The active refusal of a citizen to obey certain laws or commands of a government — civil disobedience—is both a deeply personal act of individual conscience and a powerful political tactic. This talk examines the history of civil disobedience as a response to social injustice, and its current practice as a tool of fossil-fuel resistance within the climate justice movement. Speaking both as a PhD ecologist and a civil disobedient, Sandra Steingraber will argue that civil disobedience can open a cultural and political space for science to speak. Readings from personal essays composed while Steingraber was incarcerated are interwoven throughout the talk.

SANDRA STEINGRABER, Ph.D. is a biologist, author, and cancer survivor. She writes about climate change, ecology, and the links between human health and the environment. Recognized for her ability to serve as a two-way translator between science and social change, she has been a leader in the movement to protect the environment and human health from the dangers of industrial pollution and climate change.

Continued on p.7

THREE TALL WOMEN, by Edward Albee
Patricia Bruder Debrovner, Producer
“A comedy about decrepitude or a tragedy about survival” is how New York Times reviewer Jesse Green described this play about three women, at different stages of life, confronting age and death with grim humor, for which Albee won his third Pulitzer Prize. Join us as members of the Society and theater professionals read selected plays before a live audience. Continued on p.11

Continued on p.5

ACCOMPONISHED ETHICAL SOCIETY MEMBER AND NYSEC ASSOCIATE LEADER DIES

George Sakheim died on December 5. He was 96 years old. Sakheim was an Associate Leader here at the New York Society for Ethical Culture in the 1960s and an outstanding individual who exemplified the teachings and beliefs of the Society.

At age 10, after his father's early demise, and the growing anti-Semitism in Germany, George's mother fled with him to Palestine in 1933. A few years later, she sent him to live with his aunt in New York City, intending to follow but died shortly after of ovarian cancer.

In 1943, while pursuing a degree in psychology at Columbia, George was drafted into the service, and, because he spoke German, assigned to military intelligence at Camp Ritchie. Subsequently, he fought in Normandy with the 104th Infantry Division, liberating the Dora-Mittelbau concentration camp. Continued on p.5
Michelle Goldberg, who writes for the New York Times, received a lot of buzz for a recent Op-Ed in which she documented the distress she and many others feel in response to the current political climate. In the piece, entitled “Democracy Grief Is Real,” she cited the testimonies of psychotherapists with regard to an increase in depression, anxiety and fear. For some it feels like grief.

All of us have lived through difficult moments in our political culture, be it the McCarthy period, the Cold War, the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, urban riots, political assassinations, the terror assaults of 9/11, and other highly disturbing events. But the era of Trump, who is both a symptom and a cause of the current distress, is different. As Goldberg notes, it is no longer true.

Obviously, this is hardly the first time that America has failed to live up to its ideals. But the ideals themselves used to be a nearly universal lodestar. The civil rights movement and freedom movements that came after it, succeeded because the country could be shamed by the distance between its democratic promises and its reality. This is no longer true. I think that this is exactly right. 

Chaotic and disruptive post-political convulsions have been, however great America’s failings, there remained the cohesive ideal at bottom that we stayed inspired by our nation’s founding cohering ideal at bottom that we stayed committed to turning half the nation into his enemies. But there is more. We are in an era in which there is fading regard for the fundamental norms that are necessary to sustain any coherent society. There is an ominous assault on honesty and truth-telling. Indeed, on honesty and truth-telling, indeed, on despair, anxiety, and fear result. Yet, we cannot succumb to despair; we need to sustain the hope that the darkness will be followed by a new dawn.

 muitful Planning.

And the darkest of times can produce a renewal, a new beginning. This is true in politics as well. In the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, for example, the Obama administration brought about a recommitment to addressing inequality and income disparity that many thought would be impossible.

In the same way, I believe that we can overcome the current moment of despair and hope in trying times. We need to sustain the hope that the darkness will be followed by a new dawn. This is no longer true.

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GREAT LITERATURE DISCUSSIONS
THE TIN DRUM, by Gunter Grass
Gunter Tielmann moderates
Oskar is a young German boy who doesn’t want to grow into the adult life that everyone else grows into. When he begins to lose his childhood, he feels like he is losing his innocence and purity. He uses this feeling to drive him forward, and he uses this to deal with everything from his family to politics. He can influence other people by drumming and also by deploying his piercing shriek. Oskar can remember things that happened anytime during his life and predict things that will happen. Though he completely matures in his mental capacities, narcissistic, and demonic thoughts, he still looks like a child, since he had decided to stop growing when he was three. In this major novel we live with Oskar through the beginning of World War II, several love affairs, and the world of postwar Europe.

Read the novel in advance and be prepared to discuss the aspects of interest to you by referring to and reading specific related text to the group.

Next month: Awaiting Trepas: A Fusion, by Linda Ty-Casper

1st Wednesday | Feb. 5, 7pm | Members Free, Guests $5

EXPLORING ETHICAL DILEMMAS IN...KIDS VS. NO KIDS
Janet Rose, Guest Speaker
Andrea Reyes, Guest Speaker

For women today, married or single, grappling with the decision as well as the environmental and social implications.

