been privileged to own and retain the interviews, and I found **meaning** and **fulfillment** in the whole process. There are a million books published a year, but this one is very important to me, and a true labor of love, so I hope you enjoy and appreciate it. I **know** it will be **helpful** to you if you are **open-minded** and put the time in.

Jason Merchey,  
Summerville, SC  
2017

## CHAPTER 1

### *A Life of Integrity and Meaning*

Kathleen Brooks, Ph.D. and Gary E. Kessler, Ph.D.

*“Even in our highly competitive society where the goal of making it to the top is more important than how we get there, an individual whose **ambition** is to live an **ethical** life can gain both an inner **dignity** and an overall **serenity** that money and position can’t buy.”*

~ Derrick Bell

It’s an honor to have Kathleen Brooks in-studio today because she hatched me from an egg. What I mean is, she was doing a radio show called *Ethics: from Bedroom to Boardroom*, here on World Talk Radio. She had me on as a guest and we sort of hit it off. She happened to mention that she was concluding her show, and it occurred to me that, based on a cost-benefit analysis, it would be a good idea to create some remarkable discourse with some incredible guests (who surely wouldn’t have sat for a 30-50 minute interview if there was not the advantage to them of calling in to the world’s largest Internet-based radio station).

I asked her if she would mind if I took over her time slot and named my show a similar name. All good, she said. I felt like *Ethics: from Living Room to Boardroom* would be a preferred name, since I personally feel

like **ethics** doesn't have much to do with the bedroom, (she is a psycho-therapist and perhaps it is more relevant in her line of work). Then, I added "values" and the show became *Values and Ethics: from Living Room to Boardroom*.

Kathleen is here to speak with me about living a life of **integrity** and **meaning** and I'm tickled pink. In the second and third segments, we will be joined by Gary Kessler, Ph.D. I imagine that you, like I, will be graced by such **wisdom** as Kathleen's words here on **intimacy** and **courage**: "It is an act of profound **bravery** to be vulnerable, tender, and **genuine**."

Hello Dr. Kathleen Brooks, of the late, great show: *Ethics: from Bedroom to Boardroom*!

KB: Hi! Are you avoiding the bedroom, Jason!?! (laughs)

(laughing)

KB: I had to ask you! (laughs)

(laughing) It's just been so long.....

KB: (laughs)

*"The only cure is a redistribution of the wealth in this country. First to our own impoverished and then to every starving soul on the planet. We could feed everybody that was making some attempt at 'living lives of value.'"*

~ John A. Marshall

Well, to answer your facetious question, I wanted to speak about corporate/business **ethics** and **social responsibility**, and then spend the rest of the focus on ethics in a broad sense, and I guess I did feel like "bedroom" pulled my concept in a direction that my heart wasn't in. I

probably shouldn't fail to mention that my eschewing "bedroom" does reflect my particular point of view that the idea of "family **values**" and "**moral** values" has been used (or some would say, *co-opted*) by the political Right, evangelicals, etc. and doing so hasn't done us any favors as a nation. I didn't want to inadvertently lend any credence to the ideas that homosexuality is a sin, or abortion should always be considered wrong and illegal, or premarital sex being immoral, or abstinence-only sex **education** replacing responsible sex education, or that women should be second-class. In other words, I think the dialogue about ethics and morality in this country (perhaps from Day 1) is unnecessarily *fixated*, to use a psychological word, on matters surrounding sex. A lot of people are excited (forgive the pun) by such matters, and, tell me if you don't agree, but...

KB: I would. I can tell where you're going; go ahead and go there!

I feel like you can't be a bad person in some arena – say, work – and then come home and, all of a sudden, you're an **upstanding** individual by having sex with your spouse in the missionary position.

KB: I agree, I totally agree. If you're not a great person in the living room, you're probably not in the bedroom or at work. As I say in my book, *Radical Integrity: 21 Ways to Create a Meaningful Life*, if we want fulfilling relationships, they must be founded on trust and respect. We can't expect others to trust or respect us when we don't tell the truth and when we don't do what we say we're going to do.

Well, I have had some complaints that I'm not great in the bedroom, but, I don't think that qualifies as a **moral** failing (smirking)...

KB: I'm not even gonna touch that (laughing)!



## CHAPTER 2

### *Wisdom: We Need a Revolution*

Copthorne Macdonald and Nicholas Maxwell, Ph.D.

*“As the power of our ability to manipulate the world grows, the poverty of our understanding of what to do with that knowledge becomes more apparent.”*

~ Robert N. Bellah<sup>5</sup>

Today, I am eager to welcome two guests who between them have well over 100 years of thinking and experiencing and writing; they are both students of (and experts on) the concept of **wisdom**. You might raise an eyebrow at claim “an expert on wisdom,” but there are indeed folks who spend a lot of time and energy on the elusive and important concept. I am going to bring you two of the most remarkable ones, today: Copthorne Macdonald and Nicholas Maxwell, Ph.D.

In planning to interview persons on the topic of wisdom, I reflected on how I know “Cop” – as Mr. Macdonald prefers to be called. I think I met him by simply searching on the word *wisdom* in a search engine, and his interesting and accessible site popped up near the very top. I’m honored to say that we have had a fair amount of professional

<sup>5</sup> and coauthors Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler, and Steven M. Tipton

collaboration thus far. We were considering the idea of putting together a show on how wisdom is related to knowledge, science, information, and technology.

I think that doing so is important because science-derived **knowledge** and technology have led to much that is **good**, but also to much that is harmful. “Progress” dissociated from **wisdom** has left us in a quandary. Nicholas Maxwell has noted that:

*“All our modern global crises are the outcome of science without wisdom. If we are to avoid in this century the horrors of the last one – wars, death camps, dictatorships, poverty, environmental damage – we urgently need to learn how to acquire more wisdom, which in turn means that our institutions of learning become devoted to that end.”*

There are a couple of premises here that I would like to be explicit about, and then spend the show slowly digesting; namely, that *progress dissociated from wisdom has left us in a quandary*, and that one of the best ways to remedy the situation is to *change our educational system*.

Copthorne Macdonald is a writer, independent scholar, and former communication systems engineer. He has written extensively about the nature of reality (including *consciousness* and *mind*), the **development** of wisdom, the *global problematique*, and the challenge of creating a **sustainable** future. He has a number of books, one of which is just chock-full of quotations on wisdom (called *Toward Wisdom*); I also have *Matters of Consequence* on my bookshelf. He runs the very successful and insightful, *The Wisdom Page*, which is [www.wisdompage.com](http://www.wisdompage.com).

*“Our scientific power has outrun our spiritual power. We have guided missiles and misguided men.”*

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

Nicholas Maxwell, Ph.D. is a philosopher who has **devoted** much of his working life to arguing that there is an urgent need to bring about a

**revolution** in academia so that it seeks and promotes **wisdom** and does not just acquire **knowledge**. For over thirty years, he taught philosophy of science at University College London, where he is now Emeritus Reader. In 2003, he founded *Friends of Wisdom*, an international group of people sympathetic to the idea that academic inquiry should help humanity acquire more wisdom by **rational** means. Possessing a fecund imagination, he has published 14 books spelling out different aspects of the argument for an **intellectual** revolution – *from knowledge to wisdom*. Maxwell has contributed to over thirty other books and has published more than 75 papers in scientific and philosophical journals on problems that range from consciousness, **free will**, **value**, and **art** to the **rationality** of **science**, **simplicity**, scientific realism, explanation, time, and quantum theory. The titles of his books are clever, and include ones such as *How Universities Can Help Create a Wiser World: The Urgent Need for an Academic Revolution, What's Wrong With Science?*, and (published by Oxford University Press): *The Comprehensibility of the Universe: A New Conception of Science*.

I am very proud to note that both gentlemen contributed to my 2006 book, *Living a Life of Value*. Well, let me finally get to it. Hello, Cop; greetings, Nicholas. Let me see if I can keep up with you two.

CM: Hi there, Jason! Nice to talk with you, as always.

Nice to talk with you, too. Now, do you two know each other?

NM: We've actually emailed each other, but have never talked before. Hello, Cop!

*"...to counteract fragmentation of bodies of knowledge, the **wisdom** heuristic functions as an organizing selector and activator of otherwise more independent bodies of knowledge about the means and ends of a good life."*

~ Paul B. Baltes

CM: Hi there, Nicholas!

Cop, I'm sure you'll be impressed by Nicholas's accent – I spoke with him this morning right before the show and he sounds quite **genteel**! It will be fun to be able to talk with him for 50 minutes. So, today we are investigating what turns out to be one of Nicholas's "*life's work* type of ideas," and I assume or believe that Cop, you have a lot of concordance with his aims – namely, that is that scientific **knowledge** and technology have led to much that is useful and benign, but also, have spawned many unintended consequences, negative outcomes, quandaries, unpredictable dangers, and unsustainable situations. Do think that's **true**?

CM: Exactly. We've got this *amazing* capability; our knowledge has allowed us to do all kinds of things, but it hasn't always been guided by wisdom. Actually, that's an understatement!

Nicholas, tell us something about what's so interesting about this idea of **wisdom** being disjointed from knowledge?

*"...A positive **aspiration** and effort for an **ethical-moral** configuration of our common life is of overriding importance. Here no **science** can save us. I believe, indeed, that overemphasis on the purely **intellectual** attitude, often directed solely to the practical and factual, in our **education**, has led directly to the impairment of **ethical values**."*

~ Albert Einstein

NM: Okay, well, we have this long tradition of **rational inquiry** devoted to improving knowledge and technological "know-how," going back to the Scientific Revolution starting in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Of course, the original idea was that this was going to promote **human welfare**; the basic idea being that first you acquire knowledge, and then you apply it to help **solve** social problems.

If our concern is *really* to promote **human welfare** and to help us

## CHAPTER 3

### *Doubt: Philosophical and Religious*

Jennifer Michael Hecht

*“The leading fact in belief, according to my viewpoint, is our primitive credulity; we begin by believing everything.”*

~ Alexander Bain

The topic of the day is philosophical and religious doubt. With my very able guest, Jennifer Michael Hecht, Ph.D., I explore some history of the subject, and learn about her **fascinating** book. Thank you for tuning in to *Values and Ethics: from Living Room to Boardroom*. Let’s look into one of the most critical precursors of wisdom: **doubt**.

We will find that doubting is an attitude, a skill, and it can be brought to bear on any topic. Even children will react to certain statements and propositions with incredulity. “*Whaaat?!*” is how it sounds when they question/protest. We think of human beings as quite capable of deceit, subterfuge, and chicanery, so we all have a more-or-less “tuned up” ear for such manipulations. However, religion is based on dogma, supposition, and authority – and thus is a perfect subject for the exercise of **doubt**. As well, there is philosophical doubt, which refers generally to an attitude of hesitancy, modesty, carefulness, evidence-wanting, and

the big one: **skepticism**. If your doctor prescribes a medicine and you suggest you want to look it up on the Internet first, you’re being skeptical. If a teacher guarantees you will use such-and-such subject after high school and you **question** whether or not it is true, you demonstrating philosophical doubt. At higher levels, philosophical doubt encompasses many questions in the fields of *epistemology* and *metaphysics*. And, I’m proud to say, *ethics*...

*“The extent to which beliefs are based upon evidence is very much less than believers suppose.”*

~ Bertrand Russell

...It’s an interesting topic to me because I took my first **philosophy** class during my first semester of junior college. It made a huge impact for a few reasons. One I will never forget!

I was a bit unprepared for college; I graduated with a 3.2 from high school and not having studied for the SAT, performed in a lackluster manner (not exactly University of California material). I was, however, prior to my family tumult starting at about age 14, known as “bright.”<sup>8</sup> Thus, on the first day of the philosophy class, when I raised my hand with a question, I literally – and no, I am not kidding to be ironic – mispronounced the word *philosophical*. I don’t know what came over me. I basically started saying *phil-AH-suf-ee* and halfway through, switched to the adjective, *phil-ub-SOPH-i-cal*. It came out as *phil-ab-sub-FIC-ul*. My teacher literally corrected me. It was mortifying. I think maybe Athena was making me look **absurd** right from the get-go as a way to permanently and unalterably inoculate me against the possibility of developing *hubris*...

*“Imagine a world in which generations of human beings come to believe that certain films were made by God, or that specific software was coded by him.”*

<sup>8</sup> Bright, curious, precocious, and talkative. I always got good grades for academics and low ones for behavior!

*Imagine a future in which millions of our descendants murder each other over rival interpretations of Star Wars or Windows 98. Could anything be more ridiculous?”*

~ Sam Harris

...The philosophy (or should I say: *phil-o-SOPH-ee!*) class in question was **impactful** and memorable for many reasons. First, it was my first semester of junior college, which was a big deal since, secondary to my parents’ divorce a few years earlier, I was underprepared emotionally and academically for college. Second, the professor was an accented, Irish-accented individual with a white beard and a Ph.D. after his name – which was fairly exotic to me as a youngster. Denis Hickey was his name (with one “n”) and the college was Cypress College in Cypress, California. Third, he was really into quotations, and I, to this day, remember memorizing quotations by towering intellects such as Petrarch, Bronowski, Gibran, and Durant– to name just a few. I ended up finding quotes to be worth more than saffron, gold, and diamonds – and I still love them.

Finally, he taught that **doubt** was absolutely indispensable to the philosophical enterprise. It was a great lesson, one that authors and thinkers as remarkable as Clarence Darrow, Alfred Lord Tennyson, and Francis Bacon counseled. It seems like the only true path to **wisdom**. Faith has its place, but not in **science, philosophy, or logic**.

When viewing quotes from the database at [www.ValuesoftheWise.com](http://www.ValuesoftheWise.com), I was struck by the utter “maleness” of the authors of quotes having to do with **skepticism, doubt**, and agnosticism. I’m happy that I can provide some much-needed balance by interviewing the woman who wrote the book on doubt – literally. Her name is Jennifer Michael Hecht, and she put together an assiduously **researched** and well-received book on doubt. It’s called – not surprisingly, *Doubt: A History*. The subtitle is: *The Great Doubters and Their Legacy of Innovation – from Socrates to Jesus and Thomas Jefferson to Emily Dickinson*. This is going to be a good **education** for me, and I hope it will for you, too. If she speaks

anything like she writes, we’re all in for a treat...

*“If there is a God, it’s going to be a whole lot bigger and a whole lot more incomprehensible than anything a theologian of any religion has ever proposed.”*

~ Richard Dawkins

...I received the book for Christmas one year from a family member, and impressed with it, I thought it would make a great interview. I looked for Dr. Hecht online, and lo and behold, there she was. I wanted to learn more about her, this interesting topic, and find ways to **improve** and shape my thinking. I read it, wanting to be able to be **enlightened** and consoled by all the people from the past who made their mark on history as skeptics, iconoclasts, freethinkers, rebels, leaders, atheists, agnostics, philosophers, and secularists – and maybe put a few new arrows in my quiver along the way. The book did not disappoint; a *bona fide* scholarly work...

*“The believer is happy, the doubter is wise.”*

~ Greek proverb

...Jennifer holds a Ph.D. in the history of science/European cultural history from Columbia University and has taught in the MFA program at Columbia University as well as the New School. Her books have been translated into many languages. She has also written a number of others, including *The Wonder Paradox*, a guide to using poetry to find **meaning**, invoke **awe**, and rest in some **clarity** of mind. Another work, *The End of the Soul*, won *Phi Beta Kappa Society’s* 2004 Emerson Award. She has appeared on *Talk of the Nation*, *Hardball*, the Discovery Channel, and *The Morning Show*. She lectures widely. *Publisher’s Weekly* called her poetry book *Funny* “One of the most original and entertaining books of the year.”

