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# NYSEC PANEL TACKLES LEADING PUBLIC SERVICE ISSUES – AND THE 2016 ELECTION FOCUS



*(L-R) Panelists: Marc Morial, Barney Frank, Bill Ritter, Sherry Glied, and Steven Cohen.*

The future impact of US public service policy and the limitations future presidents may face in a highly bipartisan environment were the subjects of the inaugural 2015 “Champions of Change” Public Service Forum, sponsored by the New York Society for Ethical Culture and the Social Service Board. The forum, held on Thursday, April 30, at NYSEC featured a panel of experts who tackled the big questions about the nature of contemporary public service. Can future presidents overcome political obstacles to lead change as predecessors have done with achievements such as the New Deal, the Civil Rights Act, and Social Security?

The panelists included: 32-year veteran of Congress, the Honorable Barney Frank, former Chair of the Congressional Finance Committee, of “Dodd/Frank” fame; Professor Steven Cohen, Executive Director of the Columbia University Earth Institute; Marc Morial, President and CEO of the National Urban League; and Sherry Glied, Dean of New York University’s Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and formerly with the Obama Administration as Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation at the Department of Health and Human Services.

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# Leader's Desk



DR. ANNE KLAEYSEN

## Moral Mondays Come to NYC

First, the announcement: Judson Memorial Church is hosting a retreat on Monday, June 8, with a rolling agenda from 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm, to reflect upon our shared values and bring Moral Mondays to New York City. Please join me for as long as you can and spread the word. I participated in a planning meeting for this retreat with interfaith and secular colleagues on May 18. Together we aired our outrage over the many injustices New Yorkers endure and framed our discussion in terms of developing a culture of organizing, intersectionality of social justice issues, and articulating a moral vision.

We agreed that we experience “a multiplicity of belonging,” embodying different identities in different communities, and are brought together by an understanding that we are all human beings with worth and dignity. That understanding moves us to work for justice for everyone. Whether or not we personally experience injustice, we must stand alongside our sisters and brothers who do – and fight for their rights.

The issues we readily identi-

fied in NYC included economic and educational inequality, mass incarceration, and racism, homelessness, affordable housing and healthcare, voting and immigration rights, gender and LGBTQ rights, domestic violence, and climate change. The list, of course, goes on and on. Our emphasis was on participatory democracy. How do we support the empowerment of people whose voices are neither heard nor heeded? Can a coalition as wide and deep as the one that gathered for the People's Climate March gain traction around moral issues? What does it take to sustain a moral movement in a diverse population?

Our inspiration is the Moral Mondays movement organized in North Carolina by Reverend William Barber II, pastor at the Greenleaf Christian Church in Goldsboro and president of the state NAACP chapter. For him, it began a few days before Easter 2013, when the North Carolina Republicans, who in November 2012 took control of the State Legislature and the governor's mansion for the first time in more than a century, “chose to crucify voting rights.” They pushed

*Continued on page 16*

# Ethical Enrichment and Events

## Wisdom and World Affairs

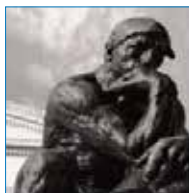
Join us on the first and fourth **TUESDAYS, 6:00**

**PM – 8:00 PM**, in Room 508, for a

philosophical discussion moderated by Ken Gans.

We'll cover a wide variety of subjects: the fate of humanity, world affairs, and Humanism, among many others. Come, and share your opinions.

*There is no fee for this.*



## Great Books Discussion Group

Larry Schiff

Where does our sense of justice come from? Did it gradually

evolve? Or is it somehow innate to humankind? Noted philosopher David Hume says we are led from “virtuous motives” to take “virtuous actions,” derived from our natural sense of humanity. Evolutionist Charles Darwin declared that our “moral sense or conscience” is “the most noble of all attributes of man” and that it is acquired, rather than innate.

This month's Great Books



Discussion Group will discuss Hume's *Justice and Injustice* and Charles Darwin's *The Moral Sense of Man and the Lower Animals*.

We who regularly attend these popular monthly meetings anticipate another lively discussion on **WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3** at **7:00 PM** in the Elliott Library.

We meet the first Wednesday of the month (unless that's a holiday) from **7:00 PM** to **9:00 PM** in the Elliott Library, 5th floor. We read excerpts that are in the Great Books texts — usually 40-60 pages — ideally twice, jotting down some questions for the group to handle. Newcomers are in for a treat! You will be joining the thousands of readers who participate in the Great Books discussions across the nation, following a format that was developed by Professor Mortimer Adler and Chancellor Robert Maynard Hutchins at the University of Chicago in 1947, and which spread across the country and the decades to come, with an ever-enthusiastic following.

To learn about the Great Books Foundation and the discussion process, visit our website, [www.meetup.com/Manhattan-Great-Books-Discussion-Group](http://www.meetup.com/Manhattan-Great-Books-Discussion-Group). In the first paragraph of the box entitled, “What is our Great Books Reading Discussion Group and how do we work?” click on “Great Books”

## SUNDAY PLATFORM MEETINGS

11:00 am

Ceremonial Hall, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

### JUNE 7

“June Is Torture Awareness Month” with Shahram Hashemi

Dr. Kathleen O'Connell Presides

### JUNE 14

“Transitioning: It's a Big Deal!” with NYSEC Member Michelle Ainsworth

Dr. Anne Klaeyesen, Leader  
Henryka Komanska Presides

### JUNE 21

Theater of the Oppressed

Katy Rubin  
Emily Newman Presides

### JUNE 28

Mitigate, Adapt, or Suffer: Living With Climate Change?

