

# WINTER 2009 LECTURE SCHEDULE

## THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

IN PITTSBURGH



**THE OBJECTS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY: To form a nucleus of the Universal Brother & Sisterhood of Humanity regardless of race, sex, caste, creed or color. To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science. To investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in humanity.**

*Unless otherwise announced, all lectures this lecture season are presented Sundays from 1:30 to approx. 3:00 PM and are held in room 117 on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Falk/Coolidge Hall on the Campus of Chatham College. Attendees need not be a member of the society, but must abide by the society's standards of civil conduct. Unless otherwise indicated, programs may be attended free of charge.*

*Call our 24-hour automated phone system at (412) 462-4200 for the most current information on lectures and Society sponsored events. This number will have all the latest information on weather and unforeseen cancellations. Officers can be reached at this same number.*

### WELCOME BACK!

Special thanks to everyone at Chatham University! Their support continues to be a key factor in our continued success. Our meeting place continues to be room 117 in Coolidge/Falk Hall, which is a special boon because of its easy access to parking and its handicap accessibility.

Unfortunately success has a cost. Although we are very grateful for the money people donate at our meetings - we work on very slim margins. No member or officer makes any salary of any sort (officers are much more likely to donate work and resources than take anything from our kitty.) Because we offer this resource to a community that is substantially larger than our membership, we do not charge dues but instead are almost completely funded from donations.

Costs continue to rise (even our rent at Chatham has gone up since last term) so if you can see your way clear to send us a few dollars it could make all the difference in the world.

The Theosophical Society in Pittsburgh is a 501c3 Pennsylvania corporation and, as such, all donations are tax deductible.

Make your checks payable to:

**The Theosophical Society in Pittsburgh  
P.O. Box 171  
Munhall Pa. 15120**

Your presence, and support make our existence possible.

Namaste

Andrew Nesky  
President

## February

22<sup>nd</sup>

### THE CHRISTIAN APOCRYPHA – Fr. Tom Hart

Many influential early Christian writings did not make it into the book modern Christians call the “New Testament”. This presentation will discuss how these writings nevertheless influenced Christianity's doctrinal and liturgical life, showing a more porous relationship between the official canon and these texts than is widely known.

# The Theosophical Society in Pittsburgh

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February Cont...

## March

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1<sup>st</sup> **SPRING BREAK – NO MEETING**

8<sup>th</sup> **SPRING BREAK – NO MEETING**

15<sup>th</sup> **UNIFYING “GOD”** – Shree\_G Dasa  
Join religious scholar and spiritual teacher Shree\_G Dasa for an investigation of the unifying principles behind the concept of “God”. Examples and references will be taken from multiple religious ideologies including the Bhagavad-gita, the Bible, Koran and the Vedas.

22<sup>nd</sup> **SPIRITUAL HEALING** – Francesca Szarnicki  
Learn how spiritual healing can stop the relentless turning wheel of karma. Many things we experience in this life are rooted in past life times. For eons spiritual teachers have rationalized that karma dictates if a person is to be born healthy and wealthy or not. Today, energetic healing reveals that pre-programmed karma can be de-programmed.

Many of us have a backlog of illnesses, accidents, and relationship disasters just waiting to unfold. Utilizing spiritual therapy we are now able to erase those items before they actually materialize in our lives. The process engages self-forgiveness at the deepest levels of consciousness. This healing is a major step in freeing us from the shackles of karma. SRT, a subtle form of spiritual therapy initiates positive changes even before a person realizes the scope of their own problems. Negative energy is dissolved and cleared so quickly that some people do not immediately recognize what is happening. In many cases, long-term difficult patterns shift instantly to give the person the relief they so desperately need.

29<sup>th</sup> **DOUBLE FEATURE**

**LECTURE:**

**THE PHYSICS OF MEDITATION** – Andrew Nesky

Is there a common thread in meditation? What is the significance of the Right Hand vs. the Left Hand Path? Can Tantric Sex have *anything* in common with reciting the Rosary? Join Theosophical Society President Andrew Nesky for the answers.