Skipping any further adulation, allow me to introduce Jennifer Michael Hecht, Ph.D. Hello there. May I call you Jennifer?

## CHAPTER 4

### *Economics from the Progressive Perspective*

Jared Bernstein, Ph.D. and Edward S. Herman, Ph.D.

*“One of the lessons of the last few decades is that a rising tide does not necessarily lift all boats.”*

~ Douglas Elmendorf

Welcome to *Values and Ethics: from Living Room to Boardroom* on World Talk Radio here in San Diego, broadcast on the Internet to the world, and downloadable for the foreseeable future. Today’s show is about the economic and fiscal issues in America looked at from the lens of **progressivism**/liberalism. My guests are very noteworthy.

Unless you’re quite wealthy, you probably feel an economic pinch—a job that’s not keeping pace, a fair amount of debt, insecurity about Social Security. The economic priorities of the Bush administration and Congress are fairly plain to see; the road to fiscal propriety in a more **progressive** America is not rocket science—it comes down to priorities and **discipline**. I’m happy to speak with two guests today who have decades of combined experience watching the economy, the media, and the rest of the factors that support it. Thank you for listening; we have to take a quick break, but when I return I will tell you about Jared

Bernstein, Ph.D. and, then at the bottom of the hour, I will be speaking with Professor Edward Herman.

Today’s show is an important one to me; I think economics and the way the country is being stewarded by those who hold the power are extraordinarily important. You read about Walmart trying to squeeze its workers a little bit more in the paper on this day, the national debt on that day, the trade deficit in the paper yet another. Then tax cuts, then it’s the minimum wage not keeping pace with inflation. For those who follow it, it seems ceaseless and unsettling. Conditions are as bad for the middle class as they have ever been – or *worse*.

*“There’s enough on this planet for everyone’s needs, but not for everyone’s greed.”*

~ Mohandas Gandhi

I came across a book three or four months ago. It’s a short read, and only cost \$12. It’s got a nice cover and it’s extraordinarily-endorsed—it’s entitled *All Together Now: Common Sense For A Fair Economy*. On the front, it has an endorsement by former Senator John Edwards, it’s got Barbara Ehrenreich on the back, Robert Reich, EJ Dionne – I couldn’t think of better endorsers if I were trying to impress someone (well, John Edwards’s chicanery aside).

It is written by Jared Bernstein. He earned his Ph.D. in social welfare from Columbia University; he is a senior economist and director of the Living Standards Program at the Economic Policy Institute in Washington, D.C. He is the author of the last seven editions of *the State of Working America*, as well as *The Benefits Of Full Employment: When Markets Work For People*. He is a contributor to *The American Prospect*. The book is very well laid out; it doesn’t use a lot of jargon or anything like that. It’s called *All Together Now: Common Sense For A Fair Economy*.

Here’s an example of what you’ll find:

*“With a strong economy and soaring **productivity**, we ought to have access to reliable healthcare, more **confidence** in our ability to get our kids to good public schools, and a greater sense that if we play by the rules, things will fall our way more often than not.”*

That’s **fair** enough, but on the other hand, you see something like:

*“Economics, once an **elegant** and **principled** set of ideas, **dedicated** to shaping economic outcomes to the **betterment** of society, has been reduced to a restrictive set of ideology- inspired set of rules devoted to an explanation of why we cannot take the necessary steps to meet the challenges we face.”*

Dr. Bernstein not only analyzes, in an elegant and astute way, what is going on nowadays with the economic priorities of the Administration, but also lays out a plan for how we can make improvements and come together as a people. So without further ado, I’d like to welcome Dr. Jared Bernstein.

JB: Hello, thank you for having me on.

Sure! Would it be okay if I called you Jared?

JB: Of course. It sounds like you’ve read the book...

Indeed. For someone like me who doesn’t know much about economics at a theoretical level – I don’t even do my own taxes! – it’s great to be able to see some of the ideas laid out in ways not too jargon-laden. You kind of just tell it like it is, in layman’s terms. Is that what you were going for?

JB: Absolutely, and I was actually trying to riff off of Thomas Paine’s pamphlet back in 1776 called *Common Sense*, wherein he tried to muster a set of **critical** but **intuitive** arguments as to why it would be in the

interests of America to do something very different. I’m trying to muster a set of credible arguments vis-à-vis economic policy, which I judge to be very much off track. I offer what I hope is a useful analysis as to how we got here. I introduce this concept of “YOYO Economics,” and then try to suggest a different set of approaches to the challenges we face.

Yes, indeed, you have a website that is dedicated to this book, [www.noyoyoeconomics.com](http://www.noyoyoeconomics.com). It is an acronym, and kind of a play on words, right? How do you describe what that stands for?

*“The economic owning class is always the political ruling class.”*

~ Eugene V. Debs

JB: It stands for “You’re on your own.” The idea is that the economic policies of the last few decades – be they Republican or Democrat (this is largely a nonpartisan argument) – have for the most part emphasized individual action and solutions to the biggest economic challenges we face. So, for example, if you look at healthcare – and I’m going to go partisan here! – if you look at the health care plans offered by the Bush Administration, they refer to something called “health savings accounts” – supposedly designed to make citizens better healthcare consumers. The idea is, “Here is a tax cut, and a private account and a little bit of a slap on the back and you’re out there in the market, fending for yourself.” The rationale is that government can create better, more cost-conscious consumers if it can tap the forces of the marketplace to generate savings. I show in the book that all this does is shift risk to individuals that would be much better shared amongst large groups of people.

It’s a theme I’ve seen in Social Security; I’ve seen it in terms of inequality, in globalization, in health care, in unemployment – in practically every aspect of social policy. I document the shift to “You’re On Your Own” economics as similar to a more collaborative, “We’re In This Together” (a WITT agenda), which pushes back the other way

*“We are **committed** with our lives to **building** a different model and a different future for humanity, the Earth, and other species. We have **envisaged a moral** alternative to economic globalization and we will not rest until we see it **realized**.”*

~ Maude Barlow

*“Grabbing hands  
Grab all they can  
All for themselves.  
After all –  
It’s a competitive world.  
Everything counts  
In large amounts.”*

~ Martin Gore and David Gahan

*“Markets and money must again become the servants and not the masters of our **vision and values**.”*

~ Jakob von Uexkull

*“An ideologically broad range of financiers and elite business managers—Warren Buffett, BlackRock’s Larry Fink, Vanguard’s John Bogle, McKinsey’s Dominic Barton, Allianz’s Mohamed El-Erian and others—have started to speak out publicly about the need for a new and more inclusive type of capitalism, one that also helps businesses make better long-term decisions rather than focusing only on the next quarter. The Pope has become a vocal critic of modern market capitalism, lambasting the ‘idolatry of money and the dictatorship of an impersonal economy’ in which ‘man is reduced to one of his needs alone: consumption.’”*

~ Rana Foroohar

## CHAPTER 5

### *Relationships and Social Policy That Foster Moral Development and Caring*

Marianne Preger-Simon, Ed.D. and Nel Noddings, Ph.D.

*“We need to **understand** historically how we came to think that individual **freedom** is the **highest good**, that institutions stand in the way of our freedom. We need to understand how we failed to see that the **virtue** in **autonomy**, in the sense of personal freedom, can be realized only along with other virtues, such as **care** and **responsibility**.”*

~ Robert N. Bellah<sup>11</sup>

One of the things that can make a major difference in the **quality of life**, as well as the **greatness** of America, would be to raise children who are almost always **safe, secure, happy, healthy, moral, well-adjusted, civically-minded** and **generative**. How do we get from here to there? What are the constituent elements of this complex goal? What can we learn from our past to shape our future? Can **science, philosophy, education**, religion, or politics play a role? Are we talking about

11 and Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler, & Steven M. Tipton

“**character** education”? What are the elements of caring, healthy **relationships**? What role does free market capitalism play in this evolution – if any? Can virtue and **morality** even be taught per se? What new social policies should (or, in today’s climate, *could*) be enacted? Should society even be determining what is **good, right**, and desirable – or is leaving the freedom to choose one’s individual ways and ends be **sacrosanct**, even at the expense of the **community**?

These are interesting questions; critical ones. I think they might provide some “grist for the mill” as we try to determine how, within the bounds of a **pluralistic** (or even, *fragmented*) society, we will make **progress** in the future. I am relieved to have the ears of two **enlightened** and **accomplished** guests to help me in my endeavor...

*“Life is mostly froth and bubble. Two things stand like stone: **kindness** in another’s trouble, **courage** in your own.”*

~ Adam Lindsay Gordon.

...My first interlocutor is Marianne Preger-Simon, Ed.D. She’s a psychotherapist in private practice from Whately, Massachusetts. Dr. Preger-Simon has many feathers in her cap; she obtained degrees from New York University and the University of Massachusetts. She has **studied** and/or **practiced** psychotherapy, family therapy, **personal growth, values clarification**, guitar, singing, teaching, dance, and drama. If *polymath* is appropriate to refer to a female, she seems to fit the bill well. I am **happy** she made the time to speak with me.

Her book is *Heart by Heart: Mothers and Daughters Listening to Each Other*. It’s an anthology about **transformative** moments in pairs of mothers’ and daughters’ **relationships** – all ages, all stages. Marianne wrote introductions to each chapter explaining a key relationship-enhancing concept which it exemplifies. That’s right up my alley; I like that style of **academia**. Let’s bring her on now and begin our Q&A about this interesting topic.

Hello, Dr. Simon. Would it be okay if I called you Marianne?

MS: Sure, that’s my name!

Okay, good deal. Thanks for coming on the show.

MS: You’re welcome, I’m **delighted** to be here.

**Wonderful**. Please say a little something about yourself so that the listener gains an **understanding** of some of the things you’ve been into throughout your long and varied career path.

MS: At the moment, besides being a mother, I’m also a grandmother and have nine grandchildren. I’m married. I’ve been **leading** mother-daughter workshops in a number of different places; I was at Esalen for four years. My first career was as a dancer in Merce Cunningham’s *First Company*. That was wonderful fun and had nothing to do with mothers and daughters whatsoever! I’ve had many different careers since then— I was a folksinger; I’ve been a teacher in the inner city schools; I’ve conducted all kinds of workshops throughout the United States and in Canada.

Interesting. And **diverse**.

MS: And diverse, yes!

Are you **excited** about this anthology you put together? How did it come about? How did you find the participants?

*“For me, it’s **empathy**. We **struggle** with ourselves, which means we should be able to connect with other people’s struggles. You need the facts, the analysis to figure out what to do, but empathy is the first ingredient. For me, music and politics are both about trying to find that place to connect.”*

~ Eliza Gilkyson



“Real **kindness** is mouth-gaping **respect** and **compassion** for just how hard it is to be a human being – any human being.”

~ Rebecca Alban Hoffberger

“The surest way to knock the chip off a fellow’s shoulder is by patting him on the back.”

~ Zig Ziglar

“**Empathy** and compassion are our most basic **moral** impulses, and we can even teach the Golden Rule without lying to ourselves or our children about the origin of certain books or the virgin birth of certain people.”

~ Sam Harris

“...one of the things a **wise man** knows and a foolish man does not is that such things as social position, wealth, and the good opinion of the world are too dearly bought at the cost of **health** or **friendship** or **family** ties.”

~ Philippa Foot

“Children who **develop strong, caring relationships** with all the people and living things around them will be more grounded and ultimately more prepared to function in, and **meaningfully contribute** to, an increasingly complex society.”

~ Mark Sorensen

“To **give aid** to every poor man is far beyond the reach and power of every man. **Care of the poor** is incumbent on society as a whole.”

~ Baruch Spinoza

“I have **mentored** many young women with childhoods similar to mine, helping them **cope** with home lives that are untenable, helping them find positive ways to **adapt** until they were able to be on their own. They have all gone on to lead **productive** lives.”

~ Ruth Westreich

## CHAPTER 6

### *Morality Applied to Politics*

Arianna Huffington and David Callahan, Ph.D.

“Why should our political identities not express the **moral** and religious **convictions** we affirm in our personal lives? Why, in deliberating about **justice** and **rights**, must we set aside the moral judgments that inform the rest of our lives?”

~ Michael J. Sandel

Hello, and welcome to *Values and Ethics: from Living Room to Boardroom*. I’m Jason Merchev, and you’re listening to this on World Talk Radio live, or streamed on my website, [www.ValuesoftheWise.com](http://www.ValuesoftheWise.com) any time, day or night. I appreciate you tuning in.

In the above quotation, Michael J. Sandel, a noted philosopher who teaches at Harvard University, is getting at the idea that we can go too far toward the “minimalist liberal” position and believe that we can do well to have a society where **pluralism**, **tolerance**, and libertarianism rule; where individual **rights** and **freedom** to choose reign.<sup>13</sup> He, however, is more inclined to think that we cannot reasonably enter public

<sup>13</sup> Thoughts on this topic are my relatively nascent interpretations of Sandel’s “public philosophy,” as expounded in his many books. I should apologize if I

life (e.g., outside the home) *unencumbered*; we have **moral** and religious and cultural **commitments** perhaps not of our own volition.

Think of Jews in modern-day Germany, or African Americans in the United States. The German people might not wish to have a special **dedication** to preserving and **protecting** Judaism, but it is so. Likewise, white Americans often don't feel like *they themselves* owe anything to blacks in the here-and-now, because they never harmed black persons and certainly didn't enslave any. However, according to Sandel's view of public philosophy, we do carry baggage that we might not have **freely** chosen to. "You are a Grantham, and that has attached to it certain **responsibilities**," one might hear Lord Grantham counsel his children on the PBS series *Downton Abbey*.

One example of morality applied to politics comes from Sandel's book *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* On page 29, he notes:

*"Debates over [post-recession financial] bailouts and [post-catastrophe] price-gouging, income inequality and affirmative action, military service and same-sex marriage, are the stuff of political **philosophy**. They prompt us to articulate and justify our moral and political convictions, not only among family and friends but also in the demanding company of our fellow citizens."*

One can see why Sandel's ideas constitute what he calls "public philosophy" in his use of the phrase: "...not only among family and friends but also in the demanding company of our fellow citizens." It's rather reminiscent of a more civic-minded society, such as Aristotle's Athens.

Another example involves abortion specifically. I took the relevant quotation from Sandel's book, *Democracy's Discontent: America in Search of a Public Philosophy*. More to the point: whether decisions about the permissibility of abortion (a political issue) should be left to individuals who, in a **pluralistic** and fairly **liberal** society, are **free** to decide – and

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mislead you with less-than-accurate commentary. I don't mean to misinterpret his views.

could just as conceivably decide in favor or against. However, Sandel here indicates that **morality** is inextricably intertwined with any libertarian, political, or personal decision:

*"...the case for abortion **rights** cannot be neutral with respect to the underlying moral and religious controversy. It must engage rather than avoid the substantive **moral** and religious doctrines at stake. Liberals<sup>14</sup> often resist this engagement because it violates the priority of the right over the good.<sup>15</sup> But the abortion debate shows that this priority cannot be sustained. The case for **respecting** a woman's **right** to decide for herself whether to have an abortion depends on showing that there is a relevant moral difference between aborting a fetus at a relatively early stage of development and killing a child" (p. 21).*

Essentially, he is noting that we must first decide what is *good* before we can really determine what one's *rights* are. In other words, whether it is *good* (i.e., morally permissible) to terminate a fetus must be determined before society can decide whether one should have a right to do it. Euthanasia is determined to be *illegal* because it is thought of as *wrong*. It does put a fair amount of power in the hands of the community/polis/State, especially from a free-market/libertarian perspective, but a reinvigorated "commons" is what he has in mind.

