

E T H I C A L O U T L O O K

TWO WEST 64TH STREET, NEW YORK, NY 10023 TEL. 212 874-5210 E-MAIL OFFICE@NYSEC.ORG

Sunday Morning Meetings

11:15 AM—Music and Reflections

In the Concert Hall

April 2

The Underpinnings of Ethical Culture

Tony Hileman

Senior Leader

Eric Volpe Presides

April 9

Beyond Spirituality

James Coley

President, North Carolina

Society for Ethical Culture

Tony Hileman Presides

April 16

Hope Without A Hereafter

Tony Hileman

Senior Leader

Joseph Marvel Presides

April 23

Beethoven: Defiance And Joy

Gerald Ranck

Music Director

Dr. James W. Farer Presides

April 30

Ethical Business—An Oxymoron?

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh

Society President

Dr. Charles H. Debrovner Presides

*Dedicate flowers
for Sunday
Morning*

April Happenings

Robert Fisk—*On War, the Middle East, and Journalism*. Friday, April 7, 7:00 pm (doors open at 6:00 pm). An evening with Robert Fisk, acclaimed journalist and author of *Pity the Nation* and *The Great War for Civilization*, with a discussion on war, the legacy of Western intervention in the Middle East, and journalism. A book signing will follow the event. Admission: Free. No reservations, first come, first served. Contact: Leslie Doyle at 212-874-5210, ext. 144.

Meet the Humanist Family—Tuesday, April 18, 7:00–8:30 pm. Join us for the second session on Humanism presented by our **Senior Leader, Tony Hileman**. While by far the oldest entity in the Humanist movement, Ethical Culture is but one voice in the broad spectrum of the community of reason. *(Continues on page 5)*

President's Notes

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh



Bringing Personal and Business Ethics Together

"...But the intolerable strain of the divided conscience of which I speak is felt by (those) who are eagerly desirous to make their life whole, all of a piece, of achieving consistency in their conduct throughout, and who do not see how to do it because they find that the ethical standard which they acknowledge in their private relations, and which they would like to expand so as to cover their business and professional relations, their conduct as citizens, is incapable of such expression."

—Felix Adler, *The Reconstruction of the Spiritual Ideal*

(pp. 24-25, 1923)

(Continued on page 2)

Sunday Morning Meetings

April 2—The Underpinnings of Ethical Culture

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

Ethical Culture is a Humanist movement and was so even before the term gained full definition and assumed its contemporary usage. The conceptual boundaries of Humanism have proven elastic enough to serve people of diverse perspectives who want to live together harmoniously in a caring community. It is through Humanism's central elements that we determine what we know and how we know it, derive our ethics, and discover how we find fulfillment, meaning, and happiness.

(Continued on page 2)

Contents

Sunday Programs 1
 April Happenings 1
 President's Notes 1
 Sunday Morning Meetings 1
 Early Sunday 3
 Sunday Afternoon 3
 Youth and Family Programs 4
 Our Ethical Family 4
 Film Forum 5
 Meet the Humanist Family 5
 Cherry Blossom Festival 5
 Ethics and the Theater 5
 Spring Hike 5
 Audio Talks Available 5
 Unsung Heroes On the Road
 to Montgomery 6
 Social Service Board 6
 Calendar 7

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 Marlon Rice 107
 Judith Wank 118

President's Notes

(Continued from page 1)

"A generation of people has grown up—particularly those who occupy high positions in politics, economics, the media and all the rest of it—who have no transcendent values, or, if they have transcendent values, they have no means of intellectually reconciling those transcendent values with the way they do business."

—Prabhu Gupta, Global Business Analyst, on "Speaking of Faith," (February 25, 2006)

As I enter a phase of growth in my architectural practice, I find myself beginning to contemplate the standards by which I want my practice to grow. I have been taking courses on green design because I know that being green is a must if we are going to survive. I find myself asking questions about my business model, which is a virtual one, employing the services of draftsmen and women in Egypt, Canada, and Seattle, and an administrative assistant working from Michigan.

I am convinced that this model is a very competitive one economically, and has its green aspects in that no one is driving or commuting to my office. I balance this against the fact that it is one in which work that could be done by a New Yorker, or a citizen of another state, is being shipped across the border to Canada and overseas to Egypt.

My Egyptian connection is an expatriate American who has semi-retired to a resort area of the Red Sea and so the question of outsourcing, right or wrong, is a little more complicated.

All of these individuals are contractors to me, and are responsible for their own health care, office space, and

office equipment. To compensate them for that I pay more for their time than I would if they were on my payroll. As a result, I don't have to invest in the management of those issues for them. I assume that they have worked out what they need to make a good living and pay for their overhead as well.

