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On the Meaning of Sanctuary

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SPECIAL ISSUE ON IMPACTED COMMUNITIES



Self-Care in the Aftermath of the 2016 Presidential Election

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On the Meaning of Sanctuary

Juli Kempner, Esq., LMSW
NASW-NYC Executive Director

In recent weeks my thoughts have turned frequently to the meaning of sanctuary. It is described in the dictionary first in a religious sense, since the word sanctuary comes from the Latin "sanctorum." Originally a sanctuary was a building set apart for holy worship, and included "immunity from punishment." in that "fugitives or debtors" enjoyed immunity from arrest in certain churches. Exceptions were made in England in cases of treason and sacrilege. The second reference is to a "place of refuge or protection," its most accepted current use.

We hear about Sanctuary in the press – a sanctuary city or state, usually defined by a governmental construct. Recent Executive Orders have threatened to remove federal funding from cities that enact sanctuary policies, which limit cooperation of local law enforcement with federal immigration authorities. On March 28, 2017, the Attorney General promised to make good on the President's threat to cut off or restrict certain funds, including Justice Department grant programs, requiring certification of compliance with federal laws which require cooperation between local, state and federal agencies with requests from the Immigration and Naturalization Service. In addition, we have heard about promises for the "wall" between the U.S. and Mexico (as of now funding is apparently put on hold for the foreseeable future), alleging that it will make the U.S. "safer," as well as the travel and refugee bans that we are all now familiar with. The message of this Administration is clear – you are not safe here or welcome if you are a person of color, a Muslim, a poor person, a person with different abilities – the list is long of who is not welcome here, expanding far beyond communities which have already been marginalized.

New York has always declared itself to be a sanctuary city, and the potential exists for New York to become a sanctuary state. In February, Assembly Democrats passed a bill establishing New York as a sanctuary state – but this has not yet passed the Senate. However, this belies the fact that declaring ourselves to be sanctuary jurisdictions often does little to protect the most vulnerable and most marginalized among us – Black immigrants face the highest risk of deportation. And Black people targeted disproportionately by the police, end up in the criminal justice system for the most minor of infractions. This will never be a sanctuary for youth of color rounded up by the police. And for those detained at Rikers Island who are subjected to daily abuses and humiliations, and their families, how can we call this a sanctuary?

For me, a sanctuary conjures up images of a space, or a frame of mind that is free from oppression of any kind, including freedom from being targeted, persecuted, or denied equal privileges under the law, for any designation such as being Black, or Latino, or LGBTQI, or a particular religion, or being differently abled. It also includes freedom from hunger and poverty; state surveillance, harassment, and violence; domestic violence; the school to prison pipeline; from being criminalized for defending yourself from an abuser; and freedom from laws that are designed to criminalize people for being of color. That is just the list of "freedom from." My concept of sanctuary also includes positive attributes: empowered communities with sustainable economies where people thrive with equal access to quality education, health care, and housing, just for starters. And it includes respect, acceptance, and healing

and nurturing environments.

Have I described something that sounds like a "Utopia", or a "Nirvana?" No, I have merely accepted a self-imposed challenge of re-imagining what we would like sanctuary to be in practice, and I urge you to join me. Rather than rely solely on government and legislation, let's create sanctuaries of our own. Since it originated in places of worship – for me it is imbued with a kind of spirituality, or sacredness. It is a space we create so that we can be replenished and rejuvenated. These are the spaces that we build in a movement for social justice. Now is the time to rely on ourselves and our communities, pooling resources and developing new ones, rethinking old alliances and strategies that once seemed natural.

There is no "us" and "them." This is particularly relevant for us as social workers. There is no one to be "saved," not in a paternalistic sense. And there are no saviors, in fact there are few leaders. This is a time to confront power and privilege at every step along the way. We can create safety in our own communities, in all public and private spaces. This kind of sanctuary comes with a wall – a wall against fear, hatred, and oppression. I can only imagine what that would look like.

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¹<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=sanctuary>

²<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sanctuary>



Self-Care in the Aftermath of the 2016 Presidential Election

**Christiana Best-Giacomini, PhD, LMSW
NASW-NYC, 1st Vice President**

As a woman of color, an immigrant, and one who is devoted to the eradication of structural racism, I was floored by the election results last November. The shock and disbelief intensified as campaign rhetoric transformed into various Executive Orders, Presidential Memoranda, and calls for legislation by the new Administration in January, 2017. Some of which are widely known such as the repeal of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the Immigration Ban (both versions) and the Presidential Memorandum entitled “Mexico City Policy” otherwise known as the Global Gag Rule, which punishes women globally by cutting services, increasing fees and closing clinics that provide reproductive services for women. Many of these clinics are often located in remote and economically disadvantaged communities.

As a clinician, I recognized that I was in the depression stage of the grieving process, where I remained for some time. Like many of my social work colleagues, I began to reach for community and move out of my self-imposed isolation. My work on the New York City (NYC) Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) committees was critical to my gradual recovery and path to healing.

It began when I decided to participate in the January meeting of the Trauma and Disaster Committee. The Chair of the committee provided a space for social workers and NASW members throughout NYC to come and share our thoughts and feelings in a safe and supportive environment. Social workers spoke their minds, sharing with each other our hopes, fears and anxieties about the impact of the newly elected Administration. At some point, the sharing transitioned to strategic planning – developing ways to cope with the draconian policies espoused during the campaign and beginning to be enacted.

This forum was unlike any other I had participated in a long time because it was focused on self-care. Usually when social workers come together we tend to keep the focus on our clients. However, this time, we focused on ourselves and our own personal world – our families, friends, loved ones – as well as our clients. This group session was healing for many in the room. It supported and nurtured our grieving and loss processes. Consequently, many of us were able to leave the room, more able than when we arrived, to work with our clients.

While it is our responsibility as social workers to stand up for the people we work with, we must also be our own champions. This means taking time for self-care, for emotional and psychological healing, connecting with people who are supportive, and finding healthy ways to redirect and discharge our pain, anger, frustrations and disappointments. In particular, those of us fighting structural racism need to replenish our energy from time to time, in order to do the work effectively; we also need to live in and/or create communities that support our work and allow us to live life with integrity.