If civic engagement were to rise, and corporate/plutocratic influence fall, it would seem plausible that the "**communitarian** consensus" about **right** vs. *wrong* could trump individual rights at times. We don't, for example, outlaw circumcision, cigarette smoking, or gun ownership,

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14 This use of the word *liberal* is more precisely defined by Sandel and others as *minimalist liberalism*, which I find to be relatively libertarian in nature; not "progressive" or "Left" or however one would describe whatever political viewpoints Ralph Nader and Bernie Sanders subscribe to. Think Howard Zinn more than Noam Chomsky.

15 "the right over the good" refers to society prioritizing one's *rights* (i.e., freedom, individuality and autonomy) over *the good* (i.e., society's best interests). That is to say: "liberals" in the sense I described wish to place the individual's rights over and above society's needs.

*right people will not do the right thing either, or if they try, they will shortly be out of office.”*

~ Milton Friedman

*“I was provided additional input that was radically different from the **truth**. I assisted in furthering that version.”*

~ Oliver North

*“I am frustrated with Washington. It has gotten totally partisan. We are not serious about anything except the next election.”*

~ Ernest Hollings

*“We have weapons of mass destruction we have to address here at home. Poverty is a weapon of mass destruction. Homelessness is a weapon of mass destruction. Unemployment is a weapon of mass destruction.”*

~ Dennis Kucinich

*“We don’t need perfect political systems; what we need is more perfect participation.”*

~ Anthony Chavez

*“The **courage** we need is not the **fortitude** to be obedient in the service of an unjust war, to help conceal lies, to do our job for a boss who has usurped power and is acting as an outlaw government. It is the courage at last to face **honestly** the **truth** and reality of what we are doing in the world and act **responsibly** to change it.”*

~ Daniel Ellsberg

## CHAPTER 7

### *Liberalism*

Stephen Law, Ph.D.

*“The broad liberal objective is a **balanced** and **flexible** ‘mixed economy,’ thus seeking to occupy that middle ground between capitalism and socialism whose viability has so long been denied by both capitalists and socialists.”*

~ Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.

I’d like to tell you about Stephen Law, Ph.D., an impressive British philosopher and author. He has written a number of books which are relevant to the present topic: *The Philosophy Files*, *The Philosophy Files 2*, *The Complete Philosophy Files*, *Humanism: a Very Short Introduction*, and *The Philosophy Gym: 25 Short Adventures in Thinking*. The last book is one that I own, and it asks interesting questions such as, Is time travel possible? Does God exist? Should you be eating meat? And, Could a machine think?

As his bio for that book reads: “Expelled from sixth-form college, Stephen Law worked as a postman for several years until he discovered philosophy. Despite not having any A levels, he managed to gain a university place. Stephen took a first and went on to Trinity

College, Oxford, and then Queens College, Oxford, where he held a junior research fellowship and earned a doctorate. Stephen now lectures in philosophy at the University of London. He is the editor of the Royal Institute of Philosophy's popular journal, *Think*."

I think Stephen Law speaks carefully and strikes one as **genteel**, but the ideas he has are defended strongly, and it's difficult to read *The Philosophy Gym* without being compelled to make solid decisions for yourself about what you believe.

He's saying that there is a lot at stake here; if you think about the title of his upcoming book, *The War for Children's Minds*, it implies that we ought to make a determination soon about how we should **educate** and raise children. Do we tell them what to think and believe? Do we ingrain in them what is right and good? Or do we merely *facilitate* their **learning** and help them to **discover** truths and facts relatively independently? That raises the question: Will children create a *Lord of the Flies* kind of future, or will they avoid the pitfalls of tradition, bad habits, and orthodoxy to **progress** beyond our current state of learning and **development**?

Thank you for joining me, Dr. Law. May I call you Stephen?

SL: Yes, indeed.

Great. I want to share with the listener some of the points you raise in your book, *The Philosophy Gym*. Basically, you ask 25 interesting **philosophical** questions, all challenging, and then attempt to provide some background, **insight**, and perhaps, direct the reader toward an answer. Let me provide a sampling of the perspectives you share in the book, *The Philosophy Gym*:

*"Moral questions are important questions that science cannot answer. Take the question of whether we should genetically design our children. Science may one day allow us to do so. It can't tell us whether we should do so. It's with such questions that philosophers grapple; deep questions that appear to reach*

*beyond the point where science might provide us with answers."*

*"We view certain actions as being **right** or wrong. But according to many philosophers, this **value** is not intrinsic to those actions. Rather, it's rooted in our experience, and how we react emotionally to what we observe. ... I call this the spectacles model of morality. Many philosophers, perhaps most famously David Hume (1711-1776) have been drawn to some version of it. But others remain strongly opposed: they believe that the wrongness of an act (such as stealing) is an objective property of the act, a property that attaches to such acts anyway, whatever our view on stealing might be. Which, if either, theory of **morality** is correct? I have to admit, I'm pretty confused."*

*"We all want **knowledge**. We want to know when the bus is coming, what's for dinner, and how the economy will do next year. We **respect** those who have knowledge, seeking them out for advice. And yet, despite the enormous value we place on knowledge, we quickly become stuck when we ask ourselves, 'What is knowledge?' It's the sort of question that we think we can answer easily—until we try."*

*"**Reasonableness** is a matter of degree. Beliefs can be very reasonable ("Japan exists"), fairly reasonable ("quarks exist"), not unreasonable ("there's intelligent life on other planets"), or downright unreasonable ("fairies exist"). There's a scale of reasonableness, if you like, with very reasonable beliefs near the top and deeply unreasonable ones towards the bottom. Notice a belief can be very high up the scale yet still be open to some doubt, and even when a belief is low down we can still acknowledge the remote possibility it might be **true**."*

You also say, in a related vein, in your book *Believing Bullshit: How Not to Get Sucked into an Intellectual Black Hole*:

*"The idea that it is, at the very least, unwise to accept claims for which we possess little or no supporting **evidence** is certainly widespread. The next time somebody tells you that something is true, why not say to them: 'What kind*

*“Power that controls the economy should be in the hands of elected representatives of the people instead of an industrial oligarchy.”*

~ William O. Douglas

## CHAPTER 8

*“Money Values” vs. “Life Values”*

Kevin Danaher, Ph.D.

*“If business comes with no **moral sympathy**, no **honorable** code of behavior, God help us all.”*

~ Anita Roddick

Hello and welcome to *Values and Ethics: from Living Room to Boardroom*. I'm your host, Jason Merchey. I founded [www.ValuesoftheWise.com](http://www.ValuesoftheWise.com) to explore and provide **inspiration** for living a life that is characterized by one's **values** and prioritizes the pursuit of **virtue**.

Not all values are equivalent; after all, the burglar values secrecy, callousness, and greed. In today's society, there are values that could be considered “good” and “prosocial,” and those that I would think could be called egocentric. Some values contribute to others, serve, and do no harm; others are the opposite (for a tidy list of “bad” values, think of “the seven deadly sins”). Little good can come of jealousy; acquisitiveness can easily lead to obsession and tunnel-vision; too much sugar, nicotine, or alcohol has its costs. Perhaps characterizing values based on whether they perpetuate greed, selfishness, and materialism (or not) is done **wisely** by my guest today, the inimitable Kevin Danaher, Ph.D....

...Dr. Danaher is a noted thinker, activist, author, and organizer. He is also co-founder of Global Exchange, the well-regarded **human rights** organization based in San Francisco. Kevin received his Ph.D. in sociology from the University of California, Santa Cruz. He is the author or editor of 11 books, including his latest, *Insurrection: Citizen Challenges to Corporate Power*.<sup>17</sup> It features a forward by the **passionate** Arianna Huffington and an endorsement by the **righteous** populist writer and activist Jim Hightower.

72% of Americans feel that corporations have too much power. I'm not sure that a significant percentage of the population believes that a corporation ought to be illegal, disbanded, and made completely passé, but, nevertheless, there are many problems with the ways that corporations interact with people that work for them, the environment, citizens of other countries, and international law. The fact that they operate internationally, store profits in any number of favorable tax havens, and see billions of dollars come in and out of their coffers makes this phenomenon particularly thorny and complex. These behemoths can go badly awry due to the values they hold – as well as the power at their disposal. From *Citizens United* and *McCutcheon v. FEC*, to Enron, WorldCom and AIG, mistakes and misdeeds at this level can have catastrophic effects.

Happily, my guest today is going to help me understand *globalization* and other related topics. I have a definite interest in his latest book, where he boldly plants a flag on a tall hill in “the commons” and exclaims, “You shall come no farther!”...

<sup>17</sup> with co-author Jason Mark

*“Does bucking the forces of a globalized, gas-guzzling sweatshop economy sometimes seem hopeless? Do you find it outrageous that Walmart has become America’s biggest private employer? Are you wary of hearing about outsourcing, downsizing, and the latest ‘mega-merger’?”*

~ Fran Korten

...Interesting questions. I’m pleased to speak today to a man who knows a lot about globalization, economics, and **progressivism**. He has been described by the *New York Times* as “the Paul Revere of globalization’s woes.” Welcome, Kevin Danaher, Ph.D.

*“Few of us are only our economic interests. We have beliefs. We have **convictions**. Corporations engage the political process in an entirely different way, and this is what makes them so much more damaging.”*

~ Elena Kagan

KD: Thanks, Jason, hi; it’s good to be on the air with you.

Great, nice to talk with you in person finally. Did you hear those questions that Fran Korten posed?

KD: Yeah, I think what we’re confronting here is that we are in the early stages of a *paradigm shift*. The transnational corporation has to be seen as one element of larger, historic transition. For 500 years, the model that has dominated the planet has been: *Money Values, Violence, & God is on Our Side*.

The *money values* was incipient capitalism, bringing forth from northwestern Europe the technologies of violence: gunpowder, mounting cannons on sailing ships, and the slave trade allowed these plunderers to conquer people in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. They built up this justification based on Christianity that, “We’re bringing these people to Christ; we’re introducing them to God by killing them.” Literally, that’s what they were saying.

Now, I think we’re transitioning to a set of **values** that’s quite different. I am talking about *life values* (**human rights** and the environment); *non-violence* (you can’t convince people of your position by hurting them); and lastly, *God* (however you want to define that – some white guy with a beard in robes up on a cloud, or *the life-force of the universe* – does not take sides in intra-species conflicts). When red ants and black ants fight, no higher being is going to get involved in that. If Christian fundamentalists and Muslim fundamentalists want to kill each other, God isn’t going to take one side or the other— yet that’s what those groups are saying. I think you see that mentality dying. Similarly, these people whose ideology and spirituality can’t handle **science**— they’re against evolution, they’re against female equality...

*“I hope we shall take warning from the example of England and crush in its birth the aristocracy of our moneyed corporations which dare already to challenge our Government to trial and bid defiance to the laws of our country.”*

~ Thomas Jefferson

...Whereas, in our *social justice*/human rights/environmental/grass-roots movement, all around the world, our spirituality embraces science. We see no division between our **spirituality** and our science. We have a *natural* economic model, called *biomimetic* – look at how nature did it and then follow that. Don’t try to put the wind in a box, be more like a surfer who “rides nature.”

We are **creating** a “**green economy revolution**” around the world: green building materials and renewable energy and recycling and composting and removing things from the waste stream and turning them into salable products. The growth rates in those sectors are far greater than any of the traditional markets— except for maybe weaponry, which they make a *lot* of profit on.

The transnational corporation – the major institutional vehicle of that old system – is now under attack, which we document in our book, *Insurrection*. There are many, but two of the fundamental flaws that are

*“Many Americans hunger for a different kind of society – one based on **principles** of **caring**, ethical and spiritual sensitivity, and communal **solidarity**. Their need for **meaning** is just as intense as their need for economic security.”*

~ Michael Lerner

*“If we define an American fascist as one who, in case of conflict, puts money and power ahead of human beings, then there are undoubtedly several million fascists in the United States. There are probably several hundred thousand if we narrow the definition to include only those who in their search for money and power are ruthless and deceitful. ...They are patriotic in time of war because it is to their interest to be so, but in time of **peace** they follow power and the dollar wherever they may lead.”*

~ Henry A. Wallace

*“From secrecy and deception in high places; come home, America. From military spending so wasteful that it weakens our nation; come home, America. From the entrenchment of special privileges in tax favoritism; from the waste of idle lands to the joy of useful labor; from the prejudice based on race and sex; from the loneliness of the aging poor and the despair of the neglected sick – come home, America.”*

~ George S. McGovern

## CHAPTER 9

### *Liberty: Its Value and Threats*

Mark Potok and Amanda Phillips

*“The winning of **freedom** is not to be compared to the winning of a game, with the victory recorded forever in history. Freedom has its life in the hearts and actions and spirits of men, and so it must be daily **earned** and **refreshed**, or else, like a flower cut from its life-giving roots, it will wither and die.”*

~ Dwight D. Eisenhower

Eisenhower’s quotation is a **potent** one. It illustrates that the threats to **liberty** – from within and without – are ever-present. All that is required is for one simple piece of legislation to be passed and signed, and for the Supreme Court to agree, and our country is changed (or even, debased). Based on the way the politics of the United States has been so grossly influenced by wealth, it is not paranoid thinking to worry about what may be coming down the pike. America has been fundamentally altered by the events of 9/11. Moreover, with a huge number of disenfranchised and ignorant human beings on the planet, ambitious countries always jockeying for position, and a huge nuclear arsenal in dubious hands, threats to liberty and **rights** could be considered grave.

Perhaps it was never “safe;” I doubt that Samuel and John Adams (or Abigail, for that matter), felt comfortable in the post-Revolutionary War era that peace and prosperity were assured.

Bertrand Barere said: “The tree of liberty only grows when watered by the blood of tyrants.” America has “a history of violence,” and frankly, we are armed to the teeth. We shouldn’t need any more reasons to get **creative** and **serious** solving our nettlesome social problems expeditiously than those which continue piling up...

Hello, I’m Jason, your host for the weekly Internet-based radio show, *Values and Ethics: from Living Room to Board Room*. Today’s topic is fundamental – **liberty**. Not only was it one of the main animating forces behind the American and French Revolutions, it has been an interminable goal for humankind since the very beginning. What are some of the aspects of this phenomenon, and the context?

In a word, liberty is being left alone and unhindered in pursuing your preferred ends (by your neighbors, by the government, and by religious authorities). Ideally, it also means freedom from unwarranted interference and manipulation by the wealthy who intend to speak for the entirety<sup>19</sup> – and by their weapons of choice: corporations and lackey politicians.

There is also an aspect that is non-political and even non-social: the **philosophical** aspect of freedom. This is also typically known as the *free will/determinism debate*. Finally, there is also a psychological/individual angle to the concept of freedom: Is one’s mind relatively unburdened and undistracted by myriad unwelcome interferences? Depression, anxiety, and psychotic mental disorders certainly can drive one to distraction – or even suicide as a means of finding relief. Alcoholism and other such coping mechanisms could conceivably be considered to indicate: “I cannot seem to get free of my problems, and alcohol

<sup>19</sup> I mean to say that some wealthy individuals have such designs, and other wealthy individuals do not. It is true that the rich, like the majority, are both good and bad, and generalizations are therefore tenuous. However, the middle and lower classes don’t have the power necessary to alter the course of society and cause as much harm to others as the moneyed class does.

functions as an escape mechanism. I feel some measure of control and relief when I ‘drown my sorrows.’”

