The Christian New Testament (2 Peter 3) asks us “what manner of persons ought ye to be?” But this fundamentally important ethical question has been asked and answered in numerous ways by different religions, not to mention different societies throughout time. This half-day conference for high school students and their teachers will consider a few of the many different answers that have been given to this question from the perspectives of several humanistic disciplines, including those of philosophy, religion, political science, and literature.

The Program:

- **8:30 AM — 9:00 AM**  
  Sign-in for schools and breakfast buffet, Ballrooms (lobby level)

- **9:00 AM — 9:15 AM**  
  Opening remarks and logistical information, Ballrooms (lobby level)

- **9:30 AM — 10:20 AM**  
  **SESSION A**  
  
  In conflicts between US tribes and the federal government over the past century, traditional Native American values (the supremacy of tribal identity, a rejection of private-property ownership, a communal lifestyle ordered by seasonal changes, the sacredness of ancestral lands) ran afoul of Euro-American notions of the Good Society. Each side believed its moral vision to be justified on religious grounds, yet the two sides often arrived at exactly opposite conclusions. The question at the center of the talk will be: How is it that the virtues praised by one society may actually be the vices repudiated by another? And what does this mean for us as we develop our own moral visions today?  
  **Speaker:** Assistant Professor Mark Clatterbuck, Department of Philosophy and Religion, MSU

  “You Can Be Better! – Responsibility in the Plays of Arthur Miller”
  
  In a career spanning well more than half a century, Arthur Miller depicted protagonists who struggle with questions of identity and where their ultimate responsibilities lie: to themselves? to their families? to a larger society? Focusing on representative plays, this talk will explore the conflicts raised by these questions and the answers at which the characters arrive—answers not necessarily shared by the author.  
  **Speaker:** Professor Keith Slocum, Deputy Chair, Department of English, MSU

  “Media Ethics in the Age of Twitter and Facebook”
  
  Can we believe everything we see and hear on the Internet? How do we know if a blogger is telling the truth? Is social media robbing us of our privacy? We'll answer those questions and more as we take a look at the impact of new media on ethical standards. That includes news, sports, entertainment, advertising and more. Also, we will take a look at some techniques on how to make ethical decisions.  
  **Speaker:** Professor Marc Rosenweig, Department of Broadcasting, MSU

- **10:30 AM — 11:20 AM**  
  **SESSION B**  
  “Why Is It a Struggle to Do the Right Thing?”
  
  Throughout history we have had stories of people struggling to do the right thing: Hercules, Achilles, Oedipus, Antigone, Odysseus, Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah. They face obstacles that range from external monsters to internal passions. We will look at several examples of struggles to do the right thing and how we can try to identify the "right thing.”  
  **Speaker:** Adjunct Professor Paul Leggett, Department of Classics and General Humanities, MSU
“Because I Said So! The Relation of Morality to Divine Commands”

How do divine commandments generate the principles of morality? In particular, are actions such as loving others morally right because they are divinely commanded? Or is it the other way around? Is loving others inherently and independently right and, for that reason, divinely commanded? When is “because I said so” a real reason rather than just a veiled threat?

Speaker: Professor David Benfield, Department of Philosophy and Religion, MSU

“Does Character Matter? The Ethics of Elected Office”

At both the state and national levels of government, personal ethics have interfered to varying degrees with pursuing the public good (recent examples including the activities of New Jersey Governor Jim McGreevey, Idaho Senator Larry Craig, South Carolina Governor Mark Sanford, and New York State Representative Charlie Rangel). What role does character play in elected office? During this session we examine the intersection of character and ethics among elected officials in the United States, contemplating whether and how personal behavior impacts public office.

Speaker: Assistant Professor Antoinette Pole, Department of Political Science and Law, MSU

11:30 AM — 12:20 PM
SESSION C

“Cultivation of the Self and the Repair of the World: Social Ethics in Buddhism and Christianity”

All religious traditions address the question of “what kind of people should we be?” The answers, though similar, are not the same. A particularly strong contrast can be drawn between religions that focus primarily on questions of individual development and those that prescribe social activism. Using Buddhism and Christianity as examples, this talk will examine how two major religious traditions arrive at their social ethics from different directions.

Speaker: Professor Cynthia Eller, Department of Philosophy and Religion, MSU

“What Do We Owe Each Other? Rawls, Nozick and Van Parijs”

This talk will center on three moral theories: one, proposed by libertarian Robert Nozick, says that the purpose of life is to live it as we see fit. So the only thing we owe one another is the gift of freedom. John Rawls, the second theorist, disagrees. He says that we owe each other fairness and that it’s only fair that we help those less fortunate than ourselves. Phillippe van Parijs, however, goes even further: he says that we owe everyone a good standard living.

Speaker: Assistant Professor Gabriel Rubin, Department of Justice Studies, MSU

“The Study of Literature: Understanding and Changing the World”

When I decided to get a doctorate in literary studies I thought it would be a specialty as divorced from the “real world” as fruit-fly genetics or abstract mathematics. It turned out to be central to understanding society, politics, history—and ethics. This talk will examine some of the ethical issues that arise, unexpectedly, in the study of works of literature.

Speaker: Associate Professor Grover Furr, Department of English, MSU

Registration and Contact Information: (Registration Deadline, Monday, Nov. 22nd)

Pre-registration is required for all of our programs. After we receive your request we will send you an e-mail confirmation, along with directions to the campus and parking.

The registration fee for this program is $15.00 per student or teacher. Registrations will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. Pre-register your school group by returning the enclosed form by MONDAY, NOVEMBER 22nd. Mail your check or PO and registration form to Montclair State University, Institute for the Humanities, Room 105 Dickson Hall, Montclair, NJ 07043. Make checks payable to: Institute for the Humanities/MSU. Registrations may be faxed to our office (973-655-7207) - check mailed under separate cover. Our office should receive all registration materials, by the deadline date.

The Institute for the Humanities is an approved provider of the State mandated professional development hours. Teachers who would like to receive (3) three hours of credit for this program - add $20.00 to the registration fee (see form, below).

For program updates and information about upcoming programs, visit our web site: http://chss2.montclair.edu/instituteforthehumanities

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