In addition to engaging in self-care activities, I was also able to redirect my anger, grief and fear by throwing myself into a project. For me, this project is also connected to highlighting structural racism in my work community. The Historical Child Welfare Timeline exhibit (“Timeline exhibit”) focuses on the legislative history of the child welfare system from the 1800s to present day. It emphasizes racial disproportionality

and disparity within the child welfare system. The Timeline exhibit tells the story of the genesis of the U.S. child welfare system and its evolution from an informal to a formal system. It traces the impact the English Poor Laws had on setting the foundation of our social services system and the philosophy towards the poor and people of color then and now.

The Timeline exhibit displays an analysis of over three centuries of child welfare legislation, policies and trends present in the United States. The Timeline exhibit is divided into five different time periods, with each time period placed on a different structure. For example, it begins with pictures and narratives on a totem telling the story of African-American children, First Nation children and poor white children. The totem is a very large structure that includes images from and of the following: the slavery era in the United States; the Colored Orphan Asylum; Indian boarding schools and the “Orphan Train” era (the beginning of the first formal foster care system); Mary Ellen Wilson (the first recorded child abuse case); and Jane Addams (Nobel Peace Prize winner and co-founder of Hull House).

There are also three large panels which chronicle the evolution of child welfare in the 20th and 21st centuries. For example, the first panel includes pictures and information on the development of the Children’s Bureau, the Social Security Act of 1935, the passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, and the significant achievement of Dr. Kempe and his colleagues with the discovery of the Battered Child Syndrome.

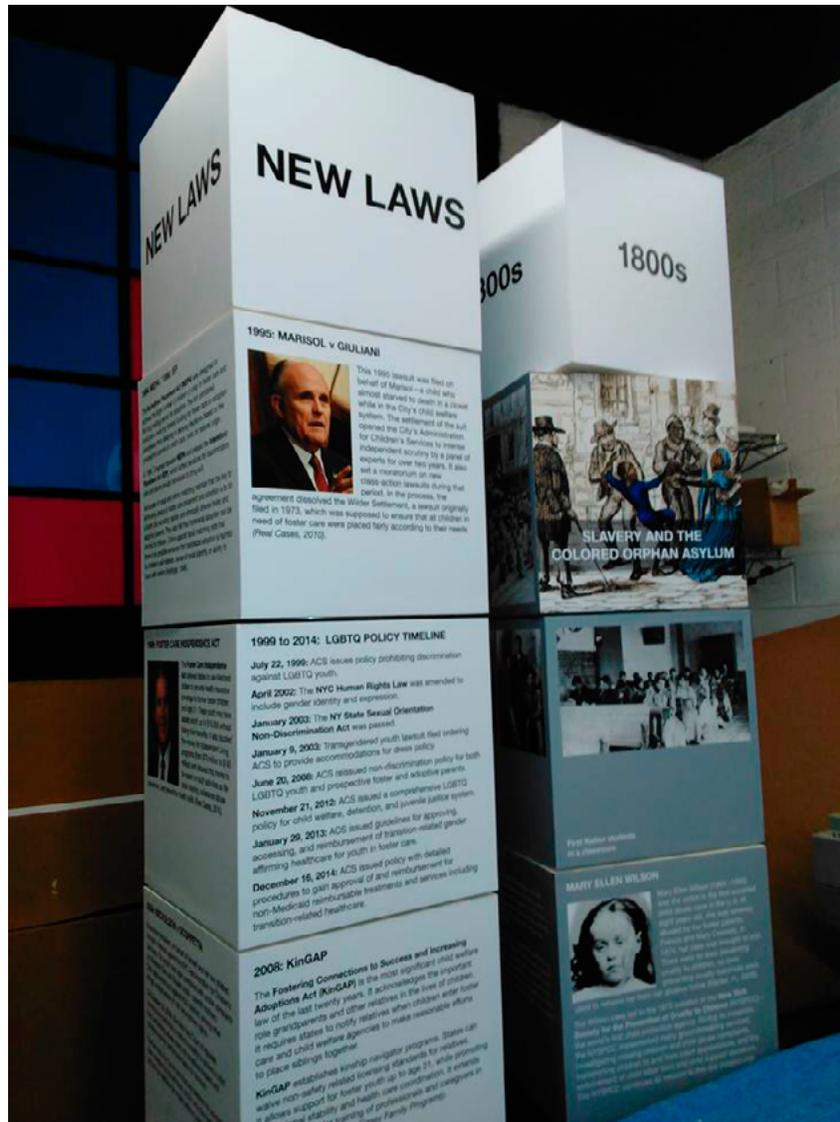
The exhibit brings together art (through its colorful pictures) and legislation (with its presentation of detailed research) but is analyzed from the perspective of the oppressed. What is also impressive about the exhibit is the use of technology. Viewers can learn more about specific aspects of both the historical and present-day child welfare system by pushing the designated button on the iPad, positioned at various points of the timeline, and hear a brief interview with subject matter experts on the topic. Some examples of the topics covered in the two-minute interviews are: the Wilder Case; Eugene F.; the Family Preservation program; human trafficking; and the impact of Substance Use Disorder on families, and the response of the child welfare system.

This project was done in collaboration with a group of Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) staff. The experience was gratifying for us all because the collaborative process produced an educational exhibit that also functioned as a venue for building and strengthening communities of racially conscious citizens whose goal is to eradicate racial disproportionality and disparity in child welfare. It helped us understand why children of color are overrepresented in child welfare and other similar systems, such as juvenile justice, criminal justice, and poor-performing schools. It begins to connect the dots in the era of restrictive immigration laws and policies, post the 1965 Immigration and Nationalization Act. It also begins to explain why New York City – among other communities – continues to be deeply segregated in 2017 – fifty-three years after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 – and delves into the insidious nature of gentrification. It tackles the differences between the “war on drugs,” in the 1980s and 1990s, which led to mass incarceration of people of color (Blacks and Latinos) and the placing of their children in foster care, and the present-day heroin epidemic sweeping through a high percentage of white communities, which is being seen as a disease. Nationally, the child welfare system has not responded with mass foster care placements as it did during the “crack” epidemic.