Unfortunately, as luminary Baruch Spinoza perceived it, we have little liberty in this sense:

*“There is no such thing as **free will**. The mind is induced to wish this or that by some cause, and that cause is determined by another cause, and so on back to infinity.”*

and

*“Men believe themselves to be free, simply because they are conscious of their actions, and unconscious of the causes whereby those actions are determined.”*

I am afraid his influence on Einstein was significant, and I don’t believe Einstein believes humans can escape being *causally determined*. However, the inimitable German philosopher Immanuel Kant believes we *are* free in one sense – if we make autonomous **moral** decisions and live according to a moral law we have given ourselves as rational animals. Doing our moral duty sets us free. Reacting to utilitarianism, which justifies the pursuit of the pleasure and happiness of the majority above individual rights (at least until reworked by J. S. Mill), Kant wrote: “No-one can compel me to be **happy** in accordance with his conception of the welfare of others, for each may seek his happiness in whatever way he sees fit, so long as he does not infringe upon the freedom of others to pursue a similar end....”

Philosopher Michael J. Sandel answers the question, “What if scientists **discover** (through brain-imaging, for example, or cognitive neuroscience) that we have no free will after all: Would that disprove Kant’s moral philosophy?” with the following quotation. It heartens one who wishes to believe that in the free will/determinism debate, humans are not reduced to products of biological imperatives or social prescriptions (or, that the “causal chain” theorized by the **influential** philosopher David Hume and others, often touted by modern cognitive scientists and physicists, cannot be broken). Here is Sandel’s



*“I am not for a return to that definition of **liberty** under which, for many years, a free people was being gradually regimented into the service of a privileged few. I prefer that broader definition of liberty.”*

~ Franklin D. Roosevelt

*“...if there could be such a thing as socialism combined with individual liberty, I would be a socialist still. For nothing could be better than living a **modest**, simple, and free life in an **egalitarian** society. It took some time before I recognized this as no more than a **beautiful** dream; that freedom is more important than **equality**; that the attempt to realize equality endangers freedom; and that if freedom is lost there will not even be equality among the unfree.”*

~ Karl Popper

*“We have a Bill of Rights. What we need is a Bill of **Responsibilities**.”*

~ Bill Maher

*“Our **wills** are simply not of our own making. Thoughts and intentions emerge from background causes of which we are unaware and over which we exert no conscious control. We do not have the **freedom** we think we have.”*

~ Sam Harris

*“I am free in performing an action if I could have done otherwise if I had chosen to.”*

~ G. E. Moore

*“‘Emergencies’ have always been the pretext on which the safeguards of individual **liberty** have been eroded.”*

~ Friedrich von Hayek

## CHAPTER 10

### *Learning from Our Past*

Anthony Arno, Ph.D.

*“The probability that we shall fail in the struggle should not deter us from the support of a cause we believe to be **just**.”*

~ Abraham Lincoln

In today’s **discussion**, we will **explore** the stories and recollections of persons who have made a minor or major contribution to United States history, fomented **progress** in one of our many historical **struggles**, and/or exemplified **values** and **virtues** that often belie their marginal social position. These unique “voices” take the form of quotations, essays, narratives, testimonies, and historical records that have been preserved, passed on, or uncovered.

Many of these **fascinating** historical figures and, often, heroes and heroines, do not get due **respect** and acknowledgment because of the way history works (by *history* I mean both the discipline and the bygone era). Many or most of these **principled** and indefatigable individuals could fairly be considered “unsung heroes” due in part to a lack of recognition of (or outright hostility toward) their group or role.

Two people who have really gone the extra mile to bring these

censored or overlooked voices to full pitch are Howard Zinn, Ph.D. and Anthony Arnove, Ph.D. Together they published the **compelling** and **assertive** book *Voices of a People's History of the United States*, a companion to Howard Zinn's seminal work, *A People's History of the United States*. I interviewed Howard in April, and today I trust Anthony will also do a wonderful job shedding some light on their thoroughly-researched tome of essays and letters by some of America's **brightest** and boldest sons and daughters from times past. In offering a bird's-eye view of the unadulterated history of the United States, Dr. Arnove will help us to understand better where we as a country came from – and thus, are headed in the future. My angle will be to tease out the relevance of these unsung heroes to the *zeitgeist*, and to highlight how they herald *the values of the wise*.

As “history is written by the winners” (Alex Haley), it is important to explore the little-known aspects of our past, to “read between the lines.” Amos Bronson Alcott was noted to have said: “The deepest **truths** are best read between the lines and, for the most part, refused to be written.”

Like archaeologists, historians can find evidence to paint a picture of what a particular era was like— how people treated each other, what the major problems were, what **values** were exemplified. Anthony Arnove and the inimitable Howard Zinn were able to find a lot of data and clues about what was going on during prior, important (even crucial) decades. They bring the voices of elusive figures to our modern living rooms, libraries, and universities. Those who take the time to get to know these heretofore nearly-forgotten testimonies and snapshots will obviously have a **deeper** and more nuanced view of history, America, and our **true** record. I take my hat off to that effort, and am eager to welcome a man who loves Howard Zinn at least as much as I do!

Dr. Anthony Arnove is a scholar of remarkable **industry** and **vigor**. He **earned** a doctorate of modern cultures and media at Brown University. He is the editor of several books, including *Voices of a People's History of the United States*, which Arnove co-edited with Zinn, *The*

*Essential Chomsky*, *Howard Zinn Speaks*, and *Iraq Under Siege*, and is the author of *Iraq: The Logic of Withdrawal*. Anthony is on the editorial boards of Haymarket Books and the *International Socialist Review*. It's my honor to welcome him. Hello, Dr. Arnove.

*“The only time an unjust man will scream against injustice is when he is afraid someone will practice it on him.”*

~ Plato

AA: It's a pleasure to be on the show.

Thank you for saying that. Would it be okay if I call you Anthony?

AA: Oh, absolutely, please.

I notice that you got your doctorate in modern culture and media; is that the correct name of what you studied?

AA: Yes, that was a program in the English Department, and was part of an interdisciplinary program. Really, at that time in my life, though I met some great people there, it wasn't what fueled or inspired me to do *Voices*. It was actually outside of the classroom that I **learned** the history and gained an interest in the topics that Howard and I explore in this book. So much of what this book is about is the history that was not taught in schools and isn't written in standard textbooks. Howard has joked that in graduate school, you learn the same thing you learned in grade school – “but with footnotes.” I think there is a certain **truth** to that, and my training in history truly came through political **activism** and reading more than it did from school.

Well, kudos to you sir because I can tell this book took a long time to **research** and put together; asking for permission and finding the pieces and organizing them and submitting for publication to a press

## CHAPTER 11

### *Values-Based Leadership*

Tom Morris, Ph.D. and Bernie Horn

*“The best and worst individuals among us are essentially the same, separated only by infinitesimal differences. The **brilliance** of some shines bright and is easy to see; the brilliance of others requires that we dim our own lights to be able to see it. Either way, if we allow ourselves to get caught up in the minutiae of our differences, we miss out on the brilliance of our commonalities.”*

~ Robert L. Lloyd

What does it mean to be a good leader? What are some attributes and styles of an effective and **ethical** leader? How does **leadership** play out in politics and business? What can historical figures and even fictional characters teach us about leading in the real, complex, modern world? What grade do America’s national leaders earn? How do we lead in order to “bring up the average score” and not miss stragglers?

Hello, I’m Jason Merchev, your host for *Values and Ethics: from Living Room to Boardroom*. Thanks for tuning in for this important topic. I’m happy to welcome back noted philosopher, author, and thought leader Tom Morris, Ph.D. We will be talking primarily about applying

leadership to business, one of his specialties. I will also spend a segment talking with Bernie Horn, Policy Director of the Center for Policy Alternatives, mostly about leadership as it relates to politics.

Tom Morris, Ph.D. was a Morehead Scholar at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, which once honored him as a Distinguished Young Alumnus. He holds two master’s degrees and a joint Ph.D. in philosophy and religious studies from Yale University.

Tom served for fifteen years as a professor of philosophy at the University of Notre Dame, where he was a very popular professor. He is now Chairman of the Morris Institute for Human Values. He seems as though he has hardly sat still a moment in the last thirty years.

Dr. Morris is the author of twenty books. Titles most relevant to the present dialogue include *If Aristotle Ran General Motors*, *If Harry Potter Ran General Electric*, and *Philosophy for Dummies*. His twelfth book, *True Success: A New Philosophy of Excellence*, has been well-received in corporate world. His work as a business consultant has taken him to many Fortune 500 companies.

Hello Tom, nice to speak with you again.

TM: Hello, Jason, good to be with you.

*“One of the most **interesting** features of the business landscape in the past few years – and one of the most notable occurrences in the culture at large – has certainly been the sudden emergence of ethical scandals...”*

~ Tom Morris

So, I understand your book, *If Harry Potter Ran General Electric*, has been very popular not only with reviewers and corporations, but also the recent international Harry Potter Festival in Las Vegas! Your new book *The Oasis Within* is a 5-star book on Amazon.com, as well!

TM: Yes, and in Vegas, I was one of the only people not wearing black robes and a pointy hat! It was incredible; it was my first time

presenting my book to the *Harry Potter* world and they went nuts. It was a very rewarding time. They were looking for all the wisdom in the *Harry Potter* stories that would apply to their workplaces. I talked with lawyers and doctors; there were teachers there who want to use it in their classrooms. It was remarkable to see people coming alive to ancient **wisdom** filtered through the most popular stories of our time.

Would you say that your specialty is taking ancient wisdom and bringing it into modern life?

TM: Yeah, that's what I try to do. You know, basically ideas that have stood the test of time. For example: What are *the great ideas* about **success, leadership, ethics, personal growth**; about how to deal with difficulty, how to handle anger, how to have a more positive attitude, how to embrace change in your life? In fact, all the things that we are challenged by and sometimes **struggle** with, if I can go and find the advice of some of the wisest people who have ever lived – advice that sustained people through centuries – and bring it into people's lives now in a form that they can use, then I will have done them some good. So, you're absolutely right; ancient **wisdom** for modern life; ideas that people can use every day.

*“Aristotle (384-322 B.C.)...Plato's long-time student, and tutor to Alexander the Great (way back at a tender young age when he was still just Alexander the Average) once said “Philosophy begins in wonder.” And he was right. If we allow ourselves to really wonder about our lives, about those things we take for granted, and about those big questions that we usually manage to ignore during the busyness of our daily schedules, we are beginning to act as true philosophers.”*

~ Tom Morris

Mm-hmm. Well, you're definitely preaching to the choir when you say that. I'm trying to follow your lead; you've been at this a lot longer than

I have and your credentials are sterling. It's nice to meet somebody who, as you say, is **achieving** remarkable **success** doing something that I think is so important.

TM: I appreciate that. And don't be too **modest** about your own contributions. You're doing more than almost anybody I know for collecting the real wisdom about **values** in our time. You're bringing together all kinds of profound and interesting and accomplished people to tell their stories and to give a glimpse of their perspectives on the world. Nobody's doing it like you're doing it, so you're benefiting a tremendous number of people with your books, radio show, and everything else you're doing. I'm really happy that we can get together and talk now and then on the radio.

I appreciate all that! So, about **leadership**; let's talk specifically about that. When you did the book *If Aristotle Ran General Motors*, what you were attempting to do was to speak about leadership, weren't you?

TM: Absolutely. In a broad sense—not just leadership for people who have top executive positions in big companies. I came to realize that we can all “take the lead” if you will, in various spheres of our lives. You know, leadership is more a role than it is an official status. It has to do with seeing a problem that needs to be solved, and taking the initiative to get it accomplished, while bringing other people into the process and **inspiring** them to make their contributions. So in that sense, whether you're a mother or father, a Scout leader, you teach in a synagogue or church, work in the business world, you're a librarian or a school teacher, you can lead other people if you understand *what it really takes* for **great** leadership.

*“The **philosophy** that began in earnest in ancient Greece with Socrates and Plato and Aristotle – the focus on **wisdom** that you can also find in the writings of Lao Tzu and Confucius and many other Oriental thinkers – resulted*

to an hour! I am a definite fan of her book *The Art of Original Thinking*. Hello, Jan, welcome.

JP: Hello, glad to be here.

You are a “thought leader.” Tell us what that means.

JP: Well, I haven’t exactly defined myself in those terms. When you say it, does it ring true? Yes. For anyone to be a thought leader in this culture, what I think that means is that we’re willing to **speak out**; to take the **risk** of **advocating** for others; to make statements that are **true**, ethical, and **moral** (which might not necessarily be popular). The biggest component, I think, is that of **courage**. Courage is called for when you **stand up** for **ethics**, **justice**, and **compassion** in the world.

Interesting. Whose footsteps do you travel in? Whom do you look to for inspiration and example about what the right thing to do is, what justice really means, etc.?

JP: Some of the elders who have gone before and passed on I would say would include Jesus Christ, the Buddha, Ramana Maharshi. More modern-day heroes of mine include Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Dorothy Day, and all the activists throughout time who have coalesced into one organism to register their feelings about certain things going on in our world.

*“People see God everyday; they just don’t recognize him.”*

~ Pearl Bailey

That’s kind of a “*Who’s Who?*” of thought leaders, if you ask me. Now, you helped found the Syracuse Cultural Workers, is that true? Tell us about your intentions.

## CHAPTER 12

### *An Ethical and Fulfilling Life*

Jan Phillips

*“People who have the most **positive** emotion, the most **engagement**, and the most **meaning** in life are the **happiest**, and they have the most life **satisfaction**.”*

~ Martin Seligman

Welcome to the first-ever broadcast of *Values and Ethics: from Living Room to Boardroom*, coming to you from San Diego, California via the world’s largest Internet-based talk radio station, World Talk Radio! I’m your host, Jason Merchey. I founded Values of the Wise, and you can read about that at [www.ValuesoftheWise.com](http://www.ValuesoftheWise.com).

Jan Phillips is a most unique person. She is an author, speaker, *thought leader*, photographer and *cultural creative*. Today we are going to be **discussing** who Jan is, how she became so, and some of her philosophies. The overarching idea is to **discover** her ideas, beliefs, suggestions and examples of how to live a life that is both **ethical** and **fulfilling**; to hear her **insights** on what we as individuals, communities, nations, and the world can do to make useful and needed improvements. I’ve spoken with Jan many times, and predict that we might have trouble keeping it

JP: It was the early '80s and I had just moved back to Syracuse, New York. I had been a photographer and activist already, so when I arrived I looked around to see how I could be of use – how to use **art** in the **service** of kind of “forwarding the action” of **justice** and **peace** in the world and in our communities. So, I gathered with a group of four other people, and what we discerned was that the movements for peace and justice in the world seemed to lack an artistic component— they were highly theoretical, very wordy, very cerebral— and we felt like we were “called” in the area of the arts; we were excited by colors and images and **vitality**. So we founded a forum for artists to **create** and submit work that said something about the world in which we lived. We **generated** interest in artists around the world to create work which we then put onto posters, calendars, note cards, and the like so one could go into a bookstore and find materials that had images that spoke to the very basic realities of our lives.