Dr. Debra Tillinger  
Monica Weiss Presides

### NOT A MEMBER?

All the more reason to attend one of our Enrichment Activities. Contributions for nonmembers are usually only \$5.

(it's in red). That links to the website page where you can order the Great Books Reading and Discussion First Series and Reader Aid (\$28.95). In the information bar on the left side of the home page, click on "Our Calendar" to see the monthly readings scheduled for the year.

New and longer-term members often share with us what the discussions meant to them. Here are two of their comments:

*"This was great! I felt like I was back in college in a wonderful seminar group."*

*"You know, I read this month's selection years ago, but never delved into it so precisely. The discussion was challenging and stimulating. I'll definitely be back for more."*

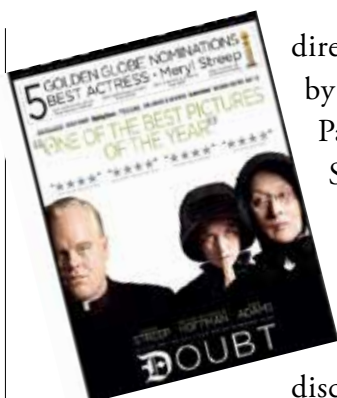
Do come on June 3, and join us in another Great Book Discussion!

*There is no charge for members, and for guests it is \$5 per session.*

## Ethics in Film

Chris Everett

Join us on **FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 7:00 PM** (doors open at **6:30 PM**), in Ceremonial Hall to see *Doubt* (2008),



directed by John Patrick Shanley. I'll be leading our discussion after the movie.

When the principal (Meryl Streep) of a Bronx Catholic High School accuses a popular priest (Philip Seymour Hoffman) of pedophilia, a young nun caught in between the feuding pair becomes hopelessly swept up in the ensuing controversy.

*The suggested donation for this film is \$5, which includes snacks and beverages.*

## Ethics And the Theater

Patricia Bruder Debrovner

On **FRIDAY, JUNE 12**, at **7:00 PM**, Ethics and the Theater will present a play reading of *Daughters of the Sexual Revolution*, by Dana Leslie Goldstein.



As the country commemorates its revolution, three women engage in their own

revolutionary activities. Against the backdrop of post-Nixon America, they face ethical dilemmas, and question what it means to be faithful — to one's values, one's partner . . . and one's self. Susanna Frazer directs our cast.

Come at **6:30 PM** for a reception and after the reading participate in a discussion of the ethical issues of the play, led by Betsy Ungar in Ceremonial Hall.

*The suggested donation is \$5 for members and \$10 for guests.*

## Ethical Death Café

Join us on **SUNDAY, JUNE 14, 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM**, and on **WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2:30 PM – 4:30 PM**, both in Ceremonial Hall. Our moderator is Rev. Dr. Barbara Simpson, who holds a Doctorate in pastoral counseling and is the Bereavement Program Community Outreach Coordinator at Caring Hospice Services.

We'll gather in a relaxed and safe setting to discuss death, drink tea, and eat delicious cake. The objective is to increase awareness of death and to help people make the most of their (finite) lives. Topics include health care proxies, ethical wills, and green burial.

*The suggested donation is \$5.*

## Honoring Our Shelter Volunteers

Come on **WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17**, at **6:00 PM**, to Ceremonial Hall, where we will honor the life and work of Dr. Maria Fridman at our Annual Shelter Volunteers Dinner. Maria's efforts to create a haven for homeless woman at NYSEC and recruit volunteers to stage it resulted in the Maria Fridman Women's Shelter, which has serviced for more than thirty years. (See story on page 14).

Non-volunteers are invited to join us for this celebration.

*A donation of \$10 is requested.*

## Adler Reading Seminar



Join us on **TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM**, in Room 502, with Leader Dr. Joseph Chuman as our moderator. We'll discuss the works of Felix Adler and other thinkers whose writings are seminal to Ethical Culture and Humanist philosophy.

To register email Yalitz Garcia-Krawczyk at [ygarcia@nysec.org](mailto:ygarcia@nysec.org), or phone her at 212-874-5210, ext. 117.

*There is no fee for this program, but advance registration is required.*

## Summer Writing Workshop

*Elaine Gurney*

There will be a short summer writing workshop again this year. "The Joy of Personal Writing" will start on **JULY 28** and run through August for a total of five weeks, meeting on **TUESDAYS** from **12:30 PM** to **2:30 PM**.

We've completed ten great

years of these nonfiction writing classes and, as always, we welcome new people. Registration in advance is required.

For information and to register call Yalitz Garcia-Krawczyk at 212-874-5210, ext. 117. If you'd like to read work by current and past writers, please look at [www.nysec.org/workshop-writers-space](http://www.nysec.org/workshop-writers-space).

Fees for the summer sessions are \$100 for members and \$140 for nonmembers. ☺

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

From **SUNDAY, JULY 5** through Labor Day, **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6** (ten Sundays), Ethical Culture meetings will be held at their normal time: **11:00 AM**. This is also "vacation time," when many people, including me, will be taking long weekends, etc. Therefore, I'm looking for volunteers to replace me as coordinator/greeter on some (but not all) Sundays during that period. A schedule will be prepared around each volunteer's preference, and I'll take on the rest of the days. I am happy to go over the routine with anyone who is interested and has never done this before. Even doing this volunteering for just one Sunday will be a big help. It really is easy and fun, but it requires a firm commitment to be there.

