

Fall 2020 Cultural Arts Virtual Speakers



Confronting an Urgent Climate Crisis: The Facts & What We Can Do

Dr. Stephen Pekar
Monday, September 14

Nearly two years ago, the UN International Panel on Climate Change issued a stunning report stating that we have 12 years or less to avert far more serious climate disruption. Already we are seeing catastrophic fires in Australia and California and extreme storms and droughts around the world. Climate scientist Prof. Stephen Pekar will explain the science, the dramatic steps needed to address climate change fast enough, and steps all of us can take today as individuals.



When the World Feels Like a Scary Place: Essential Conversations for Anxious Parents and Worried Kids

Dr. Abigail Gerwitz
Thursday, September 24

Child psychologist Abigail Gerwitz will discuss how to help your child deal with the worries, stress, and other negative emotions caused by real problems, from the pandemic to active shooter drills to climate change. Talking and listening are essential for nurturing resilient, confident, and compassionate children. In her new book, *When the World Feels Like a Scary Place*, Dr. Gerwitz provides tips about how to stay calm in an anxious world; how parents can read the signs of anxiety in their children; and how parents can make sure that their own anxiety doesn't color the conversation.



The Use of Force and the Police: Understanding the Use of Force through the Constitution and Legal Framework

James Coll
Monday, October 5

A retired NYPD detective, James Coll, is currently an adjunct professor of American and Constitutional history at Hofstra University and Nassau Community College. Coll will discuss the legal framework relating to police use of force and how the Supreme Court has interpreted the Constitution on this important issue. As a police officer, James had a long history of saving lives, including plucking a woman out of the East River, rappelling down the side of a skyscraper to help workers when a 17th-floor scaffolding gave way, talking distraught people out of jumping off bridges, and rescuing people in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake.



The Blessing and the Curse: Jewish People and Their Books in the Twentieth Century

Adam Kirsch
Monday, October 12

From the vast emigration of Jews out of Eastern Europe to the Holocaust to the creation of Israel, the 20th century transformed Jewish life. In his new book, Adam Kirsch explores the response of Jews to these profound changes, as seen in their literature and memoirs. From Franz Kafka to Philip Roth, Primo Levi to Yehuda Amichai and Tony Kushner, Kirsch argues that during this transformative period, literature offered Jews a new way to think about what it means to be Jewish in the modern world. Adam Kirsch is the author of several books, has taught at Columbia University, and writes for *The New Yorker* and *Tablet*.



Once a Girl, Always a Boy: A Family Memoir of a Transgender Journey

Jo Ivester - Thursday, October 22

Jeremy Ivester is a transgender man. Thirty years ago, his parents welcomed him into the world as their daughter. As a child, he preferred the toys and games our society views as masculine. *Once a Girl, Always a Boy* is Jeremy's journey from childhood through coming out as transgender and eventually emerging as an advocate for the transgender community. This is not only Jeremy's story but also that of his family, told from multiple perspectives—his own viewpoint and those of his siblings and of his parents. This is a story of acceptance in a world not quite ready to accept.



Famous Father Girl: A Memoir of Growing Up Bernstein

**Jamie Bernstein -
Monday, October 26**

The composer of West Side Story, chief conductor of the NY Philharmonic, a friend of the powerful, and the life of every party, Leonard Bernstein was an American celebrity. But to his daughter Jamie, Bernstein was above all the compulsive teacher and father who taught his daughter to love the world in all its beauty and complexity..



The Jews Should Keep Quiet: Franklin D. Roosevelt, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, and America's Response to the Holocaust

**Dr. Rafael Medoff
Monday, November 9**

On the anniversary of Kristallnacht, Dr. Rafael Medoff will discuss difficult truths about the U.S. response to the Holocaust. In his new book, Medoff writes that FDR's administration deliberately suppressed refugee immigration far below the legal limits. His administration also rejected pleas to drop bombs on the railways to Auschwitz, even while American planes were bombing targets only a few miles away. What motivated FDR? Medoff explores President Roosevelt's private sentiments toward Jews. Director of the David Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies, Dr. Rafael Medoff is the author of more than 20 books about the Holocaust and Jewish history.

In Partnership with the Atlanta JCC Book Festival:

**Jodi Picoult - September 23
Deepak Chopra - September 30
Colin Quinn - October 8
Steve Madden - October 15
Joan Lunden - November 8
Michael J. Fox - November 19**



Dare to Speak: Defending Free Speech for All

**Suzanne Nossel
Monday, November 2**

Controversies over campus lectures. Cancel culture versus censorship. The daily hazards and debates surrounding free speech dominate headlines and fuel social media storms. In an era where one tweet can launch—or end—your career, learning to maneuver the fast-changing, treacherous landscape of public discourse has never been more urgent. As a leading voice in support of free expression, Suzanne Nossel will speak about how we can maintain a democratic debate that is open, but also respectful of a diversity of backgrounds and opinions. Suzanne Nossel is the CEO of PEN America, the foremost organization working to protect and advance human rights, free expression and literature. She has also served as the Chief Operating Officer of Human Rights Watch and as Executive Director of Amnesty International USA; and held senior State Department positions in the Clinton and Obama administrations.



Hidden Heretics: Jewish Doubt in the Digital Age

**Dr. Ayala Fader
Monday, November 16**

What would you do if you questioned your religious faith, but revealing your doubts would cause you to lose your family and the only way of life you had ever known? In her new book, Prof. Fader tells the fascinating, often heart-wrenching stories of married ultra-Orthodox Jewish men and women in 21st century New York who lead "double lives" in order to protect those they love. While they no longer believe fully, these hidden heretics continue to live in their families and religious communities, even as they surreptitiously break Jewish commandments and explore forbidden secular worlds in person and online. Ayala Fader is professor of anthropology at Fordham University..

**For more information, please email
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