That reminds me of *a life of value* – where one does something that is not only **fulfilling** to themselves, but really makes a dent in the problems of the world; when one tries to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem. Although some artists might bemoan or decry any number of situations going on in their communities (or the world), I think the key element is: Aim to *do something*; you have certain skills and visions, so put it all together to (I think you said) *be of service*. You'll feel better, I promise you.

*“The art of peace does not rely on weapons or brute force to succeed; instead we put ourselves in tune with the universe, maintain peace in our own realms, nurture life, and prevent death and destruction. The true meaning of the term samurai is ‘one who serves and adheres to the power of love.’”*

~ Morihei Ueshiba

JP: Have you ever heard of the concept, *enlightened self-interest*? This

kind of fits into that category. It's an action that one really recognizes as self-serving, but it has what appears to be a kind of **altruism** about it. How this manifested personally in my life was that in 1982, Ronald Reagan was in charge; there was a great deal of nuclear proliferation occurring and I, as a global citizen, was experiencing a lot of anxiety. It was “hard times” to read the newspaper. I didn't quite know what to do about it, but one day, inadvertently, somebody left a copy of the book *The Hundredth Monkey* on my workbench (I was working as a picture framer in a suburban mall).

It's a **wonderful** story that was written about this research being done by an American scientist on the islands off the coast of Japan. They were researching monkeys, watching their behaviors in response to different stimuli. So, one day they went and they threw bags and bags of sweet potatoes on the ground, and the monkeys just **loved** them. There was one little 18-month-old monkey who took her sweet potato down to the stream and washed it off before she ate it. So, what happened in the long run was that the little monkey taught her peers this adaptive and useful behavior, and within a short time the monkeys' mothers all practiced this technique.

The point that the author was making was that this was a very smart move, and more and more monkeys every day were washing their sweet potatoes before they ate them. The “hundredth monkey” is a hypothetical number, but when a particular monkey picked up its sweet potato and washed it off, at that point *all* the monkeys on the island adopted that behavior. That's called the *hundredth monkey theory*, and sheds light on how we as human beings, theoretically, advance evolutionarily. It's like an ideological or cultural breakthrough, but, information was not being communicated through words, but actions and consciousness...

*“People are aware that they cannot continue in the same old way, but are immobilized because they cannot imagine an alternative. We need a vision that recognizes that we are at one of the great turning points in human*

## CHAPTER 13

### *Corporate Social Responsibility*

Mallen Baker and Scott Farrell

*“Imagine a business that is born out of a **dream** about how the world could be and should be. Picture a business built on **love** and **care** rather than stress and fear, whose team members are **passionate** and **committed** to their work. Think of a business that cares **profoundly** about the **well-being** of its customers, seeing them not as consumers but as **flesh-and-blood** human beings whom it is privileged to serve. They exist in the real world by the dozens today, but soon to be by the hundreds and thousands.”*

~ John Mackey & Raj Sisodia

Hello, you’re listening to *Values and Ethics: From Living Room to Boardroom*, on World Talk Radio. Today, I aim to facilitate **dialogue**, ask the right questions, and try to get to the bottom of **ethical** issues and values inherent in workplaces and the business world.

To that end, Mallen Baker is joining me. He’s the development director for Business in the Community, which is a unique movement in the United Kingdom comprising 700 member companies employing almost 16 million people across 200 countries. The purpose of the

organization is to **inspire**, challenge, engage and support business continually improving its **positive** impact on society. Business in the Community is the largest and longest-established independent business-led charity, having over 30 years’ experience. The website is [www.bitc.org.uk](http://www.bitc.org.uk). Mr. Baker is responsible for developing the organization’s approach to how companies manage issues arising from products and services. He’s also the editor of an email newsletter and website dedicated to corporate social responsibility, *Business Respect*. He’s a regular columnist with *Ethical Corporation*, and the Book Reviews Editor of the *New Academy Review*.

This is an important topic for us to discuss because recently, Alan Sloan of *Newsweek* said: “Watching corporate America these days is like watching drunks at a revival meeting vowing to sin no more.” With that, let me bring Mallen Baker on the line. Hello there!

MB: Hi—

Thank you for joining me; I know it’s late in the U.K.

MB: You’re very welcome, Jason. It’s an **honor** to be here.

Wonderful. I don’t know if you heard that Alan Sloan quote that I just shared?

MB: Yes, indeed.

It’s an interesting perspective he has; I think he’s referring to some of the attempts that America is making to ensure that business not only makes a profit, but does the **right** thing as well. Tell me what corporate social responsibility is all about.

*“For the key practitioners of America’s brave new game of ‘corporate socialism,’ failure has its own lush reward. It’s enough to drive one back to the*

*invisible hand of Adam Smith.”*

~ Robert Scheer

MB: It’s a worldwide movement, but it means different things in different parts of the world, as you might expect. I think where corporate social responsibility is most advanced, it has become about the relationship between business and society. So, how the company **creates** wealth is as important as what it does with it.

I think it’s fair to say that the U.S. has a fantastic “personal **citizenship** culture” – where individuals, say, volunteer in their communities. Corporate America has dealt with **social responsibility** in the past whereby it has been about community involvement, very local, very much about getting your employees involved with corporate volunteering, etc. I think it’s been relatively late that corporate America has started to grapple with some of the more challenging areas of its agenda that, say, it isn’t just about what you do with your resources – it’s also about “*the business of business.*”

*“We want to tell the story in a way that other companies can see: you can make money and do the **right** thing by taking **care** of your people.”*

~ Howard Schultz

I surmise it is too little, too late. Let me give you another quotation, as an example of my not being how sure I am that we are in fact getting this idea in the time allotted. At least on this side of the pond. Robert Hinckley says, “Corporations are set up to make money; the corporate system has no conscience, no obligations of citizenship; in fact, it’s encouraged to take advantage of the public interest.” Can you shed some light on that? Do you think it’s because we’re not quite as advanced as the U.K.? Do we simply need more time to really enumerate and enforce the responsibilities corporations have?

MB: There are all flavors of opinion in this. What you see now that

corporate social responsibility has entered into common parlance is that there has been a bit of a backlash among the classical economists who have always held that “business is business,” and if everyone just rushes around to make as much profit as they can, it will all be fine.

I have to say, the majority of senior business leaders that we deal with simply do not see it that way. They understand that they are managing a business for the long-term. Short-term pressures exist, but they aren’t the be-all and end-all of **success**.

The people who often opine, “Well yes, that’s all very well, but what they are essentially are guardians of shareholders’ money.” What they aim to do is benefit from ownership. But of course, in every other aspect of life, the benefits of ownership of something come with **responsibilities** of ownership. It is the management that’s held to account if a company breaks the law, or creates unwelcome social consequences, or damages its reputation. And that’s right, because they are the people who are the “controlling mind” of the business...

*“Corporate social responsibility starts with corporations paying their taxes. Multinationals continue to pay tax attorneys huge amounts of money to seek out tax shelters for them. As a result, the tax burden is heavier for ordinary citizens.”*

~ Susan George

...Therefore, the people who want the ownership have to understand that if they don’t take responsibility, then they either delegate to the people who run businesses, or they choose to invest somewhere else. Those who would like to claim that, “Yes, of course business is only there to make profit” are ignoring the license a business needs to operate; the consent of society that it needs in order to be able to produce, market, and sell products. The managers of the business ignore that license at their peril.

Ok, let me just ask you specifically: Is it true that “times are a-changin’”



Well, sir, I'd like to have you back, because I see that this is a huge topic, and I'm sorry that we didn't have the time that we would need. If you're willing to come back, I find you and your ideas and your website so interesting.

SF: I'd **love** to! I also welcome your listeners to come to my website to further explore the **leadership** secrets of the Code of Chivalry.

At [www.ChivalryToday.com](http://www.ChivalryToday.com). Okay, fare thee well, sir.

SF: Thank you, Jason.

*“Had I not been clear about what I thought was **right** and wrong, I would not have had a good reference point for making a decision I could live with. We probably won't remember most of the good decisions we make, but we'll most definitely remember all of the bad ones.”*

~ David S. Kim

*“In times of trouble, the knight's job was to step into harm's way to **protect** those who could not defend themselves. In times of **peace**, his **duty** was to **serve** as an arbiter of **justice** and **fairness**. **Chivalry** dictated that a knight should set ego and vanity aside and put the needs of others ahead of his own.”*

~ Scott Farrell

## CHAPTER 14

### *Applying Philosophy to Your Life*

Arthur Dobrin, Ph.D. and Tom Morris, Ph.D.

*“Socrates put a question to us that has **intrigued** me all my life: how should one live? This, he maintained, is the most **important** question a person can ask. ...He believed ‘the unexamined life is not worth living.’”*

~ Gary E. Kessler

How can one apply **philosophy** to one's life? How should we live? What is the **right** thing to do? Are we really **free**? What ancient ideas and teachings are still applicable to modern life? What can professional philosophers offer us that we can use in a practical way? These are important questions from the realm of applied philosophy, which is an ideal discipline to identify astute questions and provide **insight** into potential answers.

However, the long line of philosophical inquiry is shaken by modern society and relatively recent developments: “Today, philosophers have left the field to religion and psychotherapy when it comes to how to live a **good** life; they have largely abandoned – perhaps betrayed – Socrates” (Jack Hernandez).

I think Dr. Hernandez might be a bit pessimistic. To gain insight into these questions that confront and ennoble us all, I'm joined today by two special guests: philosopher and humanities scholar, Arthur Dobrin and public philosopher *par excellence*, Tom Morris. I couldn't have better counsel.

Arthur Dobrin, Ph.D. is professor of humanities at Hofstra University. He is also the leader emeritus of the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island. He and his wife were in the Peace Corps in Kenya in 1965-67, and return regularly to visit the village in which they worked. Dr. Dobrin is also a founding member since 1976 of Amnesty International #74. It's remarkable how many books he has either edited, written, or contributed to; the titles are great: *Ethical People And How They Got to Be That Way*, *Being Good and Doing Right: Readings in Moral Development*, *Teaching Right from Wrong: 40 Things You Can Do to Raise a Moral Child*, *Ethics for Everyone*, and *Love Your Neighbor: Stories of Values and Virtues*. I'm proud to introduce you to Arthur Dobrin.

AD: Nice to be here, Jason.

Hi. May I call you Arthur?

AD: Oh, I prefer it.

Okay, thanks. Your list of books is remarkable! I would be very happy if when I died I had a list of books such as that.

AD: Well, thank you. But I think that everyone is capable of doing that— perhaps not by writing books, but just by how it is that they live.

Absolutely. Well, that's the topic of today's **discussion**: applying **philosophy** to your life and living in a way that a **wise** person would. Since you are a professor of humanities and you study **ethics**, you have more **knowledge** than other folks such as myself about what a good life is,

how to *live a life of value*, how philosophy and ethics can be applied, etc. Is that something that everyone has the potential to **understand** and **actualize**, even if they don't go as far as you have in their **education**?

*“The defining mark of philosophy is a mode of criticism designed to test the validity or truth of propositions.”*

~ Daniel N. Robinson

AD: Oh yeah, sure; I think there's no question about that. But like anything else, the more you know about it, the **deeper** the appreciation becomes, and perhaps, the better you can be at it. Anyone can play some game decently enough to have fun at it and do well; being a **moral** person is in some ways exactly like that. Philosophy is one aspect: how it is that we think about things. I think that even more important is how we **relate** to other people: the emotional aspects of ourselves, the sense of being **connected**, empathy. That's where it begins; philosophy comes along much later as a way of providing some kind of broader **understanding**, perhaps. We begin by being moral people very early on – from the moment that we begin to relate to other human beings.

Mm-hmm. Is that to say that a person is severely challenged in becoming a **moral** and well-**developed** person if they had an upbringing that was less than optimal?

AD: Oh, sure. The environment very much affects us; children who are subjected to instability, starvation, hunger, war, mayhem, oppression, and injustices have a much harder time **becoming** and **flourishing**. **Ethics** is really about human flourishing. There are environments which nurture and there are environments which impede development.

*“Make your values mean something.”*

~ Patrick Lencioni

## CHAPTER 15

### *The Ethics and Function of the Media*

Daniel C. Hallin, Ph.D. and Fred Brown

*“The media are absolutely essential to the functioning of a democracy. It’s not our job to cozy up to power. We’re supposed to be a check and balance on the government.”*

~ Amy Goodman

The media play<sup>26</sup> an extremely important role in our society. Jefferson idealized them as being “the fourth estate” – a critical institution in the nascent and dubious governance scheme. I am looking forward to my two guests assisting me in determining what the status and function of the media are, and what **ethical** standards the media ought to **uphold**.

I am pleased to interview Dan Hallin, Ph.D., Professor of Communication at UC-San Diego. He received his Ph.D. from UC-Berkeley in 1980. Since then, his research interests have included journalism, political communication, and the comparative analysis of media systems. He has written on the media and war, including

<sup>26</sup> Some prefer media to function as a singular noun. I think it is unclear if “media is” or “media are” is typical usage

Vietnam, Central America, and the Gulf War; television coverage of elections, **analysis** of the nature and **meaning** of the “shrinking sound bite;” and the rise and decline of journalistic **professionalism** in the United States. In recent years, he has turned his attention to the comparative analysis of media systems, focusing on Western Europe and Latin America. Dr. Hallin’s book, *Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics*, co-authored with Paolo Mancini, has won Outstanding Book awards of the International Communication and National Communication Associations, and the Goldsmith Book Award of the Shorenstein Center on Press and Politics. It has been translated into nine languages. He has also written many articles and book chapters, as well as the books *The “Uncensored War”: The Media and Vietnam*, and *We Keep America on Top of the World: Television Journalism and the Public Sphere*.

I’m happy to welcome Daniel Hallin to *Values and Ethics: from Living Room to Boardroom*. In journalism parlance, I’m going to ask tough questions that get to the real story ☺ Hello, Dr. Hallin. Do you prefer that, or Daniel?

DH: Dan is fine.

As an amateur consumer of media – not a scientist studying media or an investigative journalist – I am looking for fairly digestible **insight** into the breadth and depth of the media’s function, importance, and challenges. Naturally, I would like to keep an eye on **ethics** in regard to the media. Questions I want to “get the scoop on” include: are they doing a good job fulfilling their proper role in a democracy or Republic; to what degree is the media really influenced by advertisers, politicians, and dwindling readership; does the media have an obligation to utilize the principles of investigative journalism to shine the light of publicity into the dark corners of various other institutions in America, such as politics, business, and science?

To start, let’s talk about the proper role of the media – ideally, and

in practice. I know Jefferson termed it “The Fourth Estate,” which says to me he thought reporting **truth** was **paramount**.

*“The news media’s silence, particularly television news, is reprehensible. If we knew as much about Darfur as we do about Michael Jackson, we might be able to stop these things from continuing.”*

~ Nicholas D. Kristof

DH: There are different roles to some extent; in our society, we primarily think of the news media here as a means of information for citizens so as to facilitate their participation in society and, especially, to make decisions about what policies to support, and so on.

The other important role that the media plays that in some other countries is even more critical than here is the role of being a forum for **debate**. In other words, providing a platform in which different groups in society express their opinions.

Did I hear you say facilitating debate is not typically the role of the American/North American media?