The coordinator/greeter should arrive by **10:45 AM** to hand out programs and welcome each person arriving. At the meeting you'll ask for volunteer(s) from the attendees to assist with gathering the collection, counting the number of attendees in the audience, and giving the money collected to Maggie Determann, our Membership Coordinator.

To volunteer, phone me at home: 212-666-5219, or email me: [schwarz@frick.org](mailto:schwarz@frick.org). Many thanks to everyone who has volunteered through the year!



## Ethics for Children

A U D R E Y K I N D R E D

### Wonder Friends Become Wonderful Friends

To cultivate intergenerational friendships, NYSEC created the Wonder Friends Project this spring. Children of the Society wrote letters incognito to adult members over the month of April. This letter-writing created a mystery to solve, evoking wonder. One of the members coordinated the pairings and facilitated the exchanges.

Finally, on May 2, NYSEC's retreat in Northern Westchester offered the opportunity for these new friends to discover one another at a Wonder Party. Through a Wonder Game, people asked questions of the group and deduced if any of the answers echoed letters they had received previously. This Wonder Friends project is a version of a tradition of Ethical Culture Societies all around. Its aim is to build and strengthen community through connecting friend-families across generations. Some people who have grown up in Ethical

Societies have proclaimed, at annual Ethical Education retreats, that their secret pen-pal became like a new kind of aunt or grandfather to them over many years.

*Wonder friendships grew like the flowers in spring! First "in the dark" with awesome seeds (each participant remained a secret, with a hidden code name!)*

*Then, releasing deep roots (messages with information and imagination!)*

*And then with an eagerness toward growth (our wonder, itself growing with curiosity and delight).*

*Our friendships finally blossomed (seeing each other in our full being, we all met on May 2!)*

#### Summer Programming

**SUNDAY JULY 5:** Free Community Open House (rooftop playground) Planting summer hopes! Bring friends! Reach out! Information session and registration for summer programs.

RSVP by **JULY 6** for summer involvement at *Eth-*

*icsForChildren@NYSEC.org.*

*(Summer activity participation is included with NYSEC membership; No new participants will be turned away for lack of funds.)*

Cost: \$100 per family for summer enrollment (including Sundays and Sleep Over).

\$60 per family for Sunday "Animating Humanism" Series.

\$40 per family for rooftop camping event with guardian.

\$40 per child for rooftop camping event without guardian.

#### JULY 12 – AUGUST 2

Animating Humanity and Humanism, an arts and animation series co-led by guest teacher Amy Reid and program leader Audrey Kindred held on Sunday mornings **11:00 AM – 1:00 PM.**

#### Night Light!!!!

**JULY 25, 6:00 PM –**

**JULY 26, 1:00 PM**

Urban Rooftop Camping Night With **7:00 PM** Potluck Dinner inviting: Wonder friends and NYSEC members to join in the fun. ☺

## *Ethics for Children in April...*

The Young Ethical Explorers came to the Green Festival Expo in the Javits Center on April 24, 25, and 26. Families participating in Ethics for Children met at the ETHICAL Booth. We walked around on a scavenger hunt organized by Monica Weiss. NYSEC's booth was wonderful to see represented in this context of progressive entrepreneurs and activists. Exploring, we had some unique GREEN experiences.



*(L-R) Liz Singer and Audrey Kindred, with Sylvan and Miles in green hats, Mita, dad Sean, Lillian and mom Hazel.*

*(L-R) Sylvan, Mita, Hazel, Lillian, Audrey, Miles, and Sean.*



# Sunday Morning Platform Meetings 11:00 am

JUNE 7

“JUNE IS TORTURE AWARENESS MONTH” WITH SHAHRAM HASHEMI



**Shabram Hashemi**

*Dr. Kathleen O’Connell Presides*

Every June, human rights and faith organizations join together to mark Torture Awareness Month because on June 26, 1987, the nations of the world took a major step against the immoral and abhorrent practice of torture. On that day, the Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT for short) entered into force and the United Nations later declared June 26 the “International Day in Support of Victims of Torture.”

Shahram Hashemi is the Chair of Amnesty International USA's National Advisory Council. He has been involved in human rights activism for over a decade, working with various human rights organizations. Sha holds a Master's degree in Human Rights and Economic Development from Columbia University and is a producer and documentary filmmaker.

*The shared charity is Amnesty International.*

JUNE 14

“TRANSITIONING: IT'S A BIG DEAL!” WITH NYSEC MEMBER MICHELLE AINSWORTH



**Dr. Anne Klaeyen**

*Henryka Komanska Presides*

Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyen interviews Michelle about her gender transition from male to female. It was a long and often painful journey from recognizing there was a mismatch between her body and identity to taking the necessary steps to becoming her own true self. Hers is a powerfully personal story that will help others engaged in similar struggles. “It would have helped me to have heard my story five years ago. Today I am much calmer.”

