



WE'RE COMING BACK!
Platforms Return to Ceremonial Hall

On Sunday, April 4, several members and our speaker, Dr. Nori Rost, were back for a trial run. And it felt so good! Every member in the room that beautiful April morning had been vaccinated. We were thrilled to be safely together in person, sharing the morning with 65 others who joined via Zoom. The following Sunday, Leader Randy Best delivered another hybrid platform to the delight of our small, socially-distanced group along with the rest of our community online. Communications Coordinator Ed Beck expertly managed the technology center, essential to this hybrid offering. Ceremonial Hall can, in adhering to Covid guidelines, have as many as 25 people in the room.

Our Ethical family is invited to attend platforms again in Ceremonial Hall beginning June 6. Our comprehensive plans for opening will be shared with the membership. Let's bring some fresh energy to the building. So much has changed, but our Society remains a place where people can meet to explore and embrace ethical living.

Pictured Above: Randy Best, Scotty Embree, Joe Fashing, and Liz Singer, and several Zoom participants.

Below: Pat Debrovner and Elinore Kaplan, Ed Beck, Janet and Howard Rose, and Dr. Nori Rost

Not pictured, but also present, were Chuck Debrovner, Maggie Determann, and L Miller.



SUNDAYS AT THE SOCIETY

MAY 23

**MUSIC ON THE INSIDE:
 HARMONY AND HOPE
 IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

ALINA BLOOMGARDEN
Barbara Carlsen presides

Founder Alina Bloomgarden will share stories and a short film clip about the work of Music on the Inside (MOTI). The group brings music classes with professional musicians into New York's jails and prisons. Ms. Bloomgarden will describe the impact and lessons participants have learned along the way.

The program will begin with a flute

...Continued on page 7

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NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE
Here since 1876 and still here for YOU.

THEME OF THE MONTH ★ **LOOK FOR THE THEME-RELATED PROGRAMS IN THESE PAGES.**

This month we celebrate our Society's 145th anniversary and the man who started it all, Leader Felix Adler, on Founder's Day, May 2.

INSIDE

Leader's Desk.....2	Ethical Enrichment Programs.....4-5	Snapshots.....9
YEE, Social & Racial Justice Scholars..3	Sundays at Ethical.....6-7	Our Ethical Family.....10
Ethical Adventures.....3	Growing up in Ethical Culture.....8	The Voice of Ethical Culture.....11
	Ethical Essential Question.....8	Call to Action.....11



FROM THE LEADER'S DESK

DR. JOSEPH CHUMAN, LEADER

ETHICAL CULTURE AND THE PROBLEM OF HUMANITY

Ethical Culture was founded on May 15, 1876, and I've been asked this month to write on a topic relevant to our Founder's Day. But, before speaking of our past, I feel compelled to address the present.

As I write this article, the trial of George Floyd's murderer is taking place. The nature of the crime is such that we cannot turn away. The reality is stark; for more than nine minutes, a police officer, with total control over his subject, literally squeezed the life out of George Floyd as he lay prone on the pavement with his hands cuffed behind him, pleading for his life.

In that horrible event is the much broader question of humanity. George Floyd's murder at the hands of a white police officer is representative of the dehumanization of Black people in America that extends back more than 400 years. The pervasive history and reality of racism come together graphically, with indisputable clarity, in this one event. It is a murder with implications much greater than the discrete crime alone.

But the even larger question is why some people count and others count less. It is this disparity that has enabled history's worst crimes, among them slavery, genocide, and the torture of human beings. It also allows and justifies the pervasive oppression, political and economic, of one class of people over another.

The answers as to how and why are complex, but they need to compel our greatest attention. In my opinion, the answers relate to the ability to view, appreciate, and ultimately embrace the humanity of people who are different from ourselves. The inability to

appreciate the humanity of "the other" has enabled racism to flourish, not only here, but virtually in every society in which minorities are found, which means virtually all societies.

The most evident and painful exemplification of this phenomenon is manifest in the reality of genocide, the planned and orchestrated annihilation of thousands, tens of thousands, and millions of human beings. The progressive dehumanization of "the

relegation to the domestic sphere and a status of subordination were their due.

There were other criteria commensurate with humanity. Until modern times and the emergence of science, which eroded the authority of religion, most believed that humanity resulted in human beings, who are created "in the image of God." We are not God, but a reflection of the divine, and hence unique in all of nature. We thereby possess a soul, which other creatures lack, and in our soulfulness resides our humanity.

Felix Adler was a modern who accepted the deliverances of science and, with that, the acids that

stripped away the truths of religion. But Adler also lived in an urban environment in which the masses suffered under the excesses of the Industrial Revolution—pervasive poverty; wage slavery as workers who toiled at their machines in dangerous factories; teeming, overcrowded tenements; substandard education—in other words, conditions that were dehumanizing.