DH: Well, in other societies the role of the media as a forum for debate is more important than it is here. It’s still an important role here, but I would say it’s less emphasized. It also takes place differently in other countries. For example, the media are often themselves participants in debate more so than here. The American ideal is that media are supposed to be neutral and balanced and so on, but in Europe, say, most news organizations have some kind of political orientation, and part of their role is to express their opinions and participate in the debate about important issues.

I think that’s a great place for us to dig down a little; do you think it’s appropriate for the media to have a bias or to try to influence public opinion one way or another? Under what conditions is that ethical?

*“Propaganda is to a democracy what the bludgeon is to a totalitarian state.”*

~ Noam Chomsky

DH: I think it’s not an illegitimate thing for media to have a distinct perspective (and is the way many media systems in the world are organized). We have, over the last several decades taken the view that they should not, but should be neutral.

I *would* say that partisan media are starting to reemerge in the U.S. and probably will continue – and that’s alright; I think that there are **ethical** standards that apply in those cases. One is that the **value** of *accuracy* has to be preserved, even with partisan media. In other words, standards that have to do with providing people with complete and correct information. So, it’s okay for the media to include a point of view; not alright to distort the news in the service of that point of view; not alright to suppress opposing views or to mischaracterize them; not alright to omit facts that do not support their particular orientation. In many societies they’ve actually managed to come up with a reasonably good balance and have journalistic **ethics** agreed upon regardless of political points of view, and a kind of **plurality** regarding different points of view.

I’m fan of a man named Howard Zinn, and although I don’t think he would probably call himself a true journalist (though he often writes opinion pieces for *The Progressive* magazine, *the Nation*, and so on), he said something that I think is apropos of what we’re speaking about here and I’d like to hear what you have to say about it.

He noted that the more he studied history, the clearer it became that it was not possible to be objective, because he believes that every historian comes to study history with *some* sort of bias – they believe certain things and have particular **values**. And although it might change over time, he thinks that objectivity ought not to be claimed or attempted. Rather, there should be transparency – thus the writer would offer: “This is where I’m coming from, so here is my take on this particular

## CHAPTER 16

### *Business Ethics*

Ronald F. Duska, Ph.D. and Michael Boylan, Ph.D.

*“It is a commonplace executive observation that businesses exist to make money, and the observation is usually allowed to go unchallenged. It is, however, a very limited statement about the purposes of business.”*

~ Daniel Katz & Robert L. Kahn

Hello, this is Jason Merchey, host of *Values and Ethics from Living Room to Boardroom*, here on World Talk Radio. The goal today is to discuss **ethics** in businesses, corporations, companies, non-profits, workplaces, and industry: what best practices are, which ethical principles are relevant, what can go wrong, what ought to happen, how corporations fit into the scheme of **corporate social responsibility**, how business ethics relates to sustainability, the “triple bottom line,” and the like.

Allow me to introduce Ronald F. Duska, Ph.D. He served as a past president and executive director of the Society of Business Ethics, which is the publisher of *Business Ethics Quarterly*. Currently, he is an adjunct professor in the graduate business schools of St. Joseph’s and Villanova Universities. Professor Duska held the Charles Lamont Post Chair of Ethics and the Professions at The American College from

1996 until 2011, where he co-founded and served as the director of the College’s Center for Ethics. The Center created The Mitchell Forum, which brings together chief executives in the financial services industry with business ethicists. He has taught at The Wharton School, The University of Virginia, Pennsylvania State University, and St. John’s University. Dr. Duska is a senior fellow at the Olson Center of the University of Virginia, and a senior fellow at the Pedro Arrupe Center for Business Ethics at St. Joseph’s University. He is the author, co-author, or editor of numerous articles and books, including *Accounting Ethics* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), *Ethics for the Financial Services Professional*, *Contemporary Reflections on Business Ethics*, *The Next Phase of Business Ethics: Integrating Psychology and Ethics*, *Moral Development: A Guide to Piaget and Kohlberg*, and *Ethics and Corporate Responsibility: Theory, Cases, and Dilemmas*.

I must say I’m impressed! Hello, Professor Duska.

RD: Hello, call me Ron.

Great. I’ll begin by asking for a little information about yourself: do you have a way to characterize your perspective on business ethics? For example, I studied psychology, so if someone were to ask me what my theoretical orientation was, I could indicate behaviorism, cognitive behavioral, psychodynamic, family systems, etc., but I’m ignorant about business **ethics** in that academic sense.

*“We must **think through** what management should be **accountable** for, and how and through whom its accountability can be discharged. The stockholders’ interest, both short- and long-term, is one of the areas. But it is only one.”*

~ Peter Drucker

RD: I primarily started out in **philosophy**, doing my doctoral work in ethical theory, and I did some undergraduate work in psychology and literature. I moved from theory to *applied ethics*, in which I have been involved for the last 20 or 30 years. It’s an intriguing field; its aim is to

bring theories down to practice. You learn a lot about the theories by looking at particular practices, as well. I guess my philosophical bent would be “common sense Aristotelianism,” if you will. I like to **analyze** practices, determine what constitutes right and wrong, and try to simplify some of the complex concepts and such.

It’s interesting to apply an **Aristotelian** approach to modern-day problems. So, how does that look? You would work with an executive in a corporation, and introduce an idea Aristotle wrote about, trying to kind of “bring it into the room” and utilize it in some fashion?

RD: Yes. It’s very interesting, indeed. I’ve been dealing recently with this notion of what he calls “the accumulator” – the person who accumulates for the sake of accumulating. He notes that’s not a very **happy** or **fulfilled** person. When you go to Aristotle, from the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E., and try it out on contemporary issues, it’s **fascinating** to see how it works itself out; it gives you new insights and new ways of going at things. One can apply the idea to some of the things going on in Enron and WorldCom and the like — it opens up a whole lot of perspective on what goes wrong in companies that act unethically and betray trust.

*“It is easy to dodge our **responsibilities**, but we cannot dodge the consequences of dodging our responsibilities.”*

~ Josiah Charles Stamp

Yes, Enron *is* an interesting example in regard to this idea of accumulation. It’s probably not just simply *greed* which made this corporation worthy of blame; it’s deeper than that, right? Because one could picture someone who’s got a lot of money and they just want to collect cars or something— there’s really nothing unethical about that per se. So, tell me something about Enron that characterizes the nature of their downfall.

RD: Basically, they forgot what their mission and purpose and goals

were, and became simply accumulators of profit. If you go back and look at some of their statements when they were growing under Jeffrey Skilling, he gave a speech indicating they want to be “the world’s leading company.” That is a curious kind of goal – leading *at what*? That elicits an Aristotelian question: *Why* do you want to be the leading company? What’s the point of that? It’s a limitless goal; it led Enron to a kind of hubris and single-mindedness that got them in trouble.

*Hubris* tends to do that.

RD: Indeed. What I would insist on is that every business produces some product, and their **vision** ought to be to produce it well and make people’s lives better off. In the process of doing that, they’re going to make a profit, which is essential because they’ve got to stay in business. What happened with Enron and myriad other companies in recent years is that they got so enwrapped in becoming bigger and more and more profitable that they forgot what they were really about and why they existed. I think that inevitably leads to a lot of trouble, and in company after company, you can see that coming to pass.

It sounds like you’re speaking of the **purpose** of a corporation; what are some **ethical** purposes of a corporation?

*“Aristotle took note of those who ‘turn every quality or **art** into a means of getting wealth; this they conceive to be the end, and to the promotion of that end they think all things must contribute.’ Clearly, for Aristotle, this is a picture of someone corrupt. Like Midas, those who accumulate wealth for its own sake are ‘intent upon living only, and not upon **living well**.’”*

~ Ronald Duska

RD: Well, I’m not sure I’d call them *ethical*. I think the purpose of the corporation is, fundamentally, to make goods and services and produce products. If you consider why in the world human beings invented

## CHAPTER 17

*Social Entrepreneurship*

John Abrams

*“Business is the only mechanism on the planet today powerful enough to produce the changes necessary to reverse global-environmental and social degradation.”*

~ Paul Hawken

“If the people who make the decisions are the people who will also bear **responsibility** for the consequences of those decisions, perhaps better decisions will result.” That’s an elegant thought by the man I’m excited to talk with today, John Abrams, the author of *The Company We Keep: Reinventing Small Business for People, Community, and Place*. He’s CEO and founder of the South Mountain Company. The South Mountain Company is a 30-year-old, employee-owned design and building company on Martha’s Vineyard, Massachusetts. He chairs the Island Affordable Housing Fund and is vice-chairperson of the Island Housing Trust. They are both nonprofit organizations dedicated to solving the community’s affordable housing crisis. For many years, he has written and spoken about **socially responsible** business practices, affordable housing, and ecological building issues. I think he’s got a very

grounded, solid, ethical perspective about how to do business and how to be a member of a community – and not just a member, a *leader*, or as he would characterize it, a *social entrepreneur*. Now I’d like to bring John on the line. Hi there—

JA: Hi Jason, nice to talk to you.

You as well. Let’s spend some time talking about your ideas and your book. Give us some background so that the listeners and I will have an understanding of where you’re coming from.

JA: Well, the book is really about the experiences of the last 30 years in The South Mountain Company, which I kind of inadvertently started with a partner in 1975. We were just really following our particular **passion**, which was designing and building houses, but we didn’t have any intention of “being in business.” We kept trying to build the perfect house, and kept failing at that, but kept going.

A particular pivotal moment for me was when a long-time mentor who believed in our work came to visit. We showed him some houses, and he said: “My God the work is **beautiful!** You making any money?” I said, “No.” He replied, “Well, Abrams, you’ve got a unique idea here – subsidized housing for the rich. You’re building these nice houses for people of wealth, but aren’t really making any money.” At that moment, I began to think about *business*. And I began to think that the pursuit of profit and the ability to use those profits to do **good** things was a **valuable** exercise...

*“There’s a lot of pride that business owners have. It’s actually critical that pride and ownership extend to the entire organization. I think of everyone as in the same boat in driving the company forward.”*

~ Aaron Levie

...So the company turned into something that was very near and

dear to us, but was also a very tight-knit group, and about ten years into it, my partner had left and two long-time employees came to me and said, “You know, we really want to stay and make our careers here, but we need more of a stake than an hourly wage.” So, we put our heads together and soon after we restructured the company and those employees became an employee-owned, **cooperative** corporation, whereby anybody that worked there for five years would become a full owner and share in both the profits and the control of the company. At this point, well over half of our employees are owners and all the rest are on a track to ownership. I would have to say that this restructuring and bringing workplace **democracy** to the company has probably been the most important aspect of our **success**.

*“There is intense **debate** within the movement for **socially-responsible** business about a parallel growth-related issue: how to manage growth, and how to keep their original **values** intact.”*

~ John Abrams

Ok. Let me tell the listener a little bit about the book, *The Company We Keep*. It’s “part memoir, part guide to **democratizing** the workplace and part prescription for **strong**, local economies. It marks the debut of an important new voice in American business.” And, paraphrasing the publisher: As a proponent of the benefit of working *for* the people and community, you explore the role of business in promoting local culture, celebrating social equity, and maintaining ecological **balance**. Conventional business concepts such as “bigger is better,” “profits come first,” and that “location is incidental” are challenged. The experiences that you document in the book demonstrate that one can bring high personal **values** to the workplace, **protect** natural resources, **uphold** high standards of craftsmanship, control growth, and still run a successful and highly-collaborative enterprise. It sounds very admirable and aspirational.

JA: Well, we’re still having fun, and that’s the most important part. I’m incredibly fortunate to have this great group of people as collaborators. To write the book, I took a sabbatical (two winters) meant to accomplish two important goals. One was to do the project, but the other was to get me as the founder of the enterprise out of the way for a little while and let the company emerge from under me and see how we did. It was astonishing; people stepped up in remarkable ways.

It was a great experience having that time to think and write, but the thrilling part was coming back to a company that was much better than the one I left. The changes have continued. One of the things that has most impressed me since returning is that we now have a conviction that South Mountain Company is going to exist way beyond me.

*“Democracy is strongest when people own the homes in which they live and have a direct ownership stake in the assets on which their livelihood depends. When workers are owners, the conflict between workers and owners disappears.”*

~ David C. Korten

Hmm. Can you please define *social entrepreneurship*? It’s a bit complicated.

JA: Yeah, it’s a bit complicated for me! It means taking an **entrepreneurial** approach to solving social problems. We use the skills that we’ve gained in business (a profit-making enterprise) to work on **community** problems. The big one for us is affordable housing. We tackle it in many ways, and “take the bull by the horns.” For example, inventing projects, bringing them to the community, and finding ways to fund them. It’s really diving in and **giving back** to the community.

I see. And yet, in doing so, you’re not having financial difficulties such that you are not able to stay viable?

JA: Absolutely. Our profits are limited, and we need to do some very important things with that. People need to make a great living and have



## CHAPTER 18

*Amending Capitalism: How and Why?*

Gar Alperovitz, Ph.D.

*“I believe capitalism will eventually be replaced by a **communitarian** ethic where the **rights** and **care** of all beings will be taken into consideration, not just the greed of a corporate few.”*

~ Terry Tempest Williams

Hello and welcome to the show. I'm Jason Merchev, coming to you from the World Talk Radio studio in San Diego, CA. I'm interviewing a humane and erudite man today – Gar Alperovitz. He is professor of political economy at the University of Maryland, a former fellow of King's College – Cambridge, a former fellow of the Institute of Politics at Harvard University, and guest scholar at The Brookings Institution.

Professor Alperovitz has a book entitled *Rebuilding America*, and another: *Making a Place for Community*. He has no shame in calling his ideas “radical,” but considering his stellar and very mainstream qualifications, it is plain to see that his contentions are not coming “out of left field” (forgive the pun!). He has also written *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb* as well as *Atomic Diplomacy*. Dr. Alperovitz has testified before Congress and has written articles in all kinds of

high-quality publications.

GA: Hi. Good to hear you.

Would it be okay if I called you Gar?

GA: Absolutely. Let me say two things in addition to your introduction. One, I'm from Racine, Wisconsin – that turns out to be important, I'm a Midwesterner, and some of the ideas in this book come basically from experience in the real world. On the other hand, just to mention, I've had a lot of political experience; I consider myself a “realist” – I've directed staffs in both the House and the Senate and at the policy level of the State Department. Even though the book is called *America Beyond Capitalism*, and takes us beyond the current moment, I'm interested in how we move the ball practically and realistically, and some of my experience informs many ideas in the book.

*“The division between an ethical and a selfish approach to life is far more fundamental than the difference between the politics of the political Right and the political Left.”*

~ Peter Singer

Let me **understand** you correctly: you're talking about the fact that certain ideas have to receive a kind of critical mass of support from various folks in order to actually get any airtime?

GA: That's part of it. It is **true** you've got to build up over time and then things begin to move in a different way. But the other part of it is: Can we actually look at practical things going on right now in the real world (in communities around the country) that might be not just *ideas*, but *real-world efforts* that can be built upon? And the third piece obviously is longer-term political change. That all has to work together – the **ideas** and the **vision** and **value**, practical things on the ground, and

longer-term political possibilities – or essentially, you’re talking *theory*. I’m not interested in just “pure utopias.”

Is that because you’ve found the utopian ideas/things that are more visionary to be lacking in some sort of substance and practicality, or is it that you were never interested in such things?