Of course, there are the more usual ethical challenges of my business: clients who want to cut corners and ignore the building code, as well as questions about whether certain kinds of projects should be built at all. I find myself weighing my values against my need for economic stability all the time.

As the two quotes above, separated by more than 80 years, demonstrate, the issue of how we can conduct business in a way that aligns with the values we embrace as individuals is with us more than ever, and the difficulties of doing so seem intractable. I don't have any answers to offer here, other than to say that I believe these issues can be addressed and positively worked on and that we have to do so in community.

As I look to build a business in which my personal and business ethics are the same, I wonder if any of you are trying to do this, as well. If so, let's talk about it. Email me at mkriegh@acedsl.com. I'd like to hear from you.

Sunday Morning

(Continued from page 1)

April 9—Beyond Spirituality

James Coley, President, North Carolina Society for Ethical Culture

Try as we might to redefine it, the language of spirituality carries with

it connotations of the otherworldly, at least for some. Ethical Culture should be open to many different viewpoints, including those that embrace this traditional religious language. But we may also allow for other views, including the renunciation of religious language for those among us for whom it compromises the appreciation of meaning in this world.

April 16–Hope Without A Hereafter
Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

Ethical Culturists accept this life as all and enough and find hope in our faith in each other—in our quest for a supreme way of being. This is an alien concept to most of western tradition, which depends on the promise of a better life to come, diminishing this life to little more than a test for that life—a trial to be endured rather than an experience to be relished. We believe that the ethical life cooperatively lived offers the very real prospect of a better world and it is in that prospect that we find hope.

April 23–Beethoven: Defiance And Joy

Gerald Ranck, Music Director

At a time when people are perceived to be complacent and spoiled (some-what as the American people seem to be lately), it is appropriate to revisit Beethoven, the titanic struggler who continued his defiant energy and passionate joy in life despite unimaginable strife and personal suffering. One of his great chamber music masterpieces will be performed.

April 30–Ethical Business–An Oxymoron?

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh, Society President

“...But the intolerable strain of the divided conscience of which I speak

is felt by (those) who are eagerly desirous to make their life whole, all of a piece, of achieving consistency in their conduct throughout, and who do not see how to do it because they find that the ethical standard which they acknowledge in their private relations, and which they would like to expand so as to cover their business and professional relations and their conduct as citizens, is incapable of such expression.”

–*Felix Adler, The Reconstruction of the Spiritual Ideal (pp.24-25, 1923)*

“*A generation of people has grown up—particularly those who occupy high positions in politics, economics, the media and all the rest of it—who have no transcendent values, or, if they have transcendent values, they have no means of intellectually reconciling those transcendent values with the way they do business.*”

–*Prabhu Guptara, Global Business Analyst on “Speaking of Faith” (2006)*

This talk will explore the challenges of being ethical in the business world.

Early Sunday
10:00 AM

April 2–Everyday Ethics–Hate: an early morning chat, led by Abe Markman. Bring coffee if you’d like. We’ll discuss the feeling of hate and whether it is an obstacle or a spur to ethical behavior.

April 9–Colloquy–A meditative hour in which we explore thoughts about a presented subject. Marcella Montaruli will guide us in this probing, quiet, and contemplative experience.

April 16–Poetry Reading–A peaceful hour with Cheryl Gross reading the poems of which we are especially fond. Come to read or just to listen.

April 23–Coffee ‘n Chat–Come, enjoy a cup of coffee or tea, and get to know some of your NYSEC Board members.

April 30–Singing–We’ll practice the songs we sing on Sunday mornings—and get some tips to improve our singing technique. A little rusty voice-wise? It doesn’t matter. Join us!

Sunday Afternoon
1:30 PM

April 2–Community Meeting: Find out what’s up with the NYSEC Board and committees. President Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh will present this program. Coffee and tea will be served.

April 9–Ethics in the News: A discussion, led by Mary Ellen Goodman, will continue the search for ethical positions to urge on the 2006 candidates. We hope to persuade other Ethical Societies and the AEU to join us.

April 16–Hospital Chaplaincy: Reverend Dr. Willard C. Ashley, Executive Director of the “Care for the Caregivers” project of the Council of Churches of the City of New York, will talk about the healing help given to hospital patients by chaplains. A pastoral counselor and psychotherapist, Dr. Ashley, along with Dr. Harrison-Ross, is a member of Black Psychiatrists of Greater New York.