Unable to look to the religions to find our humanity, the question that Adler confronted—and it was urgent—is how can we ensure that human beings count? How can we safeguard the humanity of women and men, especially those who are different from us?

This, I submit, is the question that gave rise to Ethical Culture 145 years ago. It was the central question that preoccupied Adler. And I contend, given the endurance of racism, given the realities of war, mass slaughter, and human cruelty, it remains our question that continues to call out for an answer. How can we respond? How can we vouchsafe humanity?

“ *How can we ensure that human beings count? How can we safeguard the humanity of women and men, especially those who are different from us?* ”

other" is a necessary step along the way toward wholesale slaughter. The Nazis employed medical metaphors. The Jews were a disease infecting the Aryan body and needed to be excised—a plague, vermin, to be exterminated. The Hutus referred to their Tutsi victims as "cockroaches" before proceeding to slice to death 800,000 in a hundred days with knives and machetes. The Serbian genocidaires assessed their Bosnian victims in the Balkan wars of the 1990s as "Muslims" and not as human beings, and proceeded to murder and rape them without conscience.

How does one know the human from the non-human? Since at least the time of Aristotle, the criterion in the West was the attribute of impersonal reason. In the thought of white, European-originated males, Blacks lacked a capacity for abstract thought and were more like perpetual children than themselves. Human beings? Perhaps. But of a lesser type, sufficiently deficient to justify enslaving them. Women, also further down on the rationality spectrum,



AUDREY KINDRED
 Youth & Family Programs Coordinator

To RSVP, please contact Audrey at:
youngethicalexplorers@gmail.com.
 For more information about all of our youth programming, please visit ethical.nyc/youth.

May 2 | 1:30 – 3pm
 (on Zoom):

NURTURING HUMANITY

1st SUNDAY — Our Monthly Intergenerational Event!

Today, on World Laughter Day, we invite participants to share baby pictures and to prepare drawings, poems, and songs to share along these themes: **“What brings me laughter? What brings me tears?”**

Please email pictures to youngETHICALexplorers@gmail.com for inclusion in a “guess who?” slide show.

All Ethical NYC members are invited and encouraged to attend!

May 9 | 11am (on Zoom):

WOW MOM! DAY:

Acrostic Poems for our nurturers — and a chance to interview the people we think we know so well, our parents!

May 16 | 11am (in person):

PANDEMIC/EPIDEMIC FIELD TRIP FOR AIDS WALK NYC FUNDRAISER

The Three R’s of Pandemic/Epidemic times are “Remember, Reflect, Renew.” We’ll meet at NYC AIDS Memorial Park, 76 Greenwich Ave.

May 23 | 11am (on Zoom):

THE INVENTION AND LEGACY OF ETHICAL CULTURE

Do you know how your family discovered Ethical Culture?

May 30 | 11am (in person):

MINDFUL PATHWAYS FIELD TRIP

Brooklyn Navy Yard’s “Naval Cemetery Landscape.” We’ll meet at the Navy Yard Ferry. Bring a picnic lunch.

THEME THIS MONTH: MINDFUL MAY

Our deed this month is fundraising for **AIDS Walk NYC**, a virtual event this year on May 16. We hope you will join the team as a contributor. Instead of walking with masses of people as in past years, we are making our own field trip walk in conjunction with the event. Please RSVP if you would like to join and link here to donate: ny.aidswalk.net/ETHICAL.



Easy Walkers return!

CENTRAL PARK: THE GREAT LAWN AND SENECA VILLAGE

It’s time to return to Central Park to enjoy, experience, and learn more about this jewel of the city. We’ve planned a short, but interesting, stroll with ample time for welcome in-person conversation. In 1931 the huge above-ground York Hill receiving reservoir was decommissioned. Over the next two decades, it was gradually replaced by the Great Lawn and its baseball fields. The Great Lawn is in the exact geographic center of the Park. We will find some of the few remains of the old structure.

From there we proceed to the Park’s highest point, Summit Rock. This area is the site of Seneca Village. Started in 1825, the Village grew to around 225 residents by 1855, about 2/3 of them African Americans.

Details: We’ll meet in front of Ethical (64th Street and CPW) and walk north along CPW and in the Park. Even if you are fully vaccinated, we will all be masked.

If you plan to come along, please email either Bob (rbumcrot65@gmail.com) or Howard (howard@rosesquared.com). AND if you’d like to join us at a member’s roof for a picnic lunch after the walk, email us a.s.a.p. because only 10 can be accommodated.