*“To date, no corporate executive has been sent away for life after being caught three times polluting a river or ripping off its customers. In America, we reserve that special treatment for those who happen to be poor or African-American or fail to contribute to one of our fine political parties.”*

~ Michael Moore

GA: Actually, let me clarify: I think that utopian thinking in one sense (giving us a vision of what it really will take to do real **democracy**, **equality**, **liberty**, a sense of **community**) is absolutely important, and in that sense I want to affirm utopian thinking. What I really was trying to say is that unless you can then say: How do we get there? Is there a realistic path, or is it *just* utopian thinking?”, it doesn’t give us a way forward in the real world.

That’s **fair**. As I understand **science**, moving forward is usually a combination of theorizing on the one hand, followed by testing on the other. If you try to study without a theory, (if you just let the data guide you), you might not see the big picture. Conversely, if you look at the big picture disconnected from testing and data gathering, you may experience the chasm between what *may* work and what *will likely* work. I think even someone like Noam Chomsky is not particularly radical in the speed at which he wants to see change; I think he sees how things *should* change, but he’s not a big proponent of risk-taking in regard to implementing social programs and such. My point is, you’re interested in pragmatism; something that has a real chance of working. You are trying to be cautious and not ideologically-driven.

*“If the person without the goods is starving, and the person with them has plenty, then morality demands a split: the money is needed more by the starving. The starvation of the poor demands redistribution from the rich.”*

~ Simon Blackburn

GA: I like that. Yes, I think you’re quite correct that we do need a theory, otherwise you’re just poking around in a haystack with experiments. But it also has to have certain **principles** that can be not only tested, but *built upon*.

Let me give you an example. This is from the heart of this book, and one of the reasons I named it what I did. “Changing the system” – everybody says “It’s the system” when **discussing** things going wrong. Changing the system usually means (the heart of most systems is): *who owns property*. That’s where the power in most political systems is based (in one way or another).

There are many variations associated with who really owns the property. In the feudal era it was the lords owning property; they controlled the politics, if you like. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, who owned capital in the United States were largely (though not totally) small business people – usually farmers and craftsmen. That’s where we get the Jeffersonian **vision** of the independent “yeoman farmer,” kind of standing on his own two feet.

Well, who owns property today in America is, on the one hand, the very, very large corporation (world-spanning). Most people are not entrepreneurs— one in ten may be, at best. Thus, 90% of the people are employees. So, it’s a very different animal. Then if you look more closely at who has power and who owns capital – this statistic is mind-blowing, but it’s at the heart of this book and why I use the term *beyond* capitalism – 1% own over 50% of all the business investment capital in the United States. The Waltons, of Walmart, own more wealth than 42% of American families *combined*...

## CHAPTER 19

*A Progressive Perspective on Justice,  
Liberty, and Social Problems*

Michael Ratner, J.D. and Matthew Rothschild

*“Justice is a name for certain **moral** requirements, which regarded collectively, stand **higher** in the scale of social utility and are therefore of more paramount **importance** than any others.”*

~ John Stuart Mill

Today’s program is important to all of us, even if we’re not stuck in Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. This is, in part, because some of the things that our government is doing is a blight on our country’s **honor**. I will be talking with two very capable guests; gentlemen who have a lot to say about a **progressive** perspective on social problems vis-à-vis **justice** and **liberty**. First, Michael Ratner, President of the Center for Constitutional Rights, joins me. Hello, and may I call you Michael?

MR: Yes, Michael’s fine.

Well, it seems like every day there’s something in the newspaper on these topics, huh?

MR: Yes except for winning occasionally, it seems like *every day* is another disaster for **human rights** and civil rights out there!

I can **imagine** that you have a sense of frustration as well as eagerness to do what you do here at this important time and place. If you were a bread maker, you would probably be less excited about what’s going on!

MR: I’m excited, but it’s been very difficult. I often read about another non-citizen, especially if they are Muslim, being harassed or wrongly accused by the government. I travel across the country; I see examples all the time. I find in Guantánamo or other places, the accused and detained are subject to torture. I’ve met people who have been freed from Guantánamo, in England, and they’re about as far away from terrorists as my own children. There is a tremendous amount of fear in the country right now, and I think because of that we’re willing to look the other way, particularly when it comes to other people’s **rights**—not their own.

I see. Clearly, there are some parallels between Japanese internment during World War II and the present situation — unless you would disagree with me on that. But it seems to me that government overreaches – more commonly (exclusively?) when it comes to people of color, and the lower social classes.

*“The government has a pathological incentive to collect more and more and more; they just can’t help themselves – they have an insatiable hoarding complex. Since the government unchained itself from the constitution after 9/11, it has been eating our **democracy** alive from the inside out. There’s no room in a democracy for this kind of secrecy: it’s anathema to our form of a constitutional republic, which was born out of the **struggle** to free ourselves from the abuse of such powers, which led to the American Revolution.”*

~ Thomas Drake

MR: Yes, what happens in times of fear is that they scapegoat people. For example, during World War II, we had Germans and Italians here, and even though we were fighting against Italy and Germany, we didn't go put Italians and Germans in internment camps. We did put Japanese into camps – 50,000 citizens and a similar number of noncitizens – and that is not because they were less loyal than others, it was different racial characteristics. People doubted their loyalty because of their ethnicity. We put over 100,000 people into veritable prisons despite the fact that there was *no evidence at all* that any of them had committed any crime, forcing them to sell their businesses and destroying people's lives. The government lied; it came into court and said: "We think that some of them may be involved in terrorism or attacks on the U.S., and therefore all of them have to be put into camps because we can't figure out which ones they are."

If you look at what's happening today, it's not that dissimilar. Yes, we were attacked by Muslim fundamentalists on 9/11, but we have one and a quarter billion Muslims in the world – four to six million in the United States alone. I speak to Muslim groups all the time, and they are more patriotic than I am by a great deal. They represent all kinds of occupations and varieties, from businessmen to doctors to scientists to telephone workers and everything else, and yet they are stereotyped as dangerous and scapegoated. So, whether we call it race, ethnicity, or religion, there is a tendency in times of great fear to think that we're going to be safer to cast such a wide net and treat individuals in this way; of course, we're not.

*"The financial crisis did more than cast **doubt** on the ability of markets to allocate risk efficiently. It also prompted a widespread sense that markets have become detached from **morals**, and that we need to reconnect the two."*

~ Michael J. Sandel

Depressing. Can you give a little bit of an overview of the top three things that you are concerned about? I know "extraordinary renditions"

have been particularly egregious.

MR: Extraordinary renditions are what we call "outsourcing torture." I have a client, a Canadian citizen, Maha Harar. Born in Syria, he left there when he was a young boy. He was picked up at Kennedy Airport; they claim he is a member of Al Qaeda, and originally they never gave him access to an attorney. The government put him on a private jet and sent him over to Syria where he was stuck in an underground cell for nearly a year. He had the heck tortured out of him. Eventually, we got him out because he's a Canadian citizen; of course there is a huge stink being made by the Canadians about what the Americans did to him. This is outsourcing of torture.

The other examples of course we saw at Abu Ghraib prison, and let me assure you, the pictures the public got to see were only the tip of the iceberg. It's happening in Afghanistan, and it's happening in Guantánamo. The U.S. government has tried to claim that this wanton behavior is just "bad apples," and is not the fault of the higher-ups. In fact, as the so-called "Torture Memos" indicate, this outlandish situation was authorized at the very top. It's a really nasty case of violating fundamental law with this torture. It's no coincidence this occurs outside the United States.

Appalling. This is a quote from the terrorism and geopolitics expert, Pulitzer Prize winner Thomas Friedman:

*"We killed 26 of our prisoners of war. In 18 cases, people have been recommended for prosecution or action by their supervising agencies; eight other cases are still under investigation. That is simply appalling. Only one of the deaths occurred at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, meaning that the others occurred elsewhere."*

So, this is a huge problem that actually not only involves the deprivation of **human rights** and the rule of law, but murder.

“Solve people’s personal problems – or even just try to – and they will march with you. That’s the key to an **enriched progressive movement**.”

~ Doris “Granny” Haddock

“America’s **leadership** and prestige depend not merely upon our unmatched material progress, riches, and military **strength**, but on how we use our power in the interests of world **peace** and **human betterment**.”

~ Bob Herbert

“Progressives are about we. We want to progress the national agenda so that no one is left behind.”

~ Jan Phillips

“As societies grow decadent, the language grows decadent, too. Words are used to disguise, not to illuminate, action: you **liberate** a city by destroying it. Words are to confuse, so that at election time people will solemnly vote against their own interests.”

~ Gore Vidal

“With the Democratic Party slowly morphing into a watered-down Republican Party, **progressives** have grown increasingly cynical of politics. Many feel little incentive to vote or participate in the political process.”

~ Sahil Kapur

“More government by the state does not necessarily result in less **freedom**. The control exercised over an individual by a private agency may be far more tyrannical than anything the state imposes.”

~ Pendleton Herring

“As a nation, we have **triumphed** over a series of external enemies and **overcome** internal **struggles**, and we have done so not by abandoning our core **principles** in the name of fear but by insisting on an **adherence** to our **fundamental political values**.”

~ Glenn Greenwald

## CHAPTER 20

### *Improving the Character & Ethics of Children*

Bernice Lerner, Ed.D.

“**Virtues**—such as **honesty, justice, courage, and compassion**—are dispositions to behave in a **morally good** way. They are objectively good human qualities – good for us whether we know it or not. They are affirmed by societies and religions around the world. Because they are intrinsically good, they have a claim on our **conscience**.”

~ Thomas R. Lickona

Hello, and welcome to *Values and Ethics: from Living Room to Boardroom*. I’m your host, Jason Merchev, and I’m the founder of Values of the Wise.

Today’s show is about **character**, and a phenomenon called *character education*. We’ve all seen examples on television – and many of us on our very streets – of children and adolescents who are somehow “off-track,” selfish, crass, violent, careless. Obviously, this has a lot to do with the family, community, political and socioeconomic environment in which the child is embedded. I am purposely leaving off religion and ethnicity because they are not, in my opinion, correlated with poor character, conduct problems, delinquency, etc. I also exclude genetics

and prenatal environment because they are complex and of a different nature than what is typically considered to be “the environment” (i.e., the “nurture” half of the hackneyed “nature versus nurture debate”).

Becoming educated is almost synonymous with cognitive and intellectual **development**, and since school is a group experience for the vast majority of America’s children, a child must develop social **maturity** along the way. This conspicuously leaves out character education – or places it solely in the sphere of responsibility of parents and religious institutions. Do the Boy Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, daycares, Head Start classes, and public schools have nothing they should be contributing to our much-needed revitalization of citizenship? As Peter Buck said in the neat little ditty about the American armed forces, “Gun Shy:” “They’re so good at making soldiers/ But they’re not as good at making men.”...

*“Parents are planters and have the wonderful opportunity to sow into their children a sense of identity and destiny based on a genuine code of ethics. This planting places a hedge of **knowledge** and protection that will, over time, reap a harvest of **integrity** and **virtue**.”*

~ Stephen G. Austin &  
Mary Steelman

...When it comes to a family, school, community, religious group, and society at large, **developing** virtues in the young is one of a country’s paramount tasks. Though Spartan citizens had physical **strength**, skill, and endurance, and were **proficient** with weapons, the other aspect of the city-state’s triad of **excellence** was **virtue**. Would you rather fight next to a fellow Spartan soldier who was great with the blade, strong and tough, but who lacked **courage** and **loyalty**? I think not. The same argument could be made for the citizenry; Spartan women wanted nothing more than to have a son excel in militarism. They literally gave them up to facilitate such an overarching goal. The fact that they deemphasized femininity in young girls is a **fair** critique –

but beside the point. From what little I know of Eastern civilization, it seems fair to say that character and voluntary cooperation with societal norms (for example, filial piety, **honor**, and the norms of collectivism) mark the very fabric of the society. In almost every culture, and in some more notably than others (Japan, for example), honor and **integrity** are virtues that are prized, cultivated, and functional. It also appears that there is a correlation between the moral virtue of a culture and its ascension or decline. Apt comparisons are sometimes made between ancient Rome and modern America. Spoiler alert – Rome didn’t last, and that is in no small part because of **moral** decay.

The questions I wish to explore today are: Can our schools be doing a better job educating children to be **good** people? Functional and capable citizens? Individuals who tend to behave in a **moral** way? Clearly, American schools have a role in the development of a child’s intellectual and social capacities. But can they, without resorting to a Christian dogma, teach them to have good **character**? How can schools, where children spend seven or eight hours a day, play a role in **creating** upstanding and **wise** citizens? How does the character education movement jibe with the recent emphasis on testing? Join me as I speak with an expert on this topic, Bernice Lerner, Ed.D.

Bernice is an author, speaker and consultant. She is the director of adult learning at Hebrew College and senior scholar at the Boston University School of Education’s Center for Character and **Social Responsibility** (where she is the former executive director). Prior to working for Hebrew College, Dr. Lerner worked for Boston’s Bureau of Jewish Education. She has **enlightened** teachers from rural and urban schools in Massachusetts, South Carolina, and Colorado, and personally taught grades 4-12. She conducts **research** on character education and teaches courses at B.U. in character **education** and also the Holocaust. She has authored many academic articles, and two relevant books: *The Triumph of Wounded Souls: Seven Holocaust Survivor’s Lives*, and *Happiness and Virtue Beyond East and West: Toward a New Global Responsibility (with Osamu Nakayama)*. Allow me to introduce Dr. Bernice Lerner. Hi there.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Jason Merchey is a philosophical thinker and independent scholar as well as founder of Values of the Wise. Growing up in Los Angeles, he grappled with sociocultural, familial, and psychological issues that led to much of the insight he has today. Merchey earned a bachelor's degree *summa cum laude* in psychology and social behavior from the University of California Irvine, and was inducted into *Phi Beta Kappa* for excellence in liberal scholarship. He went on to earn a master's degree in clinical psychology from California State University Fullerton and obtain thousands of hours of experience counseling clients of all types.

While pursuing California's Marriage and Family Therapist license, Jason became intrigued by studying wisdom, values, and ethics—so much so that he created the Values of the Wise™ website ([www.ValuesoftheWise.com](http://www.ValuesoftheWise.com)) and book series as a way to encourage not only himself but also his clients to find the insight, consolation, and wisdom from great quotations representing our intellectual heritage.

Merchey's first book was a book of quotations titled *Values of the Wise: Profound and Witty Words of Wisdom to Inspire and Empower Us* (2003). He followed that up with three similar quote books. He has since published two well-regarded, top-shelf books on the concept of

“*a life of value*,” both of which primarily utilize quotes and stories about values and wisdom as the basis for improving one’s life and gaining valuable insight.

“I believe values that wise persons are attracted to are scintillating and useful, but obviously, different people have different conceptions of which ones are worthy. Quotations can be used to build a case for a particular point of view (i.e., an argument), but only the strongest beliefs and conclusions flourish. Thus, the ideas and concerns Socrates discussed in a distant time and culture still have relevance today,” he notes. This is the notion of *true conservatism* that MercheY attempts to integrate with *progressivism* and apply to modern issues and problems.

Jason moved to the Charleston, SC, area for career opportunities and lives there with his wife and pets. A lifelong learner and tireless reader, he is pursuing a graduate certificate in philosophy and ethics from Harvard University Extension. In addition to Values of the Wise, MercheY tutors college students in writing and academic success.