We’ll see videos on hospital chaplaincy, *A New Look*, produced by Katrina Scott, and an interview of two Imams, a Muslim physician and a Muslim community activist, about Islamic hospital chaplaincy services in a New York City public hospital.

The presentation will be followed by a discussion about the history, training, challenges, and various levels of counseling, support, and activism required to provide caring and support for patients.

April 23—Shakespeare’s Birthday: We’ll watch and discuss an A&E biography of Shakespeare.

April 30—NYSEC Poetry Reading: Join us for a rewarding afternoon program of poetry read by the poets of the New York Society for Ethical Culture. If you’d like to read, please send your poem or poems (five at the most) to Andra Miller, 146 W. 16 St., NY 10011 or e-mail them to andramm@juno.com. The deadline for receipt of submissions is April 10.

You will be notified of the poems selected and the order in which they will be presented.

Youth and Family Programs

Lynda Kennedy

Please join us on Friday, April 28, at 6:00 pm, for an informative presentation for parents.

“What’s Ahead for Parents of Teens? Raising a teenager was never supposed to be like this,” will be presented by Devorah Weinmann, Director of the Youth Ethics Program at the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island.

Today every thirteen-year-old lives with issues like sex, violence, drugs, alcohol, divorced parents, and easy access to guns. Yet, in this new and sometimes terrifying 21st century, many parents struggle in vain to raise teens with 30-year-old rules that no longer work.

Parents are still the most important influence in a teenager’s life. At this workshop, using the works of Dr. Michael Bradley and other respected authors, parents will learn about the new rule book, gain insight and hope, and get the help they need to safely steer their teenage children through the stormy waters of adolescence.

The program includes a lecture, facilitated group discussion, and a 17-page booklet for each participant. The cost is \$10 for members; \$20 for nonmembers. To register, call Lynda at 212-874-5210, ext. 106. Childcare will be available.

Drama Intensive for Teens: Once again we held a fun and successful Winter Break Drama Intensive here at the Society. Fifteen high school and middle school students, 10 of them from the East Harlem School at Exodus House, came together in February for a week to work with a teaching artist from the American Place Theatre. They created their own performance and then presented it to their families, NYSEC staff, and guests on the final day.

The students also attended a free performance of the Theatre’s *Literature to Life* series. This year the Social Service Board cosponsored the program with the Youth and Family Programs Committee, allowing 10 students to attend free and the others to donate what they could on a sliding scale.

This exciting program gives NYC teens who have nowhere else to go during the public school winter break a creative outlet for their thoughts and ideas, and a chance to meet other students from around the city and work with their peers and professionals to learn elements of theater. We were even able to provide healthful lunches, thanks to Jean Donnay.

Our Ethical Family

Suzy Frazer

Please welcome these new members:

Frank Berger is a retired physician and a noted developer of vital new medicines. He is a member of the NY Academy of Science, the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, among many other organizations. He has known our Senior Leader, Tony Hileman, for many years and was attracted to NYSEC’s liberal outlook.

Jeanine Boubli is a graphic artist who also writes poetry and has a great interest in photography. She has attended many platform talks and was drawn to membership in the Society by the philosophy of Ethical Culture.

Alison Brehm is a hospital administrator with special expertise in analytic philosophy and an advanced practice in nursing. She has attended many of our political debates and enjoys gardening, hiking, and a wide range of NYC’s cultural activities. Alison is married to new member Alvin Brehm.

Charles Dorman is an actuary working in Jersey City. He is starting a non-profit organization to assist others with medical issues. Charles has attended many Sunday platforms and was attracted to NYSEC for its “ethics without superstition.”

Linda Moody recently arrived in New York from Boston, where she was a member of Pen New England and was on the Board of the Art Institute of Boston. She is an educator and writer with an M.ED from Harvard in reading, language, and creative writing. She says that she also works on literacy in public schools. Linda discovered

NYSEC through one of our evenings with *The Nation*, and looks forward to participating in our social activities and community.

Resignations: Joy Collins and Bert Holland have resigned from the Society.

Note: In last month's issue—Carla Stea's name was inadvertently misspelled.

Film Forum

Valerie Leiman



Join us Friday, April 7, to see *Crossing Delancey* (1988). Amy Irving plays a self-reliant, independent New Yorker trying to escape her feisty grandmother's match-making efforts. Irving's character works in a bookstore, a job that brings her into contact with New York City's literary scene. She fulfills her needs for family with visits to her grandmother, where she is introduced to a likely candidate for romance, a store owner, played by Peter Riegert, who has not "crossed Delancey." His flawless timing is one of the film's highlights.

As always, film historian Richard Bruno will be our host for the evening and will lead a discussion following the showing. Past discussions among the series' attendees have been lively and informative, and this evening should be no exception.