Wednesday, May 26 | 10am
 (Rain date: Friday, May 28)



SOCIAL & RACIAL JUSTICE SCHOLARS

Ethical Youth Zoom-Program Monthly Sessions through June 2021

Pre-registration required

Free to ALL Tweens and Teens with commitment!

RSVPs and inquiries: youngETHICALexplorers@gmail.com

WATCH & CHAT SESSION

Wednesday | May 19 | 7–8:30pm

FOLLOW-UP DIALOGUE & DEED WORKSHOP

Sunday | May 23 | 4 – 6pm



ETHICAL ENRICHMENT

WEEKDAY PROGRAMS

All these ongoing programs are open to the public. Newcomers are always welcome. For an updated listing of all programs, visit our Zoom programs at the Ethical Online Live! website, <https://ethical.nyc/live>. We also email a Weekly Program Schedule, where, for applicable programs, you will find the topic and suggested reading of the week and other additional information.

MONDAY

MANAGING IN THE TIME OF COVID

COVID-19 has created challenges for all of us. Frank and Carol will address your concerns about managing day to day during this trying time.

Dr. Carol Portlock, oncologist, moderates 1st & 3rd Mondays. Dr. Frank Corigliano, clinical psychologist, moderates 2nd & 4th Mondays

Mondays | 2 – 3pm

TUESDAY

ETHICS IN THE NEWS

Join in the lively give-and-take on compelling issues and current events. Weekly topics and suggested readings.

Joe Fashing moderates

Tuesdays | 2 – 3pm

MEDITATION

Midweek meditation for relaxing body and mind.

Larry Hurst moderates

Tuesdays | 5 – 5:45pm

CAMARADERIE & GOOD CONVERSATION ON ISSUES PHILOSOPHICAL & NEWSWORTHY

We aim to illuminate the philosophical concepts and values that underlie the contemporary issues on which we focus in our discussions.

Joe Chuman, Leader, moderates

3rd Tues. | May 18 | 7 – 8pm

CONNECT WITH
ETHICAL CULTURE
AND SPREAD
THE WORD



Find us on Facebook
[@NYEthicalSociety](https://www.facebook.com/NYEthicalSociety).

Tell your friends you're
here [#EthicsInAction](https://twitter.com/EthicsInAction).

WEDNESDAY

DEBATING THE ISSUES OF THE DAY

Discuss significant events of the week.

Sy Amkraut moderates

Wednesdays | 11am – Noon

GREAT LITERATURE DISCUSSION

Read the selected works in advance and share your thoughts and observations.

Gunther Tielemans moderates

1st & 3rd Wed. | May 5 & 19 | 7 – 9pm

May 5: *The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling*, Henry Fielding

A foundling of mysterious parentage brought up by Mr. Allworthy on his country estate, Tom Jones is deeply in love with the seemingly unattainable Sophia Western, the beautiful daughter of the neighboring squire—though he sometimes succumbs to the charms of the local girls. When Tom is banished to make his own fortune and Sophia follows him to London to escape an arranged marriage, the adventure begins. A vivid panorama of 18th-century life, spiced with danger and intrigue, bawdy exuberance, and good-natured authorial interjections, *Tom Jones* is one of the greatest and most ambitious comic novels in English literature.

May 19: *A Persian Requiem*, Simin Daneshvar

Set in the northern Persian town of Shiraz in the last years of World War II when the British army occupied the south of Persia, this book chronicles the life of Zari, a traditional, anxious, and superstitious woman whose husband Yusef is an idealistic feudal landlord. This immensely moving story is a powerful indictment of the corrupting effects of colonialism. *A Persian Requiem* was the first novel written by an Iranian woman and, 16 reprints and half a million copies later, it remains the most widely read Persian novel. In Iran it has helped shape the ideas and attitudes of a generation in its revelation of the factors that contributed to the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

Coming up: *Sputnik Sweetheart*, Haruki Murakami, and *Maud Martha*, Gwendolyn Brooks

★ EXPLORING ETHICAL HUMANISM

Topic: What is truth?

These discussions of Ethical Culture beliefs and practices explore the history, ideals, and current interests of the Ethical Society community and our place in the philosophical/religious firmament.

Leader *Richard Koral, moderator*

1st Wed. | May 5 | 2 – 3pm

★ PATHWAYS TO ETHICAL CULTURE

Part 2: Felix Adler's Philosophical Challenge

Adler was a philosopher with a moral mission facing an urgent problem that we continue to confront in the modern world: How do we ensure that the human being has inherent worth? How do we philosophically guarantee that human beings are not merely expendable when doing away with them will serve a compelling purpose? Adler believed that traditional religion did not effectively do this, nor could science. Where did he turn to find the answer?