*The shared charity is Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund.*

JUNE 21

THEATER OF THE OPPRESSED



**Katy Rubin**

*Emily Newman Presides*

We will open the talk with two monologues from *The Housing Circus*, a play we created with the Concrete Justice troupe, made up of actors with experience of homelessness, during our residency at NYSEC. Then I will speak, alongside the actors, about the importance of initiating social change from the direct experience of, and in the voices of, those confronting the oppressions. We will speak to our ethical understanding of Theater of the Oppressed, which is to approach social change from a position of solidarity and collective risk-taking.

Katy Rubin, Executive Director of Theater of the Oppressed NYC, is a joker, actor and circus artist. She has facilitated and directed Forum and Legislative Theater workshops and performances in partnership with various communities including homeless adults and youth; LGBT homeless teens; people living with HIV/AIDS; recent immigrants; and court-involved youth and adults. Katy trained with Augusto



Boal at the Center for Theater of the Oppressed—Rio de Janeiro, and later with Jana Sanskriti in India, Mind the Gap in Yorkshire and Cardboard Citizens in London. She has trained facilitators in Nicaragua, the Netherlands, Norway and New Orleans as well as NYC.

*The shared charity is Theater of the Oppressed.*

**JUNE 28**

## **MITIGATE, ADAPT, OR SUFFER: LIVING WITH CLIMATE CHANGE**

***Dr. Debra Tillinger***

*Monica Weiss Presides*



The science behind climate change has been understood since the late 19th century, but it is the response of the 21st century that will determine the course of the future. Come take a guided tour of the basic science behind earth's climate, the drivers of climate change, and the range of responses available to us on a personal and cultural level: mitigation, adaptation, and suffering.

Debra Tillinger holds a PhD in ocean and climate physics from Columbia University. She works at the American Museum of Natural History as an educator on climate change and at Marymount Manhattan College as an adjunct professor of physics. Her recent research is based at NASA/GISS and focuses on the effects of declining sea ice on global climate. In addition to formal science education, Dr. Tillinger also presents scientific information through the arts in character as “Dr. Mermaid”.

*The shared charity is Evidence Action.*

### **THIS MONTH'S SHARED CHARITIES**

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL is a global movement of people fighting injustice and promoting human rights.

TRANSGENDER LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND is committed to ending discrimination based upon gender identity and expression and to achieving equality for transgender people through public education, test-case litigation, direct legal services, and public policy efforts.

THEATER OF THE OPPRESSED, a term coined by Augusto Boal, is a series of theatrical analyses and critiques developed in the 1950s. Boal is an avid supporter of utilizing interactive techniques, especially in the context of theater. Many of his ideas are considered as “a new media perspective,” despite the relatively early birth of these ideas. Since then, these ideas have been developed more, giving them meaning in a modern-day context. The creation of the Theater of the Oppressed is largely based on the idea of dialogue and interaction between audience and performer. Moreover, these ideas have served as a framework for the development and evolution of stronger ideas.

EVIDENCE ACTION scales proven development solutions to benefit millions of people around the world. We fill the gap between knowing “what works” and having impact at scale.

We implement cost-effective interventions whose efficacy is backed by substantial rigorous evidence. We identify innovative, appropriate financing mechanisms and build best practice operational models. We voraciously self-evaluate, learn, and improve our models for scaling with a commitment to transparency on progress, impact, and value for money.

## Early Sunday Mornings 9:45 am (Except as noted)

(Rooms are subject to change)

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**JUNE 7**

### **MINDFULNESS**

Led by Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyen.

Join us for exploration and practice of mindfulness through meditation  
Room 408.

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**JUNE 7 & 21**

### **CHORUS PRACTICE**

Led by David Gracia and Pat Debrovner. 10:00 am. Ceremonial Hall.

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**JUNE 14 & 28**

### **CHORUS PRACTICE**

Led by David Gracia and Pat Debrovner. 10:30 am. Ceremonial Hall.

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**JUNE 14**

### **COLLOQUY: LOVE**

Dr. Anne Klaeyen presides. Room 508. Ceremonial Hall.

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**JUNE 21**

### **POETRY READING**

Cheryl Gross presides. 9:30 am. Room 508.

Our last poetry reading session until September! So, bring your favorites  
to read!

## Sunday Afternoons 1:30 pm (Except as noted)

(Rooms are subject to change)

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**JUNE 7**

### **HOSPITALITY TRAINING**

Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyen presides. 1:00 pm, sixth floor school cafeteria.

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**JUNE 7**

### **SUNDAY ASSEMBLY**

2:00 pm. Ceremonial Hall.

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**JUNE 14**

### **ETHICS IN THE NEWS**

Abe Markman presides. 12:45 pm, sixth floor school cafeteria.

At lunch join us at the Ethics-in-the-News table and share your take on  
today's burning issues.

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**JUNE 14**

### **ETHICAL DEATH CAFÉ**

Rev. Dr. Barbara Simpson presides. Ceremonial Hall.

A gathering in a relaxed and safe setting to discuss death, drink tea, and eat  
delicious cake.

*more Ethical Enrichment and Events.....*

**JUNE 28**

**LIFE WITH HEALTH – THE BEDBUG PROBLEM IN NYC**

Phyllis Kreuttner presides. 1:15 pm, Ceremonial Hall.

This will be a follow-up to the last one due to popular demand by people who missed the first one and/or people who have more questions to ask.

The summer is a time when begbug problems tend to increase. The more knowledgeable we are the more we can either avoid the problem or at least minimize it and deal with it efficiently, thoroughly, and cost effectively.