**DOCUMENTARY:**

**CENTURY OF SELF: Happiness Machines– Bet’cha didn’t know Sigmund Freud was Big Brother- See details page 4**

## April

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7<sup>th</sup> **CASE STUDIES IN REINCARNATION** – Joe Turiano  
Reincarnation is a controversial topic in modern Western society, but this look at some striking true life cases of past-life recall will not only reveal proof of this spiritual phenomenon, it will illustrate how past life recall and study can reveal the energetic source of personal illnesses and fears and help bring about their cure. The implications of these things for the personal learning of life lessons and the achievement of spiritual growth will also be discussed.

12<sup>th</sup> **EASTER HOLIDAY – NO MEETING**

19<sup>th</sup> **ZEN – THE ORIGINAL REALITY SHOW** – Dr. David Clippinger  
From its earliest inception, Zen practice has always focused upon the nature of reality, and enlightenment is nothing more than a return to the source--that is, the ability to penetrate to the "real." In this lecture, Ven. Shih Tao-Fa will discuss the fundamentals of Buddhist and Zen philosophy and the relationship that the practice has to the transcendent that permeates reality. Drawing upon writings from

April – cont.

the Ch'an (Zen) patriarchs, the talk will survey Buddhism and examine how applicable those practices are to our contemporary culture.

26<sup>th</sup>      **ART AS A JOURNEY** – Steven Sherrill  
Art as Journey, and Journey as Art: One man's path into joyous atheism.

## Speaker's Biographies

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**Venerable Shih Tao-Fa (Dr. David Clippinger)**, Resident Instructor and Leader of Mountain Wind Zen Meditation of Pittsburgh, is a fully ordained Bhiksu (Priest) in the Ch'an (Zen) Ni'en Fo Order. In addition, Shih Tao-Fa is the founder and director of Still Mountain T'ai Chi, and has studied with a number of renowned T'ai Chi masters including Grandmaster Daniel Lee, Grandmaster William C. C. Chen, Master Helen Wu, Grandmaster Dr. Yang, and others, and he has published articles on T'ai Chi, Buddhism, and Taoism in various journals and books. He is currently writing *The Bliss of Now: Integrating Living, Working, and Being*, which includes discussions of meditation and Chi Kung exercises and draws upon his experience as an Ordained Zen Buddhist Monk and the resident Instructor of Mountain Wind Zen Meditation in Pittsburgh .

**Shree\_G Dasa** is the director of Krishna Ministry, which has about 1,000 online members, and he is a direct disciple of Srila Prabhupada, having taken initiation in 1970. The goal of our ministry is to help everyone find peace through chanting the Hare Krishna Mantra, as established by Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the yuga avatar in this fallen age of Kali. Lord Chaitanya descended 500 years ago in Bengal and established this chanting process as the yuga dharma (religious duty of the age). E-maiKrishna Ministry was founded in 2002 by Shree\_G Dasa and follows the path set by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, founder of the modern-day Krishna consciousness movement. The Krishna Ministry is located at: 3513A Butler St., Pittsburgh, PA 15201 Shree\_G can be reached by telephone at 412.685.4347

**Fr. Tom Hart** is the Chair of the Religious Studies Department and the Assistant to the President for Mission at St. Vincent College. He has a B.A. from the University of Steubenville, a Master of Divinity from St. Vincent Seminary, and is an S.T.L. candidate at the Catholic University of America. He is widely published and a recognized leader of inter-religious dialogue.

**Andrew Nesky** is the president of the Theosophical Society in Pittsburgh. He has twice been elected to the position of Master of a Masonic Lodge, is a ULC minister and is a published writer. An actor with over 200 performance credits, he also lectures on the subject of metaphysics and human development and has coached high-school competitive public speaking, specializing in value-based Lincoln-Douglas format debate. He created and hosted the pioneering web-casted talk show "Science and the Outer Streams". The show features esoteric and religious authorities from around the world and investigates the frontiers of human thought, science and spirituality. It is beginning its re-release and can be viewed at [www.esotericgateway.com](http://www.esotericgateway.com).