Leaders *Joe Chuman and Richard Koral, alternating moderators*

5-part Series Mar. – July

3rd Wed. | May 19 | 2 – 3pm

T H U R S D A Y

POETRY CIRCLE

Share poems of your choice. We'll discuss a line, a word, an image. Send your poems in advance, so they can be shared on screen: ethicaloutlook@gmail.com.

Elinore Kaplan moderates

1st Thurs. | May 6 | 2 – 3:30pm

STORYTELLING CIRCLE

One of the oldest traditions around the world is storytelling — folktales, fairytales, historic tales, family tales, etc. Bring a story and we'll gather 'round the virtual campfire. Your topic suggestions are welcomed.

Doris Hart moderates

1st & 3rd Thurs. | May 6 & 20 | 5 – 6pm

POTPOURRI - FUN & GAMES

This mixed bag features games (like Trivial Pursuit!), hobbies (paintings, photos, etc.), favorite anecdotes (such as your favorite trips), viewings, discussions, and more. This month we'll play a game or two. Come and join the fun! And tell us what you'd like to do in a future potpourri.

Elinore Kaplan moderates

2nd Thurs. | May 13 | 2 – 3pm

ETHICS AND THE THEATER

SKELETON CREW

By **Dominique Morisseau**

It's 2008, and Detroit's auto industry is reeling. In a small stamping factory that could soon be the recession's next victim, a makeshift family of workers bicker, flirt, and support one another as they find ways to survive, even if that means breaking rules — or laws. Following the play-reading Betsy Ungar will lead an audience discussion of the ethical issues in the play.

Patricia Bruder Debrowner, producer, stars

2nd Thurs. | May 13 | 7 – 8:30pm

COLLOQUY: "SILENCE"

Abe Markman moderates

Share your reflections on the topic based on quotes, parables, poems, etc. presented by the moderator. There are no right or wrong responses, just your individual response shared in a contemplative atmosphere.

Bob Berger facilitates

3rd Thurs. | May 20 | 2 – 3pm

GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Henryka Komanska & Carol Van Deusen

In this session, a pair of "dialogue partners" respond to questions about growing up, career, interests, adventures— including one about their experience at Ethical NYC, followed by a Q&A. For members, the programs are recorded each month, constituting an archive in the Members Section of the website.

If you'd like to be a dialogue partner, email Elinore Kaplan at ethicaloutlook@gmail.com.

Larry Hurst & Elinore Kaplan moderate

4th Thurs. | May 27 | 2pm

F R I D A Y

PROACTIVE MEDITATION & DEEP LISTENING

In this guided experiential session, we first take time to relax body and mind in order to sense how we really are in each moment. We allow ourselves to focus on listening deeply and empathically for what may be calling for our attention. We stay present with that. This proactive approach to meditating can open up fresh ideas and connections. Larry is a certified trainer and workshop leader with the International Focusing Institute.

Larry Hurst moderates

Fridays | 2 – 3pm

SUNDAYS AT THE SOCIETY

PLATFORM TALKS | 11 – 12:15pm

Join us to hear informed and inspiring speakers, including our own Leaders, while enjoying music provided by David Gracia, our Music Director.

PLATFORM PLUS | 12:15 – 12:45pm

After Platform Talks, enjoy this purely social half-hour to chat with each other.

MAY
2



THE COMMUNITY WE MAKE

DR. RICHARD KORAL

Barbara Carlsen presides

On the day of our Annual Membership Meeting, let us reflect on what we build and what we have. Let's remember that we comprise a unique community with a special legacy and a boundless future.



DR. RICHARD KORAL has been a Leader at the New York Society for Ethical Culture since 2017. Richard holds degrees from New York University and New York Law School, and a Doctor of Ministry in interfaith pastoral counseling from the Hebrew Union College. He is the Leader Consultant to the Social Service Board and numerous committees in the Society. Active with the American Ethical Union, Richard served on its Board as president from 2012 to 2015. He also serves as part-time Leader for the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island.

This week's shared charity is AIDS Walk NYC, the world's largest and most visible HIV/AIDS fundraising event. The charity was "born" in 1986 and was nurtured by the passions of New York's diverse communities of art, culture, and commerce so ravaged by the early HIV epidemic. It was steered for the long haul by activists who knew that ending HIV/AIDS would require more than fighting the virus.

It would also require confronting the social ills that fuel it—racism, sexism, homophobia, and poverty.

This year's virtual event on Sunday, May 16, will include live, televised, in-person viewing-parties from Central Park's Bethesda Fountain and Golden Gate Park's National AIDS Memorial Grove. The event benefits dozens of Tri-State Area AIDS service organizations.