Moreover, while the exhibit doesn’t explicitly address immigration bans and deportation, it does detail the history of certain U.S. immigration legislation and the disparate treatment faced by immigrants of color. It lists some of the atrocities of past immigration policies, such as the Japanese Internment and the Mexican Repatriation Act. The exhibit begins to connect the institution of slavery to the contrasting treatment of Black people by U.S. economic legislation, policies and programs in the 20th and 21st centuries – which has resulted in high rates of poverty and disparities in education, health and housing, among others. The Timeline exhibit clarifies how policies such as the 1830 Removal Act and the subsequent Homestead Acts are connected to Indian boarding schools and the oppressive treatment of First Nation people today in their

fight for land, water and their dignity.

Overall, while I support the Women’s March and most other forms of protest to the current political climate in this country, I must admit that I’m not one to use this form of protest. However this project - the Historical Child Welfare Timeline Exhibit - is my form of protest against injustice and racism. It is also one way a group of social workers and concerned child welfare activists chose to channel our anger, pain and feelings of depression over structural racism and the 2016 election, while engaging in an activity that was ultimately enlightening and empowering.



Child Welfare Timeline Exhibit tells the story of the genesis of the U.S. child welfare system and its evolution. For more information please email reccc@acs.nyc.gov



Current Political Climate Impacting Child Welfare

Justin Lioi, LCSW
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“You voted for Trump yesterday, didn’t you?”

That was how I was greeted for my first pre-election home visit. It struck me that I was suddenly going to have to re-connect with many clients who assumed that a white man must have voted for the white man.

But that’s unprofessional, isn’t it?

And aren’t I now making this all about me?

I’ve worked in child welfare for almost ten years now and our focus is working to make the home as safe as possible for children and families.

And it just got harder.

Children have been expressing fear toward their parents about themselves and classmates:

“Mommy, are you going to be sent away?”

“I don’t want my friends to be taken away by the government.”

I’ve often said that everyone should spend two years in child welfare. There is nothing that you will see in your career as a social worker that doesn’t show up in Child Protective Services. You see domestic violence, intellectual disability, substance abuse, trauma, and trauma, and trauma—and you see how it affects children.

When I began my career and learned how to do an assessment and the information that was needed for an intake, I was shocked: Why would a client answer these questions?

More often than not, people freely gave information that others in my personal life would say, “Talk to my lawyer.” I mean, I balk when Banana Republic wants my zip code. But people answered personal questions without any hesitation, and one of my first supervisors said that our clients are so used to agencies requiring the most personal of information (“Have you ever been sexually abused? Are you HIV positive? Have you ever been hospitalized for mental health reasons?”) that they simply answer. The oppressive nature of our systems have fostered a lack of empowerment that has always made my job “a whole lot easier” and clients more vulnerable.

And now the people we serve are regularly hearing that even after talking to people like me, they may no longer qualify for what they need to provide the bare—and I mean bare—minimum to support their children. And forget about finding profitable employment or furthering their education. So, they’ve let their privacy slide so that they can move toward something more positive, and now there is a more overt looming danger in doing so. We often don’t know how to talk about that looming danger with our clients.

If we talk about “Donald Trump” we’re being political and told that we, as members of agencies, cannot take a stand when it comes to politics. Ok. Well, let’s not mention Trump and instead, let’s hold up what this current political climate stands for. It has been said that if you have a certain amount of privilege you can sexually assault women. To be a social worker you must be against that. It has been said that a large portion

of people from one country are “murderers and rapists.” To be a social worker, you must be against that. It has been said that members of the LGBTQ community should not be allowed to marry, that it is acceptable to endure “treatment” to “convert” one’s sexual orientation, and to be prohibited from going to the bathroom where one feels most comfortable. Following our Code of Ethics that clearly states, “Social workers must respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person” well, then, to be a social worker, you must be against all of that.

But our clients don’t know that we’ve taken anti-oppressive classes in grad school. They don’t know that we’ve gone through Undoing Racism and Community Organizing training with the People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond. They don’t know how we voted. They don’t know that our professional association, NASW, advocates for their rights, opposes and lobbies against oppressive laws and policies.

And it would be inappropriate to tell them.

And it would be the height of privilege to think that simply telling them would be enough.

We need to find appropriate ways to let our clients know that we are wholeheartedly on their side. That we may hold clients accountable if there is excessive corporal punishment, substance use while caring for a child, and physically threatening or assaulting a partner, but that we empathize with the amazing endurance and resilience of how they are maneuvering in the system, as it is; a system imbued with structural racism and oppression.

We need to find ways, different ways depending on our race and level of privilege, to communicate to our clients that in this political culture—this racist, oppressive culture that is not so much different, but only more raw and less hidden than it previously was—that they can trust us with their lived experiences. We need to let our supervisors, directors, and boards of directors know that we need their support in this. That if they are going to call themselves social service agencies in this overtly scary political climate, well, then, they need to be of social service.

There is an urgency for our leaders to step up and push this, but that’s not how change happens. So in our direct practice we need to find ways to be vulnerable with clients to let them know how much we are empathizing with the risk they are taking in talking to us at all. We need to let them know the risk to themselves. As supervisors and directors, during clinical staff meetings when discussing clients, we need to ask about how clients are managing this political climate. We need to help direct service workers have these delicate, but often life-and-death, discussions.

As a white boy, I never got a talk from my parents about how to act if I were pulled over by a police officer. I was always glad to see them—they were there to serve and protect, and they continue to serve and protect me. We need to invite the types of conversations that families of color have into our sessions:

“How are you managing with all that’s going on in the news?”

“What’s your plan if ICE knocks on your door?”

“How do you talk to your children the night after every news outlet blasts the [insert latest administrative oppressive tactic here]?”

If clients aren’t doing it, then support them in making plans and provide the needed resources. If they are, then listen. Let them know you are invested in their safety and family stability.

This is not a time to hide behind neutrality. This is a time for bravery and to do the social justice work we signed up for.



Seva as Social Work

Shreya Mandal, JD, LCSW
NASW-NYC 3rd Vice President

“Seva,” is a Sanskrit word that means “selfless service.” In South Asian communities across various religious and spiritual practices, Seva embodies small simple actions, such as making someone a cup of tea, to bigger acts contributing to a large community. The size of its gesture never loses its intent — to give and act selflessly in the name of service. A core part of Seva is that the reward is in the giving itself. While growing up in New York, Seva was a huge part of my Bengali upbringing. Its meaning has not been lost in my work as a social worker in New York City and beyond. In many ways Seva saved me. It gave me a reason to live and a deep purpose to continue.

