

THE CHALLENGES OF PEACE ACTIVISM

Proposal for a Left Forum 2018 Panel Discussion

How do peace activists stay in the fight? The antiwar movement today is demoralized and directionless, and the entire planet seems to be sleepwalking towards disaster. Our panelists include writers, journalists and organizers who have kept their spirits up in the face of apathy, derision and misunderstanding. What have they learned about the human and psychological side of our world's addiction to war? How can activists dig deeper into the heart of the most brutal problem our planet has ever known? What will we find there? This panel aims to stir up new ideas and new avenues for hope, cooperation and agitation for change.

Roxana Robinson's 2013 novel 'Sparta' told the stark tale of a young ex-Marine tormented by PTSD after returning from Iraq. Her acclaimed and moving works of fiction include 'Cost' and 'This is My Daughter', several short stories and a new novel to be published in 2019, "Dawson's Fall", about the period of Redemption following the US Civil War. She has also written a biography of artist Georgia O'Keeffe, essays and criticism for the New Yorker and Washington Post, and the foreword for the 2017 short fiction collection 'The Road Ahead: Fiction from the Forever War'. Roxana Robinson is a Guggenheim Fellow, was president of the Author's Guild from 2014 to 2017, and teaches at Hunter College in New York City.

Alice Slater serves on the Coordinating Committee of World Beyond War and is the UN NGO Representative of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. She is on the Global Council of Abolition 2000 working for a treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons and serves on its International Coordinating Committee. She is a member of the NYC Bar Association and serves on the Coordinating Committee of the People Climate Committee, New York working for 100% Green Energy by 2030. Ms. Slater serve on the Board of the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space and is an Advisor to the Rideau Institute. She has written numerous articles and op-eds, with frequent appearances on local and national media.

Joe Lombardo is a Co-Coordinator of the United National Antiwar Coalition and Delegate to the Troy Area Labor Council. A lifelong antiwar and social justice activist, he is a former staff person for the Vietnam-era National Peace Action Coalition and member of Bethlehem Neighbors for Peace. In 2018 he helped to organize the #SpringAgainstWar Spring Action rallies in various cities.

Bob Keeler is a retired journalist and an unretired peace activist. During his decades at Newsday, he was Suffolk County reporter, Albany bureau chief, Sunday magazine editor, and a member of the editorial board. He won a Pulitzer prize for a series about a Catholic parish in Westbury, Long Island. His father and brother were soldiers, and he is an army veteran. But he belongs to the Catholic peace group Pax Christi and is planning a book about America's dangerous worship of the military, an institution he considers unworthy of worship.

Moderator: Marc Eliot Stein is a member of World Beyond War and founder of Pacifism for the 21st Century. A writer and software developer as well as a peace activist, he has built websites for Pearl Jam and Bob Dylan and worked as a technical architect for Foreign Policy, the Center for Disease Control, A&E Network/History Channel and Time Inc. His blog Literary Kicks (which he founded in 1994 using the pen name Levi Asher) is one of the longest-running active websites in the world. Marc was part of a panel discussion on Activism and Mindfulness at Left Forum 2018.

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World Beyond War

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