MAY
9



FELIX ADLER'S PROBLEM — AND OUR OWN

DR. JOE CHUMAN, LEADER

Maggie Determann presides

Ethical Culture was born out of the ferment and problems of its time. The catalyst for its creations were the evils wrought by the Industrial Revolution—workers without rights or protections laboring in factories, growing poverty under the oppression of robber barons, the exploitation of children in factories, and a monstrous wealth gap.

The problem of that age was how to ensure that human beings counted for something. How could the humanity of women, men, and children be safeguarded? That remains our problem. Growing awareness of structural racism lays bare the reality that some lives count more than others. The pandemic has unmasked similar realities, bringing to clarity the division between the

privileged and the unprivileged. "Essential workers" is arguably a euphemism for "expendable workers."

But Adler was also aware of philosophical challenges the modern age presented. Darwin had brilliantly shown how human beings evolved from earlier forms of life, devoid of a Creator who endowed us with a soul. But by placing us in the seamless kingdom of nature, Darwin deprived human beings of any special status that religion had provided, religion that Adler and fellow moderns could no longer believe in.

Adler's challenge was to rescue the dignity, the worth, and the humanity of people from the maws of social oppression and soulless science that deprived men and women of what makes us human. Ethical Culture was the answer.

I will explore further what lay behind Adler's problem and how he creatively tried to resolve it.



DR. JOE CHUMAN has been a part-time Leader of the New York Society for Ethical Culture since 2008. As an activist, Dr. Chuman has worked on behalf of human

rights and civil liberties and in opposition to the death penalty, as well as on many other progressive causes. He founded the Northern New Jersey group of Amnesty International in 1974, and currently serves as president of the Bergen County Sanctuary for Asylum Seekers. He recently retired as the Leader of the Ethical Culture Society of Bergen County, a community he served since 1974.

This week's shared charity is AIDS Walk NYC. (See May 2.)



Check out our channel.

[YouTube.com/NYSEthicalCulture](https://www.youtube.com/NYSEthicalCulture)



DISCOVERING YOUR RACE, GENDER, AND SEXUAL BIASES WORKSHOP

DR. BENTLEY GIBSON,

Sarah Sprott presides

Dr. Gibson, CEO of the Bias Adjuster and founder of the Discovering Your Race, Gender and Sexuality Implicit Biases workshop, will present the latest research on implicit bias in order to increase awareness about how it impacts real-world behaviors and relationships. Prior to attending, the audience will be invited to take the Project Implicit bias test available at Ethical.nyc. The audience will learn effective strategies to mitigate implicit biases so that they may develop more positive attitudes.



DR. BENTLEY GIBSON is Associate Professor of Psychology at Georgia Highlands College. In 2018, she founded The Bias Adjuster, LLC., a diversity and inclusion consulting/training company that educates social and professional groups about implicit bias. Her research and trainings focus on how these biases develop and their related behaviors. She uses strategies that she and other social scientists have found effectively address and reduce implicit bias. Dr. Gibson earned a BA in Psychology from Spelman College, and a PhD in Psychology (Cognition and Development) at Emory University. Her research focuses on the development of explicit and implicit racial and gender attitudes across cultures, on factors associated with biases, and on mitigating implicit bias.

MAY 23

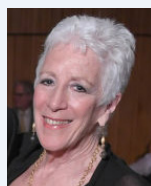
MUSIC ON THE INSIDE: HARMONY & HOPE IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

...Continued from page 1

solo by Dawud Rahman who was able to keep his spirit alive through music over the 46 years he spent in prison. He now has weekly one-on-one music mentorships through MOTI with a flute and saxophone professional.

Today's Platform is part workshop. Jazz singer and MOTI teacher Antoinette Montague will lead attendees in a call-and-response and share her experience teaching in the prisons with MOTI. She will also guide attendees in writing their own blues, as she does in the prisons. The program will culminate with more live-on-Zoom music by Dawud Rahman, this time on saxophone with a piano track he created.

Questions and comments will be welcome afterwards as time allows.



ALINA BLOOMGARDEN is the founder of Music on the Inside Inc. (MOTI), a nonprofit charitable organization working with professional musicians to bring music education, mentorships, and hope to individuals impacted by incarceration. She was a director and producer at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts for over 23 years. Proposing that jazz had a rightful place at the country's preeminent performing arts center, Alina was the initiating producer of Jazz at Lincoln Center, bringing Wynton Marsalis on as Artistic Advisor. It's a role he now serves for MOTI, which also engages many other distinguished musicians who share empathy and concern for those impacted by the criminal justice system. Alina is motivated by the power of music to break down barriers and build immediate connection to our shared humanity, particularly needed by those emerging from the punishing and soul-crushing experience of incarceration.