Most recently, through the practice of Seva and social work, I established my own psychotherapy and forensic consulting firm, One World Mitigation (OWM). Since 2005, I have been contracting with human rights organizations, nonprofit law firms, and private law firms throughout the United States. At OWM, I provide frontline forensic social work, mitigation, and psychotherapy services to immigrant communities facing extreme hardship and legal challenges. My services also include advocating for criminal justice involved individuals and personal injury cases.

Whether clients in the community are at risk of immigration removal and deportation, face a lengthy sentence for a criminal conviction, or sustain a debilitating physical injury, the universal theme of people’s stories has been trauma. Through trauma-informed social work practice, we can understand both the personal and collective struggles of individuals and communities, evaluate how trauma has manifested in their lives, and ultimately identify strengths and resilience for clients to overcome their hardships. Over an extended period of time, my work at OWM also placed me in a position to document macro level trends and patterns — implications for future social work.

As a spiritual practice, Seva has shaped my social work identity every step of the way. This cultural grounding has served as a response to the community just as much as it has been a calling. In 2005, I was first contacted by the American Friends Service Committee to assist in an immigration case, where a Bangladeshi native woman was detained at a Detention Center in New Jersey. As a domestic violence survivor, she required bilingual social work assistance to help her establish a legal case of spousal abuse and extreme hardship under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). In this situation, I provided a written hardship evaluation and expert testimony in immigration court on her behalf. Since then hundreds of Punjabi, Bengali, Hindi, Arabic, and Spanish-speaking families sought my services to assist them in fighting for asylum or cancellation of removal. By weaving Seva and social work together, I responded to immigrant communities who largely felt linguistically and culturally isolated but were in the U.S. as working families. In many instances, my work in immigration has assisted families from fleeing political and religious persecution, torture, and imminent death in countries abroad. My work with immigrant families, in both the criminal justice system and outside of it, has been a direct way for me to give back the resources and privileges I have benefitted from in the United States.

A blended practice of Seva and social work allowed me to have a far-reaching impact than I ever dreamed possible. Through an international human rights perspective, an integrative approach led me to connect frontline practice with a community-wide response. In the current political and social climate of the United States, it has become critical to engage in social work practice through an applied sense of collectivism. Utilizing a global mental health framework is a call to the profession for cross-cultural and intersectional social work response, relevant for all communities.



Difficult Work in Uncertain Times

Sarah Strole, LCSW
Co-Chair of NASW Trauma-Focused Clinician Support Group

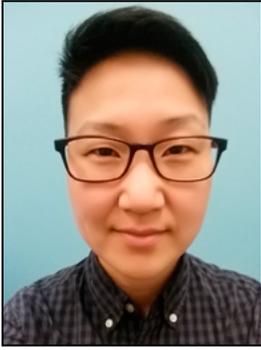
Historically, social workers and other front-line service providers have been asked to do more with less, at times even without the assurance that the funding for their salaries would remain in the following year's budget. While this is a familiar narrative for most in the non-profit world, the past few months have brought this picture into starker relief.

The first few months of this new Administration have been defined by an unprecedented uncertainty — uncertainty regarding policies that will be implemented or changed, how newly appointed leaders will change the current landscape of federal funding, as well as service provision mandates. Those working in immigration have felt this acutely the past few months, along with increasing hate speech and rhetoric against people without documentation in the United States.

Particularly divisive has been the discourse around people immigrating without documents. An often-overlooked fact of the immigration system in the United States is that some forms of legal relief require people to immigrate without papers. Additionally, our immigration system cannot be simplified, as has been common in the past months, to “documented” or “undocumented.” Some people do not have and are not in the process of becoming documented, some people are at some point in the lengthy process of becoming documented (giving them some sort of legal status in the United States), and still others have some form of documentation but are in the process of receiving more permanent status.

For unaccompanied minors, children who have recently arrived without their parents, they are at the beginning of that process. They left family, friends, school, a life they knew, a culture they understood, a language they spoke. They left home, many without plans, or hope, of returning. To leave your home and everything familiar, entering a country hostile to your very presence, some level of desperation must be assumed. Some children are sent by their parents on this dangerous journey alone, often through multiple countries, to escape community violence. Some are sent by relatives, no longer able to afford caring for them, to join parents already in the United States. Social workers working with these kids are tasked with helping them adjust to not only the new country, but also a family with whom they have little or no relationship. Because children are sent through various states across the United States, social workers must be informed of the resources available in different states, as well as the different policies relating to immigration in order to educate both sponsors and children.

Beyond the challenge of staying informed on the constantly changing social services and non-profit networks, social workers are also typically attempting to locate services in resource-poor communities. This creates an environment of chronic stress for staff. One of the challenges of agencies, working in the current environment of unpredictability, will be how they, despite uncertainty of funding, can support staff, who continue to serve vulnerable clients in difficult situations, attempting to locate resources that are increasingly scarce.



The Current Political Climate and the Impact on Youth

M.T. Campbell

Since the election, when I speak with colleagues who also work with youth across New York City, the topic of how the current political climate directly and indirectly impacts young people usually makes its way into the conversation.

We are currently living in a time of heightened tension and uncertainty. The emboldened acts of hatred and bigotry manifest as overt xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, racism, misogyny and all their intersections. This may seem different to some and new to many. However, historically and daily, people of color, people living in poverty, immigrants, Muslims and people perceived to be Muslim, LGBTQ and Gender Non-Conforming (GNC) people, and people with trauma histories, mental health issues and disabilities experience oppression and intense systemic barriers. Youth are not exempt.

Young people are expressing a range of responses to the current political climate such as fear, anger, and deep sadness. They are also feeling emboldened to act based on their beliefs, lack of interest and numbing, as well as strength and resistance. Shortly after the 2016 presidential election, the Southern Poverty Law Center's Teaching Tolerance Project conducted an online survey receiving approximately 10,000 responses from educators, administrators, counselors and other staff working in schools on the impact of the election on students and on their teaching practice. The report produced is, "After Election Day: The Trump Effect, The Impact Of The Presidential Campaign On Our Nation's Schools".