**Lunch Discussions    Thursdays, 12:00 noon – 1:30 pm**  
**Elliott Library, Room 507**

Bring your lunch and join Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyesen and Society members. This month's topic is: **HUMAN NATURE**. Folders with relevant articles will be available from Margaret Determann in the Membership Office. You can now access all of the Leader Lunch readings on our website at <http://www.nysec.org/leader-lunch>. Come and join the discussion.

**JUNE 4**

**“HOW READING MAKES US MORE HUMAN”** by Karen Swallow Prior, *The Atlantic*, 6/21/13.

**JUNE 11**

**“TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING: DANIEL E. LIEBERMAN ON HOW CIVILIZATION MAKES US SICK”** by Tracy Frisch, *The Sun*, March 2015.

**JUNE 18**

**“WE KNOW HOW YOU FEEL: COMPUTERS ARE LEARNING TO READ EMOTION, AND THE BUSINESS WORLD CAN'T WAIT”** by Raffi Khatchadourian, *The New Yorker*, 1/19/15.

**JUNE 25**

**“THE WITNESSES: HOW A GROUP OF BLACK SOCIAL-MEDIA ACTIVISTS BUILT THE NATION'S FIRST 21ST-CENTURY CIVIO RIGHTS MOVEMENT”** by Jay Caspian Kang, *The New York Times Magazine*, 5/10/15.

# Our Ethical Family



The following members are celebrating birthdays in June:

- JOSEPH MARVEL.....6/3
- BERNICE CORNYETZ.....6/6
- ELIZABETH HENDERSON...6/7
- CHRIS EVERETT.....6/7
- RUTH COHEN.....6/7
- DAN JULIN.....6/8
- LEE LOSHAK.....6/10
- LEWIS SMOLER.....6/15
- SANDI SACKS.....6/17
- JEROME CHAMLIN.....6/19
- MAJID ALI.....6/27

## ETHICAL CARES

The Caring Committee will help you should you fall ill or be incapacitated, whether you're home, in the hospital, in rehab, or in a nursing home. All you need do is call the committee chairperson, **STEPHANIE ROSENBLATT**, at 212-586-0017, and she'll make the arrangements.



MARGARET DETERMANN,  
Assistant to the Leaders for  
Membership Development

Welcome to three new members of our Ethical family.

**JOE FASHING**, a retired sociology professor (PhD), was the head of the Sociology Department at SUNY Purchase. He is also an attorney (retired). Joe learned of the Society through a graduate of the Fieldston School whose father was an active member. He was drawn to NYSEC because he agrees with the Humanist philosophy and he enjoys the fellowship. Joe is considering becoming more involved with the Ethical Action Committee. His interests include tennis, squash, golf, fly fishing, and Victorian literature.

**KEN POLLOCK** is a motivational speaker, AIDS outreach educator, and teacher's assistant at Medgar Evers College. He is also the author of a children's book entitled *Philosophy of Life*, which focuses on teaching good moral and ethical values to children. Ken learned of the Society through a colleague at MEC, and was drawn to it because he agrees with our eth-

ical standard for daily living. Ken's interests include traveling and reading, and he would like to get more involved with the Ethics for Children programs on Sundays.

**JANIS BASS** is a long-distance member from Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. She is a classically trained musician whose varied interests (besides music) include reading and anything French! Janis hopes to visit the New York Society sometime in the near future.

\* \* \* \* \*

The New York Society was once again a participant in the New York Landmarks Conservancy's Sacred Sites program on Saturday, May 16. Thanks to all of the volunteers for their hard work and making the day a success, including Bob Berger, Rina Crane, Elinore Kaplan, Anne Klaysen, Andra Miller, and Sandi Sacks.

\* \* \* \* \*

Memorial for longtime Music Director Gerald Ranck (October 25, 1941 – April 22, 2015).

For nearly 30 years, virtuoso pianist, organist, and harpsichordist Gerald Ranck served the NY



*Gerald Ranck*

Society for Ethical Culture as its Music Director. On **SATURDAY, JUNE 20**, at **5:00 PM**, together with his family, friends and colleagues, we will celebrate his life and work in the Auditorium. A reception will follow in the Social Hall.

\* \* \* \* \*

Our Annual Retreat at beautiful Stony Point will be held on **SEPTEMBER 25–27**. Look for details on page 18 in this issue of *Outlook*, and call me at 212-874-5210, ext. 113, to make your reservations!☺

#### NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE

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### Clearwater Festival

NYSEC will host an American Ethical Union table at the Clearwater Festival in Croton Point Park, Croton-on-Hudson, NY, on **SATURDAY, JUNE 20** and **SUNDAY, JUNE 21**. We'll need volunteers to host for two-hour periods throughout the festival (**9:00 AM–8:15 PM** each day, particularly Saturday evening and all day Sunday.)

We're delighted that multiple Societies will collaborate for this event, including Northern Westchester, Riverdale-Yonkers, Westchester, Bergen, Essex, Brooklyn, and New York. A key focus will be Ethical Culture's Ethical Action efforts. The festival attracts humanists from around the region and offers nonprofit groups the opportunity to present how their efforts help to heal and transform the world into a better place. Over 50 groups bring a broad range of grassroots issues, exemplified by the environmental, labor, peace, and human rights activism of Pete Seeger, to our mainstream audience in a comfortable and accessible way.