MAY 30



THE PAST IS THE PRESENT: HISTORY, STORYTELLING, AND THE AMERICAN SLAVERY PROJECT

JUDY TATE

Richard Koral presides

Judy Tate will talk about the American Slavery Project (ASP), a theatrical response to revisionism in American conversation about enslavement and its aftermath. NYSEC is ASP's partner for this Spring's season of thought-provoking, enhanced audio-dramas. Judy will take us on her storytelling journey, exploring how what seems long ago still reverberates today.



JUDY TATE, besides being Co-founder and Producing Artistic Director of the American Slavery Project, is a Founding Artistic Director of Stargate Theatre, a work-readiness theater program developed at Manhattan Theatre Club (MTC) in which justice-involved young men write, rehearse, and perform an original work on one of MTC's stages to develop their voices and social skills. Judy is a four-time Daytime Emmy Award-winning writer and Writers Guild of America award recipient. She has written scripts for several TV shows including *Days of Our Lives*, *As the World Turns*, and *Another World*. Her plays have been produced and presented in theaters around the country. Judy teaches at NYU, Drew University, Manhattan Theatre Club, Theatre Development Fund, and Harlem Dramatic Writers Workshop.

"Deed above creed." –Felix Adler
These words of our founder explain why we say of the Society and its members, "Ethics in Action since 1876."



The shared charity for May 16, 23, and 30 is **Music on the Inside**. The organization works with professional musicians to bring the transformative power of music education, mentorship, and hope to individuals who are incarcerated or facing the challenges of reentry. A statement on their website tells us: *The heart is our first instrument. It is our music on the inside.*



GROWING UP IN ETHICAL CULTURE

By Ellen McBride

Alexandra Martin

It was a pleasure to learn that you, one of our newest members, are actually a returning member. Please tell me more.

What was it like to grow up in an Ethical Culture family? For example, when other kids asked what your religion was, what did you say and explain? How did you feel when religious holidays were celebrated by those you knew?

My family was not religious in the traditional sense. Instead, there was an open exploration of the concept of religions around the world in history and in contemporary times. My father followed Buddhism, and my mother did not follow an organized religion but was drawn to Ethical Culture immediately. In addition to being a member of the youth program here, I attended Hebrew school for a few years at my request, despite not being Jewish. I was curious, and my mother called around to many congregations before finding a reform congregation that happily allowed me to attend Hebrew school.

The subject of religion did not come up often, but when it did, I simply said that we weren't religious. However, despite not being "religious," we were always very reflective of morality, ethics, and the exploration of who we were within ourselves, and within our roles in society.

Did you participate in the Ethical Youth programs?

I was in the Children's Program, the equivalent of today's Young Ethical Explorers.

Did you raise your children as Ethical Culturists?

While we only recently became members again, we have indeed raised our children as Ethicists.

How did your mother come to Ethical Culture? Did it have anything to do with her being a parent?

My mother came to the New York Society for Ethical Culture in the early 1980's. I was about seven or eight years old. I believe she was looking for a more formal education of ethics

for me, as well as a community of people who were supportive and also embraced the reflection of what it means to be an Ethicist.

Do you think that being an Ethical Culturist influenced your own parenting?

Definitely. I believe that I have raised my children with a thoughtfulness about their role in society, as well as a strong sense of who they are. Compassion, understanding, supporting the local community along with the community at large have all been important in their upbringing. I have modeled ethical contemplation and encouraged it to them as well.

How has being an Ethical Culturist shaped your life as perhaps differently from others?

That is a tough one. I'm not sure I can compare, but I can say that the idea of ethics—behaving in what I believe is following my ethical compass—has always been at the forefront of my mind. I'd like to believe that my ethical compass would have

been strong even without an Ethical Culturist upbringing, but I know that it was strengthened by being a part of the Ethical Culture Society.

“ The idea of ethics—behaving in what I believe is following my ethical compass—has always been at the forefront of my mind. ”

Was there a point where it sort of all came together for you in terms of seeing yourself as part of the Ethical Culture Movement?

As a child, I felt part of something extraordinary and important, and some of the outreach work we did (including painting Central Park benches), really brought that home for me. More recently, the dissociation I have felt since the pandemic brought me back to that feeling of the importance of a community that shares my ethics and spiritual beliefs.

Are your husband and children totally new to the Society and the Ethical Culture Movement?

Yes, on both counts. My husband, Aaron, though new, is loving it. And time will tell how our kids — Xander and Sebastian, both teens — take to it. It's up to them. Naturally, given my own experience, I hope they do.



ETHICAL ESSENTIALS QUIZ

Q: Not long after the founding of the New York Society of Ethical Culture in 1876, three other Ethical Culture Societies were established. In which cities and in what years?