Doors open 6:30 pm, and the movie will be shown at 7:00 pm. Admission: \$3.00 for members and \$4.00 for non-members. Popcorn and beverages are included so, come and enjoy!

Meet the Humanist Family

(Continued from page 1)

The community of reason is comprised of a surprising array of Humanist,

skeptic, agnostic, atheist, free thought, and other non-theistic organizations, with interesting and varied histories and personalities involved in each.

In his capacity as Executive Director of the American Humanist Association for six years, Mr. Hileman worked with all of them and has gained a unique perspective on each.

After the presentation we'll have a question-and-answer session. Please join us for a lively and informative evening. The cost is \$15 for members and \$20 for nonmembers. Please contact Judy Wank at 212-874-5210, ext. 118, to register or for more information.

Cherry Blossom Festival

Pat Berens

Come and spend a wonderful day with Society members and friends on this day trip to Newark, on Saturday, April 22. We'll meet at the World Trade Center Path station at 10:00 am. This is one of the finest displays of cherry blossoms in the area. If you are interested in participating call Pat Berens at 212-799-9365.

Ethics and The Theater



Patricia Bruder Debrovner

On Wednesday, April 26, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm., our Ethics and the Theater group will present *Sight Unseen*, by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Donald Margulies. The play won him an Obie Award for Best New American Play when it was premiered in 1992.

The drama, full of funny and incisive dialogue, and with characters whose vulnerabilities are revealed in interesting and subtly constructed scenes, tells the story of a highly suc-

cessful American painter who detours from a London retrospective of his work to visit the lover he hasn't seen in fifteen years. Although collectors are eager to buy his future works "sight unseen," fame has not made him immune to insecurity and a sense of having lost his way.

Our cast includes John Gurney, Alex Mogieleff, Betsy Ungar and Maureen Young and the guest director will be Rebecca Kendall.

Spring Hike

Henryka Komanska

Please participate in our traditional spring hike to Mt. Taurus in Cold Spring, NY, on Saturday, April 29. This five-hour hike starts in the picturesque village of Cold Spring, NY, (MTA Hudson Line) and takes us to the top of Mt. Taurus with its great views of the river and forest. Dress in layers, wear hiking or sturdy walking shoes, and bring water and a snack/lunch for the trail. We'll meet at the information booth in Grand Central at 8:35 am.

Please purchase your own tickets (one way is about \$10). The train (to Poughkeepsie) leaves at 8:55 am, and estimated return time to Manhattan is 4:30 pm, or later, if you chose to join us for refreshments at a local restaurant in Cold Spring. Rain cancels. For more information call Henryka at 212 582-5192.

Audio Talks Available

Leslie Doyle

Brian Lehrer—the audio file of Mr. Lehrer's lively presentation of "Were We Misled? – A Debate on Pre-War

Intelligence,” with David Corn, Bob Graham, Christopher Hitchens, and Ruth Wedgwood, can be heard by clicking on our website at www.nysec.org/2006/02/08/brian-lehrer-feb-8-06/.

This event was recorded before a live audience here at the Society on February 8 and was presented by WNYC Radio, NYSEC, and The Smith Family Foundation.

Norman Mailer—The audio version of this recent program featuring Norman Mailer and his son, John Buffalo Mailer, is now available on our website: www.nysec.org. At this very successful event father and son discussed their new book, *The Big Empty: A Dialogue on Politics, Sex, God, Boxing, Morality, Myth, Poker and Bad Conscience in America*. The evening was moderated by Dotson Rader.

This spirited event was recorded before a live audience on March 2 here at the New York Society and was presented by Nation Books and cosponsored by NYSEC.

Unsung Heroes On the Road to Montgomery

Valerie Leiman and Abe Markman

Twenty intrepid Ethical Culture members and friends struggled through the worst blizzard in the history of New York City on February 12 to get to the Society’s Black History Month program. The afternoon event featured a reading of a play and a taped oral history, both related to the theme of “Unsung Heroes on the Road to Montgomery.”

The play by Valerie Leiman dramatized the true story of Mary Elizabeth

Bowser, a freed slave living in the North, who risked her life by returning to the South to spy for the Union during the Civil War. Cast members Barbara Fennell, Ken Gans, and Abe Markman, and the director, David Leiman, were inspired by Karen Contreras, the professional actor who joined with them in this production.

The taped oral history presentation by Abe Markman recounted excerpts from the life of Charlotte Cochran Markman in Atlanta and included stories about her grandmother, born into slavery, who lived to almost the age of 100 and raised four sons, two of whom became doctors, and two who went into the insurance business. Several white atheists, descendants of the family that had owned Charlotte’s grandmother, later made annual visits to the Cochran family.