Join us! To sign up, contact Emily Newman, [emilynwmn@gmail.com](mailto:emilynwmn@gmail.com), 917-370-7050 (leave a voicemail or a text if she doesn't pick up).

#### About the Clearwater Festival

The festival features diverse music, dance, storytelling, and family-oriented programming as well as a juried Handcrafters' Village, the Artisanal Food & Farm Market, environmental education displays and exhibits, and the Circle of Song, where audience participation is the focus. See more at: <http://www.clearwaterfestival.org/>.

Inspired by Pete Seeger's desire to clean up the river over forty years ago, Clearwater's Great Hudson River Revival initially helped raise the funds to build the sloop Clearwater, which has since become a world-renowned floating classroom and a symbol of effective grassroots action. Today, Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc. is a nonprofit organization that sails at the forefront of the nation's environmental challenges. The revenue raised by the Festival goes to support Clearwater's numerous educational programs and its work toward environmental and social justice—as well as keeping the sloop Clearwater afloat.☺



## Women's Shelter at NYSEC

ELINORE KAPLAN, NYSEC Trustee

### Help and Hope for The Homeless

*A History of the Homeless and of our Maria Fridman Homeless Women's Shelter*

*"The least I, who have a home, a job, and supportive family, can do is give one night a month to keep our shelter open and welcome the homeless women to it as they struggle to earn homes for themselves."* — Overheard words of one of our volunteers.

For 33 years the Women's Shelter at NYSEC has been providing quarters for hundreds of homeless women — seven to ten at a time. It's the result of a longtime partnership between the NYSEC Social Service Board and the Partnership for the Homeless.

On the evening of June 17 we'll be honoring our volunteers at the Annual Shelter Volunteer Dinner — and we will be celebrating the extraordinary life of Dr. Maria Fridman, whose dedication and inspiration continue to live on in the women who seek shelter and the volunteers.

### The Homeless in New York Since the 1970's

Our Women's Shelter came about in response to the homeless crisis in the late 1970's, a time when, accord-

ing to the Partnership for the Homeless website, "Countless men and women began appearing in our streets and on our doorsteps in numbers not seen since the Great Depression."

This was the result of several converging factors. As a result of a national movement and legislation calling for the "deinstitutionalization" of those with mental illness, more than 100,000 patients were released from state psychiatric hospitals between 1965 and 1977, nearly 50,000 within New York City. Simultaneously, hundreds of single-room-occupancy hotels were shutting down. In 1972 the Supreme Court decriminalized vagrancy and so police pretty much stopped arresting those who were sleeping in public. And, during that same period, there was a decrease in the number of livable and affordable apartments in the city. It all added up to the crisis.

In response to adamant protests to the "warehousing" of the homeless in shelters that housed so many in such relatively poor and unsafe conditions that many preferred the streets, Mayor Ed Koch challenged religious leaders "to practice their message of compassion by providing shelter." Peter Smith, an activist attorney and former city official, "assembled a group of religious leaders and asked them to set up emer-

gency shelters in their places of worship that would provide adults experiencing homelessness with safe overnight lodging, wholesome meals, and fellowship." And thus was founded the Partnership for the Homeless, resulting quickly in a network of 50 shelters that soon grew to 100.

Longtime Ethical Culture member Dr. Judy Wallach brought the project to NYSEC's Social Service Board (SSB), and tells us that fellow Ethical and SSB member Maria Fridman "took responsibility for recruiting the volunteers, a thankless task," but one that Maria did tirelessly for more than 30 years. Fortunately, Maria was still with us and attended the ceremony at which the shelter was named the Maria Fridman Women's Shelter in honor of her enduring dedication.

When it became obvious that the homeless crisis was not at all temporary, the services of the Partnership expanded to include "on-site medical, mental health, and substance abuse assessments as well as access to meals, clothing, showers, and rehabilitation and recovery programs," and they provide "individual counseling, entitlement assistance, banking facilities, vocational training, money management, and instruction in other independent living skills, all of which

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## Women's Shelter at NYSEC *(continued from page 14)*

help clients successfully transition to housing.”

The Partnership works with churches, synagogues, and other nonprofit organizations to coordinate volunteers — and to provide sleeping accommodations. One organization in their network is The Antonio Olivieri Center, which operates a drop-in center for homeless women. But they do not provide not sleeping quarters. That's where we come in. The city provides cots, bedding, laundry services, and bus transportation to and from the Olivieri Center to the various shelters — including ours.

### **The Maria Fridman Homeless Shelter**

Our guests arrive after dinner between 7:30 pm and 8:00 pm, and are picked up by bus for breakfast the next morning by 7:00 am. Some of the women have worked all day on a job and some have completed a full day in a rehab program. Most go to bed immediately, while others make a phone call, have a snack, watch some t.v. or use the computer before retiring.

The shelter is downstairs, in a welcoming two-room space — a “dormitory” with 10 cots and lockers, and a “lounge” with a table, chairs, refrigerator, phone, t.v. and a computer to provide access to email. In a project by our Ethical Teen leaders, the walls bear the images of a number of women role models — Marian Anderson and Frida Kahlo among others — and

Maria Fridman.

The shelter can only receive guests when we have overnight volunteers to host them — up to five nights a week, Sunday thru Thursday. Not only our own Society for Ethical Culture members volunteer, but also students from Columbia University, and others. Their job is simple and most gratifying. Volunteers are given a brief orientation to familiarize them with the building, shelter rooms, fire-safety procedures, and such. They sleep on cots in the large space adjacent to the shelter. Most bring a cell phone and a book to read, and are welcome to sit in the lounge as well.