"The survey data indicates that the results of the election are having a profoundly negative impact on schools and students. Ninety percent of educators report that school climate has been negatively affected, and most of them believe it will have a long-lasting impact. A full 80 percent describe heightened anxiety and concern on the part of students worried about the impact of the election on themselves and their families. Also on the upswing: verbal harassment, the use of slurs and derogatory language, and disturbing incidents involving swastikas, Nazi salutes and Confederate flags" (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2016).

An increasing number of documented and undocumented immigrant youth, both in and out of school who belong to youth programs, have shared an increased sense of fear, of deportation for themselves and family members. Youth of color, immigrant youth, Muslim youth and youth perceived to be Muslim are reporting increased fear and experiences of harassment, racism, xenophobia, and Islamophobia as well as state sanctioned violence. Some Transgender youth have shared feelings of fear and defeat about the rollback of the federal guidelines issued May of 2016 allowing Transgender students to access restrooms according to their gender identity. Young people accessing youth services are also expressing an increased fear of scarcity of resources such as Medicaid, supportive housing and shelter beds in youth shelters, affordable housing for young adults, and reproductive and transgender health services.

The Southern Poverty Law Center (2016) also found in the same study that "the trauma students are experiencing is putting a strain on school counseling and social work resources and leading teachers to spend more time away from instruction so they can provide emotional support." During the past few months, some youth workers, outside of the school setting, are also feeling stretched thin, as they have been providing a

higher level of support, and in some cases trauma work that not all youth workers feel comfortable providing or have experience in. Youth workers have also found a gap in residential and outpatient mental health services for young people with emotional and behavioral regulation, and who also may have co-occurring substance abuse, are LGBTQ and/or are GNC inclusive and affirming, but are willing or nearing readiness to receive a higher level of care and support around mental health.

There are a few things youth workers in social services can do if we are seeing or hearing these issues from our youth. In addition to continuing to provide the expected quality and caring services that are holistic and youth-centered, we can provide additional therapeutic support and healing spaces. The vehicles for young people can be individual, in groups or talking-circles, or collectively in community meetings. It is important to create these and other opportunities to be youth-led or co-led. This is a time to pull youth in closer and continue to strengthen community and affirm the safety and inclusion for all youth. Our organizations can support youth publicly by writing statements affirming and re-affirming their values and commitments to the young people they serve. We can also provide access to information that can help young people understand the changes in policies and services that impact their daily lives and the implications for what this means for their individual situations and the options and resources that are available to them. We can organize *Know Your Rights* trainings for interactions with the police and ICE, and have our organizations become sanctuary spaces for young people.

For young people who are interested, we can connect them to youth leadership opportunities, civic engagement opportunities, and organizing efforts led by people and communities most impacted. With input from young people, we can review systems and protocols in place for crisis and debriefing if needed. Youth workers can continue to collaborate and share ideas and practices for providing services with care as well as advocating for systems change in this new political climate. As many youth workers have expressed increased feelings of burnout, secondary or vicarious trauma, and the need for new or different self-care practices, workplace culture may benefit from shifting with the times.

Whether we work directly with youth or not, there are concrete things that we can all do to support youth in New York City such as providing Metrocards to young people in programs, or swiping people in at the subway turnstile if we have an unlimited Metrocard. We can support campaigns such as Raise the Age, Close Rikers, NASW-NYC's joint efforts to end Conversion Therapy, Campaign Zero to end Broken Windows Policing, which targets and criminalizes Black and Brown people, as well as advocate to deny the many executive orders that target, criminalize, endanger the livelihoods of communities of color, and subject them to state violence.

Many young people are also expressing frustration and outrage and are speaking out for the first time, while many have been organizing long before this current political time. On February 8th, 2017, hundreds of high school and college students walked out of class to protest the executive orders banning travel from 7 majority-Muslim countries (Durkin & Otis, 2017). Young people have always been part of the great social and political movements in this country and will continue.

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Membership #CallToAction In A Time Of Uncertainty

Joe Barker, MSW

NASW-NYC Program Manager for Membership and Fund Development

During a time of uncertainty, fear, and confusion, NASW-NYC seeks to be a resource for all. We continue the work that we were charged with many decades ago, to support and advocate for all social workers and the clients with whom we work. Each day brings with it a new challenge, a new goal for us to achieve. Whether this is at a national level when the current Administration acts without compassion or at the local level when a social worker is concerned about licensing; we get involved and take action.

At the local level we are engaged in many campaigns which support all of our members and their clients. We show up at rallies, we hold town halls and film showings, and we work to keep ourselves informed of what is happening in the city. One of our next projects will be to evaluate the state of #SocialWorkInTheCity, by asking each of you to tell us about your field. You are the experts! This will enable us to better respond to questions from policy makers here in the City with the needs of Social Workers and their clients.

At the state level we speak with policy makers and the State Education Department to ensure that you are both protected and supported. There was once a time before licensing where anyone could practice "social work" without the proper training or where a person took out steep loans to finance the required education, but their salaries could not sustain repayment. NASW-NYC took up these challenges and began lobbying on behalf of all Social Workers. Licensing and Loan Forgiveness have been two of the issues we have championed the longest and made significant contributions. We have also partnered with both the #CLOSErikers and #RaiseTheAge campaigns to further address social issues important to social workers.

At all levels we are fully committed to anti-oppressive work and assure that all of our projects come under a Race, Diversity, and Intersectionality lens. NASW-NYC hosts a Coalition for Race, Diversity, and Intersectionality which informs all of our committee work. We host Undoing Racism workshops for social workers to explore Power and Privilege structures and to become knowledgeable and culturally competent in the work to end institutionalized oppression and racism. At the city and state level we are working to assure that all legislation has to include a racial impact statement similar to the financial and environmental impact statements already required. New York State will have a bill introduced to begin this process, and we will continue to advocate that the City follow suit.

Your membership is at our core and drives our work. We listen to your voices and learn from your experiences. We cannot do our work without your membership. On top of the benefits you receive from being a member with NASW, you can rest assured that we work on your behalf at all times. Your membership allows us, among other activities, to continue to lobby, to host committees, and to support the social justice campaigns that we are passionate about.