During the 1930’s Charlotte’s father led a boycott of a local A&P supermarket. As a 16-year-old high school senior during the 1940’s Charlotte organized a sit-in at an Atlanta University park. The results of these courageous ethical actions: the supermarket was replaced by one with a racially integrated staff and Charlotte’s black fellow students received permission from the president of the white university to use the park.

The lively discussion that followed reflected the success of this very interesting and unusual program.

Social Service Board

David Leiman, Chair

Thanks to the efforts of Henry Bunch, Social Service Board member and director of the Board’s Youth Soccer Program, from mid-February through March. The approximately 40 boys aged 12 to 17 who participate on his soccer

teams using Queens playgrounds for their games, have been able to “come in out of the cold” and play soccer on Saturdays in the gymnasium of the Ethical Culture School in NYC.

That’s important, because permission to use the gym has meant that even in bad weather, they have had a place to go where they are learning the game, actively engaging in organized competitive sports in a cooperative team effort under supervision, and staying out of trouble. The teams come to the school along with their counselors and referees.

On Tuesday and Thursday early evenings Henry works with the teams on training exercises. The boys are delighted to be able to play in a first-class gym and the project has been very successful.

Henry is a registered Commissioner of the American Youth Soccer Organization. Since 2000, his project has been sponsored by the SSB, which provides uniforms and equipment which the players’ families could not otherwise afford.

The SSB’s other projects include the Shelter for Homeless Women, coordinated by Maria Feliz Fridman (in conjunction with the Partnership for the Homeless and the Olivieri Center for Homeless Women) which provides a warm and welcoming place to stay overnight, staffed by volunteers; the semi-annual Homeless Artists Program, organized by Maria Fridman; the Scholarship Project with the East Harlem School at Exodus House, an alternative middle school, chaired by Valerie Leiman; and the Supervised Visitation Project, headed by Christine Pagonos, which provides a congenial place on Saturdays for visits by non-custodial parents with their children.

April 2006

Office hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00 am – 6:00 pm
Shelter: Monday-Thursday, 7:30 pm

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Great Books April 5 – Kierkegaard, <i>The Knight of Faith</i> Herodotus, <i>The Persian Wars</i> Save the Date: Friday, April 7 - An Evening with Robert Fisk - 7:00 PM						
2 10:00 am – Everyday Ethics 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 11:30 am – Ethics for Children 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:30 pm – Community Meeting	3 May 2006 Newsletter Deadline	4 6:15 pm – Drawing Class	5 6:00 pm – Men's Group 7:30 pm – Great Books	6	7 7:00 pm – An Evening with Robert Fisk 7:00 pm – Film Forum, <i>Crossing Delancey</i> (1988)	8 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
9 10:00 am – Colloquy 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 11:30 am – Ethics for Children 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:30 pm – Ethics in the News	10	11 6:00 pm – Women's Group 6:15 pm – Drawing Class	12 3:00 pm – ECRDG	13	14	15 No Supervised Visitation program today
16 10:00 am – Poetry Reading 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 11:30 am – Ethics for Children 12:45 pm – Orientation 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:30 pm – Hospital Chaplaincy	17	18 6:15 pm – Drawing Class 7:00 pm – Meet the Humanist Family	19 6:00 pm – Socrates Café 7:30 pm – Great Books: Clashes of Culture	20	21	22 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation 10:00 am – Cherry Blossom Festival
23 10:00 am – Coffee 'n Chat 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 11:30 am – Ethics for Children 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:30 pm – Shakespeare's Birthday	24 6:30 pm – Social Service Board	25 6:15 pm – Drawing Class	26 7:00 pm – Ethics and the Theater	27	28 6:00 pm – What's Ahead for Parents of Teens?	29 8:35 am – Spring Hike 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
30 10:00 am – Singing Practice 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 11:30 am – Ethics for Children 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:30 pm – Poetry Reading	ECRDG: (Ethical Culture Reading Discussion Group) April 12 – Mario Vargas Llosa, <i>Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter</i> Great Books: "Clashes of Culture" April 19 – Jean Rhys, <i>Questions for Wide Sargasso Sea</i>					

Ethical Culture is a humanistic religious and philosophical movement in which people share a core of common values: the worth of each individual, ethics as central to our lives, eliciting the best from each other and doing good in the world.

We seek truth as a growing, changing body of knowledge based on experience, reason and scientific observation, and seek to use it in support of human well-being.

NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR
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