Answer on p. 11

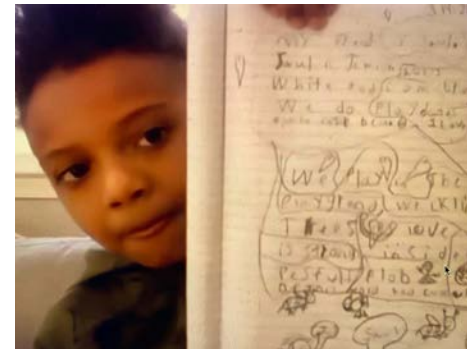


REMEMBERING THE TRIANGLE SHIRTWAIST FACTORY FIRE...

YEE friends **Marifer** and **Olina**, both 11, and YEE Coordinator **Audrey Kindred**, engaged in a public deed, connecting past and present ethical issues. As part of the March 25th annual tradition to commemorate the victims of the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, activists visit 146 addresses in lower New York to create chalk memorials of the fire victims who lived there. The fire was NYC's most deadly workplace event until 9/11. The girls chaked for Annie Altman, a 16-year-old laborer who sewed elegant shirtwaist dresses for upper class women in the then state-of-the-art building that still stands at Washington and Green Streets near Washington Square Park.

Olina and Marifer recently collaborated to educate their fellow Young Ethical Explorers in the issues of girls' education worldwide, and to create the fundraiser and awareness campaigns for girls' education internationally through the Heifer Foundation.

For more about this moment in history, visit: <https://ethical.nyc/remember-the-triangle-fire/>.



SOCIAL & RACIAL JUSTICE SCHOLARS...

In March, in collaboration with the American Slavery Project (ASP), YEE expanded to create this youth study group. Here are pictures from our first meeting with **Simone Barros**, ASP filmmaker and producer, YEE's **Audrey Kindred**. (See p.3)

YEE "CROSS-RACIAL FRIENDSHIP" STORIES...

Jai shared his illustrated story.



PLAY INTO POEMS...

Special guest, **Annie Lanzillotto** visited YEE kids as part of a collaboration with Street Cry Inc. and City Lore. Annie is a talented author, poet, performance artist, actor, director, and activist.

Capturing the Moment

We love to share pictures of our activities and the people who enjoy them. So share yours! We publish photos of members and friends here in *Ethical Outlook*, in flyers, and on our website. If you do not want your picture used, please notify the editor.

ETHICAL AFFINITY GROUPS

We partner with organizations that share our commitment to social justice and the environment. Come learn about their work and how you can participate in ethical action.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

- American Indian Community House
- Formerly Fundamentalists
- Amnesty International
- League of Women Voters
- Feminist Freethinkers
- My Own Book
- Police Reform Organizing Project

ENVIRONMENTAL

- 350NYC
- Climate Reality Project
- Drawdown NYC
- Food & Water Watch
- Beyond Plastics



OUR ETHICAL FAMILY

WELCOME... We welcome our two newest members, **Sandra** and **Burt Freeman**. Those of us who have been volunteering with the My Own Book (MOB) organization, the not-for-profit founded by the Freeman-Harrison Family Foundation in 1999, led by Burt, have already met him. Burt joined the NYSEC Social Service Board to create a partnership that would ensure the program's continuation. In 2001 he received the Frank B. Prescod Community Service Award for his work with MOB. The Society created the award to honor those who perform good works away from the limelight.



Now he and his wife Sandra — vice-president of My Own Book and a retired speech and theater professor — are joining the Society. Burt is a retired lawyer. They share a deep love of learning. Both are members of the CUNY Lifelong Peer Learning Program, where students themselves organize, prepare, teach, and attend classes in subjects of mutual intellectual and professional interests. Their long friendship with Carole and Jerry Chamlin, fellow CUNY students, led the couple to the New York Society for Ethical Culture. Burt and Sandra have two adult children, Marjorie and Kenneth.

CONDOLENCES... Members extend condolences to the family of **Jack Oisher** who passed away in late March. Jack leaves daughter Sharon, son-in-law Christopher, and grandson, Gabe; and son, Larry, daughter-in-law Randi, and grandson Gregory. Jack was a frequent participant in our Leader Lunch discussions and our Easy Walkers group outings.

My Father By Sharon Oisher Stanley



My father, Jack Oisher, passed away on March 31, 2021 at age 94. He was born and bred in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn. He enjoyed a great life, and we — my brother and I and our families — enjoyed it with him for a nice, long time.

Jack lived and died doing it "his way" ("My Way" was a good enough motto for Paul Anka to have written, Sinatra to have sung, and Dad to have lived by). A self-made man, my father worked hard, married his love, raised a family, and enjoyed his retirement. After a 40-year marriage with my mother, he found love again with his girlfriend of 27 years, whom he also outlived. He traveled all over the world for business and pleasure. He loved opera, ballet, classical music, world history, ballroom dancing and economics.