With this in mind we have a #CallToAction for you. Share this article, and any of the resources on our website, with a friend. Inspire someone to join or rejoin your membership organization, so that we can be richer in experience and stronger in our collective power. With each new member, we become stronger in each issue we address. If you are interested in Membership, Chapter information, or have any feedback for us please email us at ContactUs@Naswnyc.org — we welcome a message from you.

NASW-NYC Committees

*Most Committee Meetings are at the NASW-NYC Chapter Office, 50 Broadway, Suite 1001, NY, NY 10004

Addictions Committee

Co-Chairs: Sharon K. Davis and Susan Palmer

Starting at 9:15 a.m., a business meeting is followed by a presentation on such topics as HIV/AIDS, Family Systems Therapy, and Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy. Meetings end around 11:15 a.m. RSVPs are not necessary.

Addiction permeates all areas of practice, so whether we are specialists or generalist practitioners, clinicians, activists or researchers, knowledge of addiction related issues is essential for all social workers to work with our clients effectively. Addiction affects people of all ages, cultural backgrounds, and socioeconomic status, and the Addictions Committee is available to all social workers wishing to learn how to recognize and respond to addictions of all types. The Addictions Committee provides various social work opportunities, including clinical skills development, networking, and mutual support, gaining free CASAC credits, involvement in policy initiatives, and conference organizing. There are three subcommittees: Addictions Institute Planning, Peer Consultation, and Policy. The Institute Planning Subcommittee organizes the Annual Addictions Institute, known for over 40 years as a resource for addiction research, treatment, and governmental policies.

Upcoming Meetings

- Wednesday, April 12, 2017, at 9:15 a.m.: “Understanding and Working with Eating Disorders” Carole Gladstone -Ramos, LCSW, CASAC, is a private practitioner in NYC and a Certified Imago Couples Therapist, a Certified EMDR Therapist, and a IFS (Internal Family Systems) Practitioner.
- Wednesday, May 10, 2017, at 9:15 a.m.: “Treatment Issues Related to Sexual Offenders” Larry Menzie, LCSW-R, Executive Director – Queens Counseling for Change

The Disabilities Task Force (TDF)

Chair: Marva Mariner

The Disabilities Task Force (TDF) mission is to educate and empower Social Workers to work with and among people with disabilities. Meeting is every second Monday during the months of January, April and July, from 6p.m. - 8p.m. at the Chapter Office.

In celebration of Autism month in April, TDF will be hosting a discussion on Autism and caregivers and the roles of Social Workers. For further information or to RSVP please contact dtfnaswnyc@gmail.com

Disaster Trauma Committee

Chair: Madelyn Miller

Disaster Trauma Committee meetings recognize social workers' interest and experience in disaster work, providing continuing learning and collegial support. Discussions focus on diverse disaster experiences within a global context, related trauma and loss issues, and attention to the impact on social workers of immediate and long-term disaster work. Providing a context for dialogue, and an expanding knowledge and practice base, meetings focus on practice and community considerations of emergent natural and human-caused disasters, and those of long-enduring presence, keeping a historical and political, and a cultural and social context, and a social justice and race equity framework. From hate crimes and mass shootings

in Charleston and Orlando, to relentless community violations across our country, echoing historical trauma and loss, meetings consider individual and community vulnerability and resourcefulness, vicarious trauma and vicarious resilience, reflective self-care, and efforts toward resilience. Social support and community-building seem essential to both the aftermath of disaster, and our own experiences of disaster work.

Considering the collective trauma and loss experienced since the election, the committee is providing a supportive context for discussing our experiences, realities and implications of the political landscape, policy directions, and broadening assaults on human rights. A continuing conversation across meetings includes considering our steps forward, determining creative action, and shaping future initiatives. At the next meeting, April 21st, discussion will include issues of hate crimes, refugee experience, chapter committee collaborations, additional conversations among social workers, and public education using narratives.

All social workers are welcome at bimonthly meetings, Fridays, 9 am to 11 am at the Chapter Office. Please RSVP to mgmiller96@aol.com. Future meetings are noted on the Calendar of Events.

LatinX Social Work Collective

Co- Chairs: Luis Roberto Machuca and Alicia Montero

The vision of the LatinX Social Work Collective is to sustain a space for LatinX social workers that are committed to build and move a base that is representative of our various identities. We commit ourselves to anti-racist principles and practice and to combat the oppressive policies that imprison our gente (people). The collective does this by advocating for the interests and needs of our LatinX social workers, communities and familia (family). We will promote the reflection and educación (education) of our profession on the cultural nuances of practice across sectors. We embrace the ancestral mandate to heal our colonized past through community care. Finally, reconocemos (we recognize) the call to libertad (liberation) that dismantles borders in all its forms. To RSVP: email: naswnyclatinx@gmail.com

The new NASW-NYC Committee on Health

Chair: Christine Rollet

On March 15, 2017, the new NASW-NYC Committee on Health held its first meeting at 50 Broadway. Members of the committee have decided to join forces to give social workers, through their association NASW-NYC, a voice in the current debate concerning healthcare in the U.S.

Social workers, by the nature of their work, are on the frontline of clients' struggles with an inadequate and unfair healthcare "system," one that has been proven to discriminate on the basis of income, ethnicity and sexual orientation. Social workers are also clients themselves of such a "system." We cannot accept that our country is the only one in the developed world that does not provide universal healthcare.

Social workers have therefore decided to be part of this historic fight for justice and equality in healthcare. We do not want to meet just to discuss how harmful the "system" is. Having clearly identified the problems, we want to examine all options, agree on a course of action that is feasible and make appropriate recommendations to the NASW NYC Board of Directors on these issues.

We encourage social workers who agree with the above, to join forces and come to the next meeting on April 19th from 6 pm - 8 pm.

Narrative Practice Committee

Interim Co-Chairs: Ann Burack-Weiss and Christiana Best- Giacomini

The Committee on Narrative Practice had a well-attended inaugural meeting in the fall. Attendees represented a range of interests, agencies, and areas of specialization. Many had been doing narrative work for some time. Others were new to the field and wanted to learn more. The winter meeting featured Lynn Lawrence and Lynne Mijangos who led an exercise on Close Reading and Reflective Writing that was well received by all. The next meeting - Monday, June 19th, 6 pm. - 8 pm. – will be a book party to celebrate the publication of *Narrative in Social Work Practice: The Power and Possibility of Story* (available from Columbia University Press or on Amazon after May 31st.) The book is an edited collection of 17 chapters – many of them written by members of the committee. We invite all who are interested to join us.