2nd Wednesday | Feb. 11, 6:30pm | Members Free, Guests $5

LUNCHTIME ROUNDTABLE:
ISSUES WORTH TALKING ABOUT
Francesca Turciabio and Bob Bumcrot moderate
Read the articles in advance if you can. Access them online, pick them up when you attend the next weekly discussion, or ask Maggie Determann for them. Come join the discussion.

ELECTIONS & POLITICS IN 2020 AMERICA
2/6 The Changing Electorate


2/13 Apportionment and Polling


2/20 Pandits on Issues


2/27 The Electoral College and Freedom


12pm | Free

New ETHICS, FAIR TRADE, AND YOU

Andrea Reyes moderates
Andrea is who is chair of the NYC Fair Trade Coalition, which connects how our everyday choices and purchases affect the many environmental and social issues facing the world today. Sessions will include a short presentation on topics such as human trafficking and exploitation; overconsumption and waste management; cause related marketing and propaganda; body positivity and clothing size standards; conscious consuming and certifications. Sessions will end with action items/homework.

1st Thursday, Feb. 6, 6:30pm | Members Free, Guests $5

SPEAKING OF SCIENCE
Jesus Torres Vázquez and Joe Fashing, Coordinators
Speaker and topic to be announced. Please check our Events Calendar at https://ethical.nyc

4th Thursday Feb. 27, 6:30pm | Members Free, Guests $5

George Salkheim, continued from p. 4

His reaction to evil was to seek the highest in humanity; a deeply moral man who believed that it is up to mankind itself to better the world.
This week’s shared charity, Camp Linden, provides a summer camp experience for inner-city children that promotes appreciation of the natural world, acknowledges the intrinsic worth of all human beings, and encourages campers to develop self-reliance and integrity. Camp Linden also provides a place where Philadelphia Society members and other humanistic organizations, can hold events and retreats.

**DEATH CAFE — 1:30pm**
Rev. Dr. Barbara Simpson moderates
Gather in a relaxed and safe setting to discuss death, drink tea, and eat delicious cake. Begin in London in 2011, Death Cafes spread quickly across Europe, North America, and Australia, and Asia are and ongoing in 66 countries today. At the Cafe, with no formal agenda, objectives, or themes, there is group-directed discussion of death, the sole aim of which is to increase help participants make the most of our (finite) lives.

**ETHICS & THE THEATER ENCORE MATINEE — 1:30pm**
**THREE TALL WOMEN**
See Friday Nights at Ethical, p.12
3rd Sunday | Members $5, Guest $10

Did you know we have our own YouTube channel?

**Go to YouTube.com/NYSEthicalCulture**

**PLATFORM TALK — 11am**
**THE BIOLOGIST IN CELL BLOCK 3**
Continued from p.1

This week’s shared charity, the San Energy Project, is committed to replacing fracked gas infrastructure with community-led, sustainable energy. They develop, transport, and export of (“natural”) gas in favor of an urgent and just transition to a renewable economy with the goal of zero fossil fuel or nuclear dependence.

**EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**
Dr. Rob Stern
This week’s shared charity is the Maria Fund, which supports social justice organizations and movements in Puerto Rico that are building community power to help thousands of those impacted by climate disasters. It began in 2017 after Hurricane Maria and continues today in the wake of the recent earthquakes.

**THE BIOLOGIST IN CELL BLOCK 3**
Michelle Goldberg, recently writing in the New York Times, admitted she is suffering from what she terms “that democracy grief.” And she is suffering from what she terms “irreducible badness.” And she is suffering from anxiety, depression, and other mental illnesses. Psychiatric studies have shown that there is a noticeable increase in the number of people suffering from anxiety, depression, loneliness, and most alarming of all, suicide — the suicide rate among across the country has increased by 30% since 1999.

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TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

I’ve been a member of NYC’s Transportation Alternatives for well over 20 years, volunteering for local petition drives and lobbying trips to Albany to advocate for safer city streets for cyclists and pedestrians. As a TA member, I’ve attended numerous community board meetings and town halls to call for more protected bike lanes, lower citywide speed limits, safer pedestrian street/avenue crossings—basically for a quieter, less polluted and less dangerous urban street environment. Two recent and great TA wins I co-campaigned for are protected bike lanes along both Amsterdam and Columbus Avenues as well as 53rd and 55th Streets; and a dedicated busway along 14th Street.

TA also sponsors group bike rides throughout the city. During TA’s 30th and last Great Century tour I had the pleasure of joining Ethical co-member Gunther Tielemans for the beginning stretch. Gunther was providing an InTandem bike riding experience for his visually-disabled companions, and the two of them completed the full 100+ mile route!

FOOD & WATER WATCH

As a volunteer with Food & Water Watch for over five years, I’ve joined in campaigns calling on the U.S. Senate to reject the TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership) and agitated to save the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from dissolution, a campaign entailing frequent noisy rallies in front of Senator Schumer’s East Side office calling for his support.