Visit [www.ValuesoftheWise.com](http://www.ValuesoftheWise.com) for information and  
to access many unique and free resources



## PRAISE FOR VALUES OF THE WISE

*“There is much in this book to stir your mind and feelings; somewhere in it is a passage that will change your life –if you let it.”*

—**COPTHORNE MACDONALD**, Founder of *The Wisdom Page*;  
author of *Toward Wisdom* as well as *Matters of Consequence*

*“This is a treasury of ideas, thoughts, & feelings that represent the best of humane ideals. I hope it will be widely read because it could be a wonderful influence on the thinking and behavior of us all.”*

—**HOWARD ZINN**, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, Boston University;  
author of *The Twentieth Century, A People’s History of the United States*,  
and *You Can’t Be Neutral on a Moving Train*

*“Like a medieval monastic scribe illuminating manuscripts for the few, Jason Merchey is compiling the wisdom of the ages for the many – a cornucopia of insightful treasures.”*

—**MICHAEL TOMS**, Co-founder and host of New Dimensions  
World Broadcasting Network; author of *A Time for Choices:*  
*Deep Dialogues for Deep Democracy* and co-author of:  
*True Work: Doing What You Love and Loving What You Do*

*“The Left rarely talks about values anymore, which is a shame given the deep humanist roots of radical politics. Merchey has written an essential and beautiful book that might jumpstart that conversation. This book ought to be required reading for anyone interested in changing the world, for changing the world begins with changing how we think about how to live our lives.”*

—**ROBIN KELLEY**, Ph.D., Professor of African American Studies and  
Anthropology, Columbia University; author of *Freedom Dreams:*  
*The Black Radical Imagination* as well as *Thelonious Monk:*  
*The Life and Times of an American Original*

*“Jason Merchey has made available a valuable compilation; it is a rich selection of quotes relating to an array of virtues. His is a book I will turn to in my work on character and ethics education and in searching for wisdom in my daily life.”*

—**BERNICE LERNER**, Ed.D. Senior Scholar, The Center for Ethics and Character, Boston University; Director of Adult Learning, Hebrew College; author of *The Triumph of Wounded Souls*

*“Building a Life of Value contains an awe-inspiring collection of profound observation, advice, and wisdom. It is clear, well-organized, and has something for everybody to think about and benefit from, irrespective of the reader’s background, tradition, or preconceptions.”*

—**NICHOLAS RIBUSH**, M.D., Director, Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive; Editor of *The Peaceful Stillness of the Silent Mind: Buddhism, Mind, and Meditation*

*“Reading the wise quotations in this book is like taking sips from a snifter of finely aged brandy.”*

—**PETER B. RAABE**, Ph.D., Philosopher and Philosophical Counselor; Author of three books on philosophical counseling, including: *Philosophical Counseling: Theory and Practice*

*“This is a fascinating and useful tour of the pearls of human wisdom. No one could read this book without coming away more thoughtful about his or her own life.”*

—**MICHAEL E. KERR**, M.D., Director, Bowen Center for the Study of the Family, Georgetown University

*“This book is a great resource for professional philosophers and all seekers of wisdom. The book contains a comprehensive and inspiring selection of quotations from great thinkers and cultural traditions, quotes which can be used to stimulate class discussion as well as one’s own thought process.”*

—**JUDITH A. BOSS**, Ph.D., Visiting Scholar in Philosophy and the Center for BioMedical Ethics at Brown University and author of *Analyzing Moral Issues, Ethics for Life*, as well as *Perspectives in Ethics*

*“As someone who is writing on altruism and compassion, apology and forgiveness – this book has become very useful and I highly appreciate this valuable compendium of quotations. I look forward to using some of the wise quotations in parts of my work. I highly recommend this book for anyone who is interested in kindness, compassion, and social responsibility because it throws some light on the need for wisdom and caring.”*

—**SAMUEL OLINER**, Ph.D., Emeritus Professor of Sociology, Humboldt State University; Founder/Director of the Altruistic Personality and Prosocial Behavior Institute; author of *Do Unto Others: Extraordinary Acts of Ordinary People* and *The Altruistic Personality: Rescuers of Jews in Nazi Europe* (with Pearl Oliner, Ph.D.)

*“To aspire to live ‘a life of value’ – a life grounded in profound wisdom ascribed to great minds throughout the ages – is ambitious and inspiring. This book is a wonderful resource; a great gift to every ‘student of life’ regardless of age! I recommend it highly – a must for those seeking wisdom and inspiration.”*

—**RENEE BARNETT TERRY**, Ph.D., Dean of Student Affairs, Revelle College – University of California, San Diego

*“One of the many illuminating quotes in Jason Merchey’s provocative compilation is Shakespeare’s ‘There is no darkness but ignorance.’ Like so many of the aphorisms that Values of the Wise brings to light, this little gem ... typifies the eye-opening character of this highly original collection.”*

—**ROBERT W. FULLER**, Ph.D., physicist, educator, and social activist; former President of Oberlin College; author of *Somebodies and Nobodies: Overcoming the Abuse of Rank*

*“In this book you will find a wonderful collection of quotations about life and its problems. Our guides to ‘building a life of value’ include prophets and politicians, saints and singers, poets and scientists – even the odd, insightful comedian.”*

—**NICHOLAS MAXWELL**, Ph.D., author of *What’s Wrong with Science and From Knowledge to Wisdom*; Emeritus Reader in the Philosophy of Science/Research Fellow, University College London

*“Jason Merchey has done it again; a feast of thoughtful, carefully compiled words of wisdom to nourish us all. Combined with his intriguing website, he has now truly entered the noble realm of helping others to learn.”*

—**MAX WEISMANN**, Co-Founder/Director of the Mortimer J. Adler Center for the Study of the Great Ideas, author of *How to Think about the Great Ideas: Great Books of Western Civilization*

*“People like quotations because they’re like golden nuggets – they’re valuable, small enough to carry in our minds, and universally respected as a currency of truth. Building a Life of Value is a treasure chest of gold, holding jewels of wisdom to illumine our way.”*

—**JAN PHILLIPS**, thought leader, speaker, artist, and author of *The Art of Original Thinking: The Making of a Thought Leader* as well as *Making Peace: One Woman’s Journey Around the World*

*“This book is Bartlett’s Quotations with a conscience. It is a goldmine of insight and inspiration. If you want to learn how to remake society, and why, this book is a good place to start.”*

—**DAVID CALLAHAN**, Ph.D., political scientist and author of the books *The Cheating Culture: Why Americans Are Doing Wrong to Get Ahead* as well as the book *The Moral Center*; co-founder of *Demos*

*“Values of the Wise is profound and inspirational. I keep it on my coffee table.”*

—**JON DOLHENTY**, Ph.D., Director: The Center for Applied Philosophy

*“We are all enriched by Jason Merchey’s pursuit of wisdom and his willingness to share the fruits of his deep and wide reading with us. His book Building a Life of Value embodies the very spirit of philosophy in its original sense – the love of wisdom.”*

—**GARY E. KESSLER**, M.Div, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, California State University, Bakersfield; author of *Voices of Wisdom: A Multicultural Philosophy Reader* and *Studying Religion*

*“Building a Life of Value is a wonderful compilation of ‘words of wisdom’ regarding values. As a philosopher, I found most of the quotes can provide food for deeper reflection, providing the opportunity for people to sort out the values they hold most dear. I highly recommend the book to everyone concerned with leading a better life.”*

—**JUDITH BARAD**, Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy and of Women’s Studies, Indiana State University; author of *The Ethics of Star Trek*

*“As a person committed to bringing ancient wisdom and timeless values into businesses and organizations, I find Jason’s book Building a Life of Value to be chock full of quotations and ideas from a diverse array of good people and deep thinkers. I find myself resonating with many of the wonderful bits of wisdom resident in Jason’s well-crafted book. As an author, there is nothing more fun than reading something that makes me blurt out to myself, ‘A-HA.’ This book can be helpful as well as challenging, inspirational as well as sobering. Such is the nature of wisdom!”*

—**DAVID DIBBLE**, coach; former CEO; author of *The New Agreements in the Workplace: Releasing the Human Spirit*

*“I love this book! It’s a great compilation.”*

—**ANITA RODDICK**, Founder of *The Body Shop*; author of *A Revolution in Kindness*; *Business as Unusual* as well as *Body and Soul*

*“Building a Life of Value is a terrific and extremely useful book that brings together some of the most important thinking we have on values and ethics. It can be helpful because this book is about wisdom – and it is wisdom that guides us both as individuals and as a people as we move through the difficult times ahead toward a more just and humane society.”*

—**GAR ALPEROVITZ**, Ph.D., Professor of Political Economy, University of Maryland; author of *America Beyond Capitalism: Reclaiming Our Wealth, Our Liberty and Our Democracy*; a former fellow of Kings College, Cambridge University; Harvard’s Institute of Politics; the Institute for Policy Studies; and guest scholar at the Brookings Institution

“Building a Life of Value is a well-structured compendium of the world’s multifarious treasures of wisdom with meaningful introductions to each chapter written by Mr. Merchey – readily accessible for busy readers searching for a deeper understanding of life. I like this handy and beautiful book on values and wisdom.”

—**GEORGES ENDERLE**, Ph.D., Professor of International Business Ethics, University of Notre Dame; former President of the International Society of Business, Economics, and Ethics; author of *International Business Ethics: Challenges and Approaches*

“Building a Life of Value by Jason Merchey is a beautiful book in all ways. It looks good, is organized well and, most importantly, provides a ‘flood of words and thoughts to help make one wise.’ It would be great for one’s own personal development and life enrichment – and would also make a great gift for someone you love.”

—**EARLE F. ZEIGLER**, Ph.D., D.Sc., Dean Emeritus of Kinesiology, the University of Western Ontario; author of *Who Knows What’s Right Anymore?* as well as *Whatever Happened to the Good Life?*; winner, the Hetherington Award; Fellow, American Philosophical Association

“Upon receiving Building a Life of Value in the mail, I sat down to read it; however, I soon had to get up and retrieve a highlighter because it contains so many quotations that I wanted to be sure to pass along to my students because I think they are wonderfully relevant to humane education.”

—**ZOE WEIL**, MA, M.Th., co-founder and president, the International Institute of Humane Education; author of *The Power and Promise of Humane Education* as well as *Above All, Be Kind: Raising a Humane Child in Challenging Times*

“...an indispensable anthology of apt and anodyne aphorisms.”

—**LOU MARINOFF**, Ph.D., author of *Plato, Not Prozac!*, *Therapy for the Sane* as well as *Philosophical Practice*; founding president of the American Philosophical Practitioners Association (APPA)

“I recommend with enthusiasm Building a Life of Value: Timeless Wisdom to Inspire and Empower Us. The volume has been a wonderful source of spiritual enrichment for my daily contemplation and prayer, full of penetrating and compelling nuggets of wisdom that speak to every aspect of my professional and personal life. I was also particularly entranced and impressed by Merchey’s own commentaries, with which he introduces and concludes each chapter of quotations. They are marvelously insightful and eloquent commentaries about the attributes and virtues under consideration.”

—**LINDA YURIKO KATO**, RSCJ, M.Th., Ph.D., Director of the Center for Applied Nonprofit Research, University of San Diego

“Jason Merchey is searching the world for those bits of profound and practical wisdom that can make a positive difference for anyone. His innovative treasure hunt is bringing new gems of insight into people’s lives in a great many ways. If you want to guide your life by the values of the wise, you need look no further than [www.valuesofthewise.com](http://www.valuesofthewise.com), or get one of Jason’s books that compile the ideas that you can use everyday.”

—**TOM MORRIS**, Ph.D., philosopher; doctor of religious studies; author of *True Work and If Aristotle Ran General Motors*; former Professor of Philosophy, University of Notre Dame; founder of the Morris Institute for Human Values

“Merchey’s eclectic compilation of wisdom about how to live the examined life is the best possible kind of guide to real happiness: a self-help book for people who hate self-help books.”

—**MARK KINGWELL**, Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy, University of Toronto; author of *Better Living* as well as *The World We Want*

“While political hypocrites make their endless appeals about ‘family values’ and ‘godly values,’ Jason Merchey offers us a trove of genuine values drawn from many cultures and humane thinkers, in the best traditions of humanism and democracy.”

—**MICHAEL PARENTI**, Ph.D., author of *Superpatriotism*, *The Culture Struggle*, *Against Empire*, and *Democracy for the Few*

*“When Jason asked me to be a contributor to the book Living a Life of Value, I was willing because it sounded like a great idea, and I knew from a radio program on which he interviewed me that his heart was in the right place. Having now seen it, I am happy to be a part of what turned out to be a superb literary monument to wisdom.”*

—**LAURENT GRENIER**, author of *A Reason for Living*

*“Building a Life of Value and Living a Life of Value are fascinating and important compilations of the thoughts of some of the world’s wisest thinkers. They are a multicultural approach to human values that offer a rich variety of useful and timeless ideas on wisdom. These books and the website ValuesoftheWise.com reflect Jason Mercheys’s extensive and creative use of quotations to study and promote wisdom.”*

—**BRUCE LLOYD**, M.B.A., Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of Strategic Management at the Center for International Business Studies, London South Bank University

*“What better book to have in a therapist’s waiting room than Building a Life of Value? It is easy to read, and with a few minutes of reflection, clients will be thinking about what they value in life. It could also be useful to discuss one of the themes the book touches on in psychotherapy.”*

—**RICHARD W. LEVAK**, Ph.D., psychologist, psychotherapist, and personality expert; author of *Therapeutic Feedback with the MMPI-II: A Positive Psychology Approach* (with Liza Siegel)

*“Among my favorite passages in Building a Life of Value are those written by Jason himself; his eloquent introductions to each section demonstrate firsthand just how inspiring and empowering – and timely – timeless wisdom can be.”*

—**CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS**, co-founder and executive director of the nonprofit Society for Philosophical Inquiry; author of *Socrates Café*, *Six Questions of Socrates* and *The Philosopher’s Club*

*“Jason Mercheys has brought together a collection of essays, insights, and interviews guaranteed to stimulate the soul and enrich the spirit. Values of the Wise offers practical solutions to life’s challenges and opportunities. Adopting an interdisciplinary approach to exploring the significance of living a life of value, Jason incorporates ideas and principles covering a diverse range of viewpoints. Whether one is interested in business, philosophy, physics, medicine, or religion, Values of the Wise offers the perfect portal to gaining the understanding necessary to improve....”*

—**ROBERT L. MERZ**, author of *A Declaration of American Business Values: Ethics, Equity and Efficiency in the New Millennium*

*“Jason and I share a love of meaningful literary works that delve down deep and quotations that so eloquently and incisively elucidate values. ...I know he studied, wrote, and compiled for his own benefit – such is the life of the writer; I suppose – but with wisdom, the benefit is universal if shared. I’m so happy he did share these wonderful works.”*

—**ROBERT L. LLOYD**, Ph.D., economist

*“I have been regularly dipping into [Living a Life of Value] and finding insight, illumination, and inspiration.”*

—**BILL MOYERS**, journalist extraordinaire, and author

*“The quotes are inspiring, and the organization of the book allows the reader’s mood to guide him/her to a suitable collection of wisdom.”*

—**PAUL BUCHHEIT**, Ph.D., Adjunct professor, DePaul University; editor of *American Wars: Illusions and Realities*; AlterNet writer

*“Living a Life of Value is a GREAT book!”*

—**KEVIN DANAHER**, Ph.D., sociologist; co-founder of Global Exchange; co-founder FairTradeUSA; co-author of *Insurrection: Citizen Challenges to Corporate Power* and co-author of *Building the Green Economy: Success Stories from the Grassroots*