**Steven Sherrill**, Associate Professor of English and Integrative Arts, writes, paints, teaches, and struggles with his banjo, at Penn State Altoona. After receiving a Welding Diploma from Mitchell Community College (and the passing of a considerable amount of time) he went on to earn an MFA in Poetry from the Iowa Writers' Workshop. He is the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship for Fiction in 2002. His first novel, *The Minotaur Takes a Cigarette Break*, is translated into 9 languages. His second novel, *Visits From the Drowned Girl*, published by Random House, US and Canongate, UK was released in June of 2004, and was nominated by Random House for the Pulitzer Prize in Fiction. *The Locktender's House*, novel #3 was released in Spring 2008.

**Francesca Szarnicki** works as a spiritual healer and uses a technique called Spiritual Response Therapy (SRT). As people know, *understanding problems does not make them disappear*. Francesca advises everyone to take the leap into spiritual healing. She describes her work with SRT as miraculous because this particular technique provides a method to shut down many karmic programs. For more information visit: [www.NumerologyWizard.com](http://www.NumerologyWizard.com)

*Speaker's Biographies cont.*

**Joe Turiano** is a certified Past-Life Regression Therapist through Woolger USA and a certified Hellinger Family Constellation Therapist through the Hellinger Institute of Western PA. He is also a certified Transpersonal Hypnotherapist through the National Association of Transpersonal Hypnotherapists.

## **Theosophical Society Movie Series**

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Ever finish a movie and say, "Wow – that was *really* deep," maybe wishing you had some way to further explore the ideas you'd just encountered? *Well wish no more!* Join the Theosophical Society once each month after a scheduled lecture to view some of the finest "deep" movies and documentaries ever made. Each month the movie will be introduced by a member or guest lecturer and then after the movie – stay for the discussion and questions! (*See the main schedule for dates and times*)

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## **CENTURY OF SELF: Happiness Machines** – Documentary (2002)

**\*\*\* This difficult to find - award-winning BBC documentary has not yet been formally released on DVD which means: if you miss it at the Theosophical Society – you will have a very difficult time finding it anywhere else. \*\*\***

**Run Time:** 58 min.

**Rating:** NR

**Description:** Adam Curtis' acclaimed series examines the rise of the all-consuming self against the backdrop of the Freud dynasty.

To many in both politics and business, the triumph of the self is the ultimate expression of democracy, where power has finally moved to the people. Certainly the people may feel they are in charge, but are they really? "Century of the Self" tells the untold and sometimes controversial story of the growth of the mass-consumer society in Britain and the United States. How was the all-consuming self created, by whom, and in whose interests?

The Freud dynasty is at the heart of this compelling social history. Sigmund Freud, founder of psychoanalysis; Edward Bernays, who invented public relations; Anna Freud, Sigmund's devoted daughter; and present-day PR guru and Sigmund's great grandson, Matthew Freud.

Sigmund Freud's work into the bubbling and murky world of the subconscious changed the world. By introducing a technique to probe the unconscious mind, Freud provided useful tools for understanding the secret desires of the masses. Unwittingly, his work served as the precursor to a world full of political spin doctors, marketing moguls, and society's belief that the pursuit of satisfaction and happiness is man's ultimate goal.

### **Episode One: Happiness Machines**

The story of the relationship between Sigmund Freud and his American nephew, Edward Bernays. Bernays invented the public relations profession in the 1920s and was the first person to take Freud's ideas to manipulate the masses. He showed American corporations how they could make people want things they didn't need by systematically linking mass-produced goods to their unconscious desires.

Bernays was one of the main architects of the modern techniques of mass-consumer persuasion, using every trick in the book, from celebrity endorsement and outrageous PR stunts, to eroticizing the motorcar. His most notorious coup was breaking the taboo on women smoking by persuading them that cigarettes were a symbol of independence and freedom. But Bernays was convinced that this was more than just a way of selling consumer goods. It was a new political idea of how to control the masses. By satisfying the inner irrational desires that his uncle had identified, people could be made happy and thus docile.

It was the start of the all-consuming self, which has come to dominate today's world.

*For information call (412) 462-4200*