### **More History — and the Current State of Affairs**

Not only was the crisis *not* temporary, it has not diminished. It's gone up by 10,000 in just the past two years, bringing the current number of the homeless in New York City to 60,485 — 25,000 of whom are children.

During the Depression, Ethical Culture member Jacob Riis' book *How the Other Half Lives* greatly influenced Mayor Laguardia. The mayor persuaded New York State voters to pass a constitutional amendment, Article XVII, Section 1, which reads:

*“The aid, care and support of the needy are public concerns and shall be provided by the state and by such of its subdivisions, and in such manner and by such means, as the legislature may from time to time determine.”*

Fast-forward to October of 1979, when 26-year old lawyer Robert Hayes filed a class-action lawsuit in NYS Supreme Court against Governor Hugh Carey on behalf of three homeless men who'd been given sleeping quarters in a dangerous, unsanitary, and overcrowded shelter. Hayes based his argument on Article XVII, Section 1 — and he won! In what is commonly referred to as “the Hayes decision,” the state and the city were ordered to provide emergency shelter for homeless men immediately. (Subsequently, Hayes and two colleagues founded the Coalition for the Homeless, relying for the most part on funding from private donors — and heckling the city from that moment on.)

Future mayors Koch, Dinkins, and Giuliani prioritized the homeless for federal housing programs, which had proven effective in moving the homeless into stable housing. The programs also alleviated the burden on NYC taxpayers, who shouldered most of the \$38,000 annual bill for providing shelter to a homeless family.

But in 2005 Mayor Bloomberg stopped all that, instead, he gave homeless households city-funded short-term rental subsidies, resulting in more than one out of every three formerly-homeless fam-

## Women's Shelter at NYSEC *(continued from page 14)*

ilies returning to the shelters when their subsidies ended.

In an article on the website of the Coalition for the Homeless, Giselle Routhier writes:

*In continuing along the trajectory of bad to worse, the Bloomberg administration decided to terminate the Advantage program in March 2011, and refused to replace it with the successful federal programs. Now, for the first time since modern homelessness began, there is no housing assistance in place to help homeless families move from shelter to permanent housing.*

*...the City also tried to cut off Advantage subsidies for thousands of families who had already left shelter for apartments. Fortunately, due to a legal challenge by the Legal Aid Society, the City was required to continue making rental payments for existing Advantage tenants until February 2012, when a protective court order was lifted.*

*... The effects of Mayor Bloomberg's post-2005 homeless policy decisions have been catastrophic. The number of families experiencing multiple episodes of homelessness has skyrocketed and has been a main factor fueling record homelessness.*

Mayor de Blasio is trying to make good on his campaign promises to ease the restrictions of the City's Department of Homeless Services determining who qualifies for shelter, set aside public-housing vacancies for the homeless, come up with a new rent-subsidy plan involving a voucher system by which rent-challenged tenants can afford their own apartments, and build a hundred thousand new units of low-income housing. His LINC (Living in Communities) program has been moving families out of shelters since January, to date about 330 families, totaling close to 1,100 people. The program promises to move several thousand more out of the shelters. It remains to be seen how successful Mayor de Blasio will be — but NYSEC will continue to do its part to help.

**Want to Volunteer?** Contact Ethical member Janice Buzby at [janicebuzby@outlook.com](mailto:janicebuzby@outlook.com). It's easy, and very gratifying. You'll be given an orientation and training, and your first time at the shelter will be with an experienced volunteer. ☺

## Leader's Desk

*(continued from page 2)*

through changes to election laws, including reducing the number of early voting days, ending same-day voter registration, and requiring ID at the polls. "That's when a group of us said, 'Wait a

minute, this has just gone too far,'" Dr. Barber said. Singing "We Shall Overcome," a group of clergy and activists marched to the state legislative building in Raleigh and blocked the doors to the Senate chamber. On the following Monday, more than a hundred people gathered, and over the next few months the weekly crowd grew to hundreds and then thousands, spreading from Raleigh across the state and to other cities and states across the country.

We agree with Dr. Barber that this is a "deeply constitutional, deeply moral" battle against the worst forms of injustice. And that is why we are holding a retreat on Monday, June 8. We share his hope that the Moral Mondays movement can shift the culture of repression, inequality, and exploitation.

A participant in the retreat planning meeting said, "Mortality is our deepest connection to one another," and recalled past crises when New Yorkers, without hesitation, came to one another's aid, sharing hardship and embracing goodness. That is what we are called to do now. In the words of the late Ethical Culture Leader Dr. Matthew Ies Spetter, "*Some day each one of us will die. . . The only tragic element lies in lives unlived; lives that never made a commitment; lives spent without generosity; lives of hoarding instead of sharing. . . Life is not endless, but what we engage upon honorably, that will last.*" To which I can only add: Amen. ☺



## Panel Tackles Leading Public Service Issues *(continued from page 1)*

Moderator Bill Ritter, anchor of ABC-7's "Eye-witness News," weighed in with Frank and the other panelists on leading issues of national concern, including criminal justice reform as it relates to current national civil rights issues like the Baltimore incident. Other pressing issues covered included maintaining the integrity of the Dodd/Frank Act, a living wage for workers, income inequality, consumer protection, global warming and climate sustainability, healthcare disparity, and voting rights. Former NYC Mayor David N. Dinkins, the 2014 Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross Public Service Award

recipient, attended the pre-forum VIP reception to meet the panel. Reinforcing the importance of public service, Congressman Charles Rangel's Chief of Staff, Geoffrey Eaton, presented NYSEC and Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross with a proclamation from Congress declaring April 30 Public Service Awareness Day.