I’ve also joined in F&W’s demonstrations with other green organizations opposing the prospective Dakota Access pipeline conveying dirty tar sands oil from Canada to US refineries far to the south, threatening the well-being of communities along the pipeline’s route. More recently, we’ve persisted in urging Governor Cuomo to reject the Williams fracked gas pipeline with its enormous environmental threat to Raritan Bay and the entire Rockaway Peninsula.

WE ACT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

I’ve also been a member of West Harlem’s WE Act for Environmental Justice (Weact.org) for two years. WEAct works to improve the health and quality of the living environments of economically marginalized communities, and promotes a Green New Deal, which includes enhanced environmental resiliency for these communities. Joining WEAct and attending its monthly meetings has deepened my sense of the environmental injustices disproportionately suffered by communities of color. I believe it’s our strong ethical mandate to ensure that the emerging Green New Deal benefits health, economic well-being and quality of life for people of all backgrounds, in all communities.

If you’re interested in volunteering, contact Elinore Kaplan at ethicaloutlook@gmail.com

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO MEMBERS...

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By David Vassar, independently, and with other organizations. We invite you — members and guests — to contribute news about your ethics in action.

Every month ETHICAL NYC makes a statement regarding an ethical issue — big and bold, on our building facade on Central Park West. Often, there are programs related to that banner statement.
NEW YORK

New York Society for Ethical Culture

The Atlantic: “Our members are humanists. We’re a non-theistic religion of ethics. So most of our members don’t believe in a supernatural deity, nor in an afterlife. And they’re fiercely independent.” — Liz Singer, President

Religion News Service: “What if you open your doors to say, ‘Bring who you are and all you are in with you!’ That’s a different invitation than inviting somebody in saying ‘Learn about us.’ I think that’s where ethical culture and humanism differs as much as we’re open to learning about who you are as well.” — Anne Klaesey, Leader Emerita (article also mentions Brooklyn and Riverdale-Yonkers Societies)

Ethical Culture Society of Northern Westchester

Patch: “Beyond the simple economics of the situation, allowing immigrants into this country is simply the right thing to do. As a member of Ethical Culture, a non-theistic religion of ethics founded in 1876 and espoused by the American Ethical Union (AEU), we violate the tenants of morality when we deny entry to immigrants.” — Milt Steinberg

Ethical Culture Society of Westchester

Scarsdale Inquirer: “One of the wonderful things about growing up in Scarsdale is that we all shared each other’s traditions.” — Elaine Yellen

Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island

Garden City News: “Most of our members are an older population and this issue has been inconvenient at best and dangerous at worse, especially in the colder weather. We had the rain garden installed a week after we denied entry to immigrants.”

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Washington Ethical Society

Washington Post (Op-Ed response to an editorial about migrant children): “We are fortunate that D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser founded the D.C. Council. It’s in the best interest of the public that Bowser takes this up and has a plan to deal with the issue.” — Andy Kindler, Coordinator

WASHINGTON D.C.

Ethical Culture Society of St. Louis

The New York Times: “A comedy about decrepitude or a tragedy about survival” is how New York Times reviewer Jesse Green described this play about three women, at different stages of life, confronting age and death with grim humor, for which she won her third Pulitzer Prize. Join us as members of the Society and theater professionals read selected plays before a live audience. Come at 6:30pm for a reception with snacks and refreshments.

OUTLOOK STAFF

Emin Lee, Volunteer Coordinator
Elaine Kaplan, Managing Editor
Yolanta Komazewiska, Bookkeeper
Marie Orraca, Rental Manager

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Member of the American Ethical Union

March 2020

NEW JERSEY

Ethical Culture Society of Bergen County

New Jersey Monthly: “Now in its seventh season, Ethical Brew is a live music venue dedicated to serving up a quality blend of acoustic music and social action in an intimate and welcoming environment.” — Ross Wells

MISSOURI

Ethical Society of St. Louis

St. Louis Public Radio: “We can learn so much about ourselves and about our culture by exploring how heroism is portrayed in movies like Star Wars — including how notions of what heroism is, and who can be considered a hero, have developed over time.” — James Croft, Leader

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Washington Ethical Society

Ethical Culture Night Out: “The Graduate” will be featured at our Ethical Dilemmas program on February 19, when Steve Sterling, Program Coordinator/Discussion Moderator will present “One word: plastics.” and “Are you here for an affair?” These lines and others became cultural touchstones as 1960s youth rebellion seeped up fashion brands, and leads the NYC Fair Trade Coalition, a group of fair-trade advocates comprised of students, small business owners, NGOs, and community-based organizations. Anita gave an excellent presentation at a recent Sunday platform here, and will be the featured speaker at our “Ethical Dilemmas” program on February 19, when her topic will be “Kids vs No Kids.” In her spare time, she enjoys hiking, biking, dancing, and going to movies.

THE GRADUATE

Chris Everett, Program Coordinator/Discussion Moderator

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ETHICAL

We are Ethical Culture NYC, a humanist community dedicated to ethics, social justice, and education since 1876.

We celebrate life’s joys, support each other through life’s crises, and work to make the world a better place.

Join us for hundreds of community and cultural programs where people meet to explore and embrace ethical living.

Learn more about us at our website, www.ETHICAL.nyc — or, better still, visit with us. You’re always welcome.