An avid reader, there was no "light reading" for him. History of The Russian Revolution, Classical Artists of the Impressionist Period, and The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche, were just a few of the hundreds of books Dad read and reread. An avid tennis player, cyclist, jogger, and walker, Jack enjoyed sports and exercise—starting every day with sit-ups, push-ups, and weight-curls. During major league football season, he never missed a game. He loved Manhattan. He was a true New Yorker.

How fortunate we were to have had our father as part of our life for so long. Thanks for sticking around, Dad. We love you very much.

As per Dad's request, there will be no service or ceremony at this time.

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Happy Birthday to...

BARBARA CARLSEN, CAROLINE	LOU LIFSON.....	5/12
DEBROVNER,	CAROLE CHAMLIN.....	5/15
ELLEN MENDELSON,	JANET ROSE and BOB TAPP.....	5/21
and DICK VAN DEUSEN.....	MARIA SOLE.....	5/24
EVA YACHNES.....	JC SOBEL.....	5/27
HAZEL MAY.....	KATHLEEN HERRERA.....	5/29
JAMES FARER.....	ALICE KAHN LADAS.....	5/30



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ETHICS IN THE NEWS



Among the politically informed, *The Hill* has become a “must read.” For the last two years it’s been ranked second among all US news sites for political readership (first is CNN). As of 2020, The Hill’s YouTube channel had 1,100,000 subscribers (ahead of Politico, Axios, and Bloomberg Politics). Their weekly readership has increased to 11 million.

And, not for the first time, **Leader Joe Chuman** has had an article published in *The Hill*. This one, headlined “A Livable Wage and Human Dignity,” appeared on Saturday, March 27. At the end of the article he is identified as an Ethical Culture Leader as well as a professor at Columbia University.

Joe writes, “The fate of the poor is consigned to the vicissitudes of the politics and the market. Encoding a \$15 minimum wage into federal law will be a major step toward structurally reducing poverty in America,” pointing out that 40% of the working public have less than \$400 in savings. He says, “we should not be speaking of a “minimum wage,” but a “living wage. The right to a livable wage is a fundamental human right,” supporting that statement by reminding readers of a specific paragraph in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights of 1948:

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.



Saying that, “The standard is the preservation and protection of human dignity,” Joe goes on to make readers aware that in 1960 the UN introduced two human rights covenants to add to the Declaration: the International Covenant of the Civil and Political Rights—which was soon ratified by the United States—and the Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights — which, 50 years later, has still not been ratified by the United States. Canada ratified it. Europeans have ratified it. Joe explains that “the official position of the United States government is that economic rights are not rights.”

He concludes by emphasizing that “We

need to move toward the equitable redistribution of wealth and enforce government’s role to ensure that equity so that all our inhabitants can live a life of dignity. A federally guaranteed livable wage would be a critical step in that direction.”

Full article: <https://thehill.com/opinion/finance/545226-a-livable-wage-and-human-dignity>



Joe’s voice, as a professor in the religion department of Columbia University and a Leader at the New York Society of Ethical Culture, was also recently heard in, of all publications, the *Iranian Labour News Agency*, where he is quoted as saying: “The pandemic is truly a global issue in which virtually no nation is spared. It requires a global response and international coordination.”

He is cited as having said that he agrees with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michele Bachelet, who calls for the easing of sanctions to enable nations to be able to purchase the vaccines necessary to protect their populations, and that he believes “the preservation of health, as with providing assistance in the case of famine, should supersede political concerns, international disputes, and war. It is, again, a fundamental human right of the greatest moment, and in the case of Covid-19, urgency.”

ETHICS IN ACTION

WHY CALLS TO ACTION MATTER



We’re living in a crucial period in our country’s history. Our very democracy is

under threat from ever-growing wealth inequality, racial injustice, and the escalating impact of the climate crisis—all exacerbated by the pandemic.

A few minutes of your time, on a regular basis, can truly be influential. Whether by making calls and writing letters to politicians, helping the needy, or educating yourself about the environment and

changing your behavior, you absolutely do make a difference!

This 6-minute video, produced by our friends at Indivisible, demonstrates the value of your voice — your phone calls, in this case, just one type of action we’ll highlight. Watch and then commit to responding to our Calls to Action when your deeds are needed!



ETHICAL ESSENTIALS QUIZ - ANSWER
(See question on p.8)

A: The first three Ethical Culture Societies to form in the United States after the New York Society were in Chicago (1883), Philadelphia (1885), and St. Louis (1886).

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.

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