Marc Morial joined the panelists on stage directly from his trip to Baltimore earlier in the day. He stressed to the audience that "We need to introduce new solutions as public servants to turn around the major systemic problems of poverty, drastic wage inequality, and racial profiling so we can move forward in a positive direction as a nation."

"Considering the impor-

tance of the upcoming 2016 elections, the "Champions of Change" Forum focused on public service as an integral part of the American presidency," said Leader Dr. Anne Klaeysen. "What can we expect from our leadership?"

The New York Society for Ethical Culture, founded in 1876 by Felix Adler, has historically played a major role in establishing many public service organizations, including the Visiting Nurse Service, the American Civil Liberties Union, the NAACP, and the U.S. Settlement House Movement. In 2014, the Society launched the Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross Public Service Award Series to raise awareness of the importance of electing or appointing public servants who will be true advocates for the people and the nation. ❧



*Panelists with NYSEC President Meg Chapman (3rd from left).*



*(L-R) Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross, Dr. Anne Klaeysen, Geoffry Eaton, Chief of Staff for Congressman Charles Rangel, and Henryka Komanska.*

NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE

# ETHICAL EVENTS

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## Come one, Come all to the 2015 Annual Retreat Weekend

*"What Would Felix Do – Today?"*

**September 25-27**



**Back again to wonderful Stony Point!**  
**Rates per person – double occupancy**

**Gilmor Sloane House - \$ 330 w/private bath**  
**(\$355 if reserved after July 30)**

**Maple Lodge - \$270 w/shared bath**  
**(\$295 if reserved after July 30)**

**If you can't make it for the full weekend, you're welcome to  
join us for one night, or for the day Saturday.**

**Just ask about the pricing when you call to reserve.**

**\*Rides will be arranged if necessary.**

**Contact Maggie Determann — 212-874-5210 x113,  
[mdetermann@nysec.org](mailto:mdetermann@nysec.org), or in person at the  
Society in room 501  
to reserve and to give your \$100 deposit.**

**\*Deposits nonrefundable after August 21 – For financial aid, please contact Anne Klaeyssen**

NYSEC is a member of the American Ethical Union and the International Humanist & Ethical Union.  
Entry to our 100-year-old building and meeting rooms is available for most wheelchair users with prior arrangements.  
Please call ahead (212-874-5210 x 107) for setup of our portable system and plan to arrive one hour before start time.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><b>Great Books:</b> <i>Of Justice and Injustice</i> by David Hume, and <i>The Moral Sense of Man and the Lower Animals</i> by Charles Darwin — June 3</p> <p><b>Ethics in Film:</b> <i>Doubt</i> (2005), by John Patrick Shanley — June 5</p> <p><b>Ethics and the Theater:</b> <i>Daughters of the Sexual Revolution</i> by Dana Leslie Goldstein — June 12</p>						
	1 <b>July/August 2015 Newsletter Deadline</b>	2 12:30 Writing Class 6:00 Wisdom and World Affairs	3 7:00 Great Books Discussion Group	4 12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:00 Empowering Ethical Elders 6:30 Writing Class	5 7:00 Ethics in Film	6
7 9:45 Mindfulness 10:00 Chorus Practice 11:00 Ethics for Children 11:00 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour 1:00 Hospitality Training 2:00 Sunday Assembly	8	9 12:30 Writing Class	10	11 12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:30 Writing Class	12 7:00 Ethics and the Theater	13
14 9:45 Colloquy 10:30 Chorus Practice 11:00 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour 12:45 Ethics in the News 1:30 Ethical Death Cafe	15 7:00 Newcomers' Reception	16 12:30 Writing Class 7:00 Felix Adler Seminar	17 6:00 Annual Shelter Volunteer Dinner	18 12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:00 Empowering Ethical Elders 6:30 Writing Class	19	20 5:00 Memorial for Gerald Ranck
21 9:30 Poetry Reading 10:00 Chorus Practice 11:00 Ethics for Children 11:00 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour	22	23 12:30 Writing Class 6:00 Wisdom and World Affairs	24 2:30 Ethical Death Café	25 12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:30 Writing Class	26	27
28 10:30 Chorus Practice 11:00 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour 1:15 Life with Health	29	30 12:30 Writing Class 7:00 Advocacy Forum- An Interview with Chris Hedges				



*This artwork is a gift to NYSEC from Elinore Kaplan, Susan Needles and Liz Singer. Its message inspired their work to renovate the 5th floor lobby and Room 408 Members Lounge.*

NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE

# ETHICAL

WE ARE ETHICAL CULTURE,

a community that believes all individuals have inherent worth and  
dignity, and a responsibility to strive for ethical growth.

Ours is a nontheistic religion in which deeds and their results matter more than ideology.

We believe that leaving the world better than we found it is the highest good.

Learn more about us at our website — or, better still, visit with us.

You're always welcome.

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# ETHICAL OUTLOOK

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