

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 & Reflection,** **Concert Hall**

April 1 **The Third Great Awakening—** **Whose?**

Tony Hileman
Senior Leader
Ben Bean Presides

April 8 **The Ethics of Chamber Music**

Gerald Ranck
Music Director
Heather Grady Presides

April 15 **The Tao of Ethical Culture**

Tony Hileman
Senior Leader
Muriel Berger Presides

April 22 **My (Humanist) Concept of “Sacred”**

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh
President
Christine Swann Presides

April 29 **The Fire Within: Religion,** **Prophecy, and Politics Today**

Khoren Arisian
Emeritus Senior Leader
Tony Hileman Presides

Come to the
Founder’s Day
Family Reunion
Celebration
Sunday
May 20, 2007

April Happenings

Art Show—Sunday, April 15 at 1:45 pm in Ceremonial Hall. Works of art and crafts, many by members of the New York Society, will be on display here. (See page 5)

Starting on Friday, April 27, from 11:00 to 11:55 am, **NYSEC’s radio programs on Ethical Humanism** will be a regular part of WBAI’s programming. (See page 4)

President’s Notes

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh

Our Annual Pledge Drive



On March 2 we kicked off our annual pledge drive with a party. The event was a big success from my point of view, as it was well attended and everyone seemed to have a good time. I don’t know what the pledging results were, but if efforts, presentation, and mood of the crowd have anything to do with it, I suspect we did well.

A substantial, but none-the-less minority proportion of our membership was present, which means that the majority of our membership did not hear the pitch we made. I want to take this opportunity to review the remarks I made at the party and to encourage all of you to step up to the plate and give generously.

I begin by recounting recent discussions with the AEU apportionment committee regarding our relative wealth. By virtue of the fact that we own a building in a prime location in Manhattan, and because we devote considerable time and energy to renting space in that building, our cash flow looks pretty impressive on paper. We run a budget

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Sunday Morning Meetings

April 1—The Third Great Awakening—Whose?

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

In the course of our nation’s history, there have been two recognized religious revivals. Though arguments can (and will) be made that there have been other significant religious events since the founding of our nation, these Great Awakenings serve as significant demarcations in the religious tenor of America. Now many, including the President, are announcing or prophesying a third shift in our religious outlook, and there is ample activity to merit attention. But where will the shift lead? Will it be another revival of emotional sectarianism, or will it be a revival of a more ancient impulse adapted to a more modern world? Can the spotlight of the next great awakening be on a religion of ethical relationships?

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Deborah Foster	115
Suzy Frazer	113
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President's Notes

(Continued from page 1)

of approximately \$1.25 million a year. Many who look at this paper representation are tempted to think we are well off. Additionally, we have several million dollars of endowments in the bank, making our balance sheet look even better.

Let's take a deeper look, though. Between 80 and 90 percent of our income comes from the renting of space in our building. Less than 20 percent of our budget support comes from our membership. Additionally, to achieve that 80 to 90 percent, the Board and the majority of the staff spend a great deal of their time managing that business and the building. The bottom line is that we rent because we have to, as most of the money we bring in must be used to maintain the building both directly and indirectly. And while we may have several million dollars in our endowments, virtually all of that money is restricted to a purpose that makes it untouchable for operating budget or building repair and maintenance.

The good news is that we are operating in the black, or very nearly so. Last year we had a small budget surplus. We believe we will probably have another small surplus this year and we feel virtually certain that we

will be substantially in the black next year. Three years running in the black is unprecedented for as long as I have been a member, which is nearly 20 years. This affords the Society and the membership an opportunity to contemplate the future and make plans for growth and success without the burden of deficits, which at some points were nearly half a million dollars a year.

While we may have stabilized the budget situation, we are far from secure. In order to arrive at this budget stabilization, we have been forced to spend down nearly all of our unrestricted endowment. We have little to no reserve that can be called upon to cover a bad budget year or meet an expensive emergency. This leaves us vulnerable.

Moreover, our House Committee has noted approximately \$200,000 worth of immediate repairs our building needs