

Randy Cohen

Original writer of "The Ethicist" for the New York Times

Please contact a GDA agent for information.

Topics

- Accountability
- Activism / Philanthropy / Civic Engagement
- Business

About Randy Cohen

Randy Cohen's first professional work was writing humor pieces, essays, and stories for newspapers and magazines (The New Yorker, Harpers, the Atlantic, Young Love Comics). His first television work was writing for "Late Night With David Letterman" for which he won three Emmy awards. His fourth Emmy was for his work on Michael Moore's "TV Nation." He received a fifth Emmy as a result of a clerical error, and he kept it. For twelve years he wrote "The Ethicist," a weekly column for the New York Times Magazine. His most recent book, "Be Good: how to navigate the ethics of everything," was published by Chronicle. He is currently the creator and host of Person Place Thing, a public radio program.



Select Keynotes

- **Being "The Ethicist": An Evening with Randy Cohen**

After 12 years writing the popular *New York Times Magazine* column "The Ethicist," Randy Cohen shares details and answers popular questions of his unusual job: Were those letters real? Did he ever get one wrong (or, depending on your perspective, right)? Audiences are given a chance to pose their own ethical dilemmas or set Cohen straight about a past column.

- **Drive an SUV in Manhattan & You're Driving Straight to Hell: The Ethics of Transportation**

In this talk, Randy Cohen takes a close look at the ethics of transportation. Ethics concerns the effects of our actions on others. If you drive a private car when you have alternatives - say for a half-mile hop in a big city - then those effects are horrible: you pollute the air, squander public space, and kill about 30,000 of your neighbors every year.

- **How To Be Good**

If we can reach a rough consensus on right and wrong - don't lie, don't cheat, don't steal - why don't we all behave virtuously? Cohen explores the idea that the answer lies not in our characters but our circumstances, and discusses how to create the kind of communities (in our neighborhoods, our schools, and our businesses) in which we are likely to behave admirably. During the Q&A, he then applies these ideas to the actual ethical problems facing the audience.

- **Plagiarism, a Kind of Defense**

We all deplore plagiarism, but should we? Randy Cohen argues that much of what we label as plagiarism in fiction, in music, and in art, is not only acceptable, it is admirable. Indeed it is the only way such work can be done. Other kinds of plagiarism - in academic work, for example - deserve our scorn. How do we distinguish between them and how ought we respond to each?

Select Book Titles

- **2012:** Be Good: How to Navigate the Ethics of Everything
- **2003:** The Good, the Bad & the Difference: How to Tell the Right From Wrong in Everyday Situations
- **1981:** Modest Proposals