NASW Trauma-Focused Clinician Support Group

Co-Chairs: Janelle Stanley and Sarah Strole

The NASW Trauma-Focused Clinician Support Group is a monthly gathering for clinicians working with cases involving complex trauma. We meet to discuss cases involving chronic, complex, and cumulative traumas across multiple systems. These cases can be particularly difficult to process, and we meet to discuss and provide support to one another as we do difficult work. These traumas affect clients throughout all age groups, socio-economic brackets, and cultures. The prevalence of complicated trauma in the life cycle makes it likely that every clinician will have to work with trauma and related issues in their practice. This forum brings together clinicians who face these challenging cases in order to share knowledge and information about evidence-based clinical interventions and effective techniques. By providing a space for this dialogue, talented and energetic clinicians build on one another's knowledge to provide better services to clients in this demanding field. The next meeting is April 25, 2017, from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm at the Chapter Office.

Nursing Home Committee

Chair: Wayne Orlowitz

The Nursing Home Committee of the New York City Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers plans to have a spring meeting. The topics for discussion and presentation include CMS publication of requirements for skilled nursing facilities that participate in the medicine and medicated programs, which will be implemented in three stages. The invited presenter will be a social worker who is employed as a Nursing Home Administrator.

The NASW- NYC Nursing Home Committee will also be scheduling future meetings to review palliative care for people with dementia and the impact of managed care on nursing care and rehabilitation facilities.

It is important that social workers who are involved or interested attend the next meeting on June 22, 2017 6pm-8pm so as to address social work practice in nursing homes and promote education professional development and advocacy for nursing home social work practice.

The Private Practitioners Group (PPG)

Chair: Lynne Spevack

The Private Practitioners Group (PPG) aims to support Licensed Clinical Social Workers working in part time and full time solo private practice as well as those contemplating developing a private practice.

Free, day-long meetings held a few times each year provide the opportunity to hear expert advice about a range of non-clinical topics; past topics have included legal and risk management, taxes, insurance billing and credentialing, practice building, and fee policies and practices. These meetings also serve the important function of bringing us together, combating the isolation that private practitioners often experience. LCSWs interested in being among the first to learn about and register for these popular and sometimes sold out Private Practitioner Days can add their name to the “PPG Newsletter” link near the top of the page at www.naswnyc.org/ppgresources.

In the fifteen years since its inception, the Private Practitioners Group has developed a webpage archiving resources useful to private practitioners. At www.naswnyc.org/ppgresources, you'll find a wealth of information on topics including insurance and managed care, documentation, legal and risk management, tele-practice, taxes, and practice building.

Private Practitioners Group founder and chairperson Lynne Spevack fields phone calls and emails from members seeking guidance about starting, building and managing their private practices.

LCSWs in part-time and full-time private practice and those contemplating beginning a private practice are invited to contact chairperson Lynne Spevack LCSW at LynneSpevack@aol.com or 718-377-3400.

Social Workers of European Descent Against Racism (SWEDAR Collective)

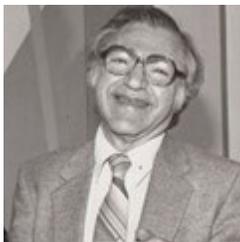
Chair: Justin Lioi

SWEDAR is a collective of white NASW-NYC members who meet to better understand and expose white supremacy in the systems in which we work as well as in our personal lives.

This Committee grew out of the Coalition on Race, Diversity, and Intersectionality (CRDI) and utilizes the shared lens of “race and racism as a social construct with power and great systemic impact.”

We are a group of white social workers who are committed to regularly process how racism disconnects us from our humanity and to take the needed steps to move toward a better understanding of our role as gatekeepers in our agencies and hold ourselves, and the structures we are a part of, more accountable in order to better serve our clients. SWEDAR meets separately from other multi-racial groups in order to better position ourselves to organize more effectively with those groups and with other social workers of Color by not overshadowing other voices nor remaining silent. The next meeting is scheduled for May 1, 2017, 6 pm - 8 pm. at the Chapter Office

In Memoriam



Kurt Sonnenfeld

It is with heavy hearts that we, at NASW-NYC, relay the passing of Kurt Sonnenfeld, an exceptional social worker and human being, at age 91. He died on March 4, 2017.

Kurt's pursuits, both within and outside of the social work and justice field, were many. He was active in the Adlai Stevenson Democratic Reform Club in Forest Hills, Queens in the 1960s. He served as a founder of the Forest Hills (now Queens) Community House, in which his spirit is deeply embedded. He supported the arts and music and was a long-time member of the Austrian Forum in the 1980s and 1990s.

Kurt was a retired career employee of the New York City Department of Youth Services, one of the agencies merged to form the Department of Youth and Community Development. He received his Doctorate of Education from Columbia University's Teachers College, writing his dissertation on "Changing Perspectives on Youth Services as Seen Through the Historical Development of the New York City Youth Board." Over the course of his 45-year career, Kurt held multiple positions at the Department of Youth Services, including Director of Training. He has also served on the Board of Directors of numerous community-based organizations in NYC, and he was a long-term Steering Committee member of NASW-NYC PACE.

Kurt was a community leader who organized in support of a proposed low-income housing project in his neighborhood in the early 1970s, part of former Mayor John Lindsey's "scatter-site" plan to build public housing in mixed-income neighborhoods and an experiment in racial integration. At the time, opposition to the development was heated and occasionally violent. He subsequently served on the board of the new organization, the Forest Hills Community House, for almost 35 years, helping to nurture the non-profit through its early development and overseeing its growth into a borough-wide organization, renamed as Queens Community House in 2006.

Kurt was the proud father of four children and one granddaughter. He was well-informed, enthusiastic and filled with positive energy. Kurt had been such an active and loving presence; he had just attended the NASW-NYC PACE Retreat in February, to which he brought his PACE Steering Committee nomination letter. We at PACE never saw him without his smile, his opinions which often championed the underdog, and his "Dad" ring, proudly displaying his most cherished role, of many. He will truly be missed by all who knew him.

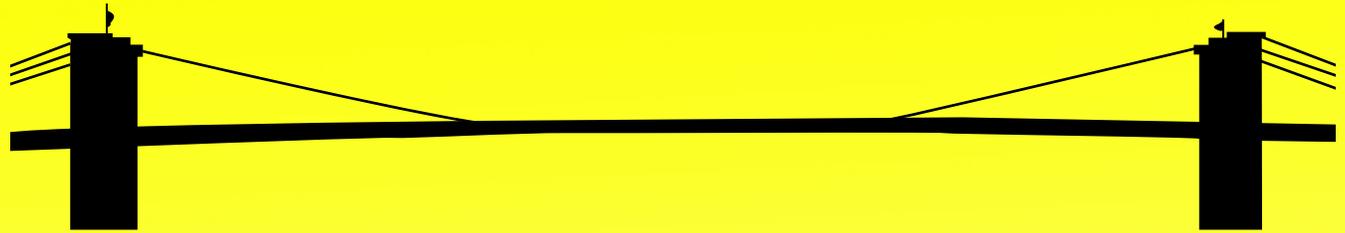
Barbara Rinehart, MSW, PhD

Barbara Rinehart was an extraordinary Social Worker who passed away on Saturday, February 4th, 2017 after a long illness.

Barbara served as the first Chairperson of the Gerontological Committee for the Chapter and was honored by the Chapter for her work. In addition, Barbara served on the Chapter Board and on several task Forces. She was a fierce advocate for older adults, in community based programs and mental health services. Barbara's career spanned from direct service and program direction to several senior management positions at Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, Goddard Riverside Community Center, and Hunter School of Social Work.

Barbara held an MSW from Hunter School of Social Work, a PhD from Fordham University School of Social Work, Masters in Divinity from Union Seminary, a Certificate in Not-for-Profit Management from Columbia University, and was a fellow of the Brookdale Center on Aging.

Barbara will be missed by all who knew and worked with her. She will be most remembered for her dedication to the Social Work Profession, her values and her humanity.



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8:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

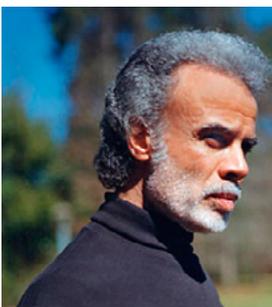
*Hunter College, 695 Park Ave
New York, NY 10065

6 CE Contact Hours

Featured Presentations



Ms. Joy Reid, host of "AM Joy" on MSNBC, is an award winning journalist and a political commentator who will give the keynote address on **the profound and historic impact of the November 8th Presidential Election on the future of American society**. She will discuss the implications of the election for the social work profession and the communities we serve, in regards to: social and racial justice, voting and elections, income inequality, employment, education, drug policy and incarceration, women's health, housing, health, and mental health.



Dr. Harry Aponte, LCSW, LMFT, nationally renowned multicultural family therapist will discuss **how social workers can apply the Person of the Therapist Structural Family Therapy Model**. Dr. Aponte's presentation will expound on how social workers are able to understand and feel with their clients and in their personal struggles, highlighting how we can relate with our clients despite differences in race, diversity and socioeconomic status.

**This Conference is not sponsored by or affiliated with Hunter College or the City University of New York*

NASW New York City Chapter is recognized by the New York State Education Department's State Board for Social Work as an approved provider of continuing education for licensed social workers #0027

SPRING CONTINUING EDUCATION WORKSHOPS

Adoption – How Ethics, Transference and Counter-Transference Intersect with Clinical and Administrative Practice

Kathy Brodsky, LCSW &
Dina J. Rosenfeld, DSW
Thursday, April 20, 2017
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
3 CE Contact Hours

Facing Aging: Working with Older Adults

Lauren Taylor, LCSW
Saturday, April 22, 2017
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
6 CE Contact Hours

An Introduction to a Gestalt Therapy Approach to Social Work Practice

Evan Senreich, PhD, LCSW, CASAC
Monday, April 24, 2017
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
3 CE Contact Hours

Motivational Interviewing for Diverse Problems

Brian Mundy, LCSW-R
Saturday, April 29, 2017
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
6 CE Contact Hours

Consent and Sexuality Issues Among People with Disabilities

Consuelo Senior, LMSW
Saturday, May 6, 2017
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
6 CE Contact Hours

A Neurobiology Approach to Emotionally Over-Reactive Clients

Judith P Siegel, PhD, LCSW-R
Sunday, May 7, 2017
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
6 CE Contact Hours

An Introduction to Budgeting and Financial Management for Nonprofit Organizations

Karun K. Singh, PhD, LCSW-R, CSWM
Thursday, May 11, 2017
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
3 CE Contact Hours

Undoing Racism/Community Organizing Workshop: Antiracism Training for Social Workers

Kimberley Richards, Ed.D
Thursday, May 18, 2017 &
Friday, May 19, 2017
9:00 AM – 6:00 PM (Must attend both days)
16 CE Contact Hours

Interpersonal Psychotherapy: Relationships and Well-Being, an Evidence Based Therapeutic Approach

Reji Mathew, PhD, LCSW
Saturday, June 3, 2017
9:30 AM - 4:30 PM
6 CE Contact Hours

Breath-Mind-Body Practices for Social Workers to Address Stress, Anxiety, Depression & Trauma

Patricia L. Gerbarg, MD &
Richard P. Brown, MD
Saturday, June 10, 2017
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM
NYU Cantor Film Center
36 East 8 St., NY, NY 10003
6 CE Contact Hours

Catching People Doing Good Things: The Value of Positive Behavior Support in Social Work

Benjamin R. Sher, MA, LMSW
Thursday, June 15, 2017
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM
3 CE Contact Hours

Dialectical Behavior Therapy – Applying DBT Skills When Emotion Dysregulation Thwarts Treatment

Susan Dowd Stone, MSW, LCSW
Sunday, June 25, 2017
9:00 AM- 4:00 PM
NYU Cantor Film Center
36 East 8 St., NY, NY 10003
6 CE Contact Hours

All workshops will take place at the Chapter office unless otherwise specified

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Friday, April 28 at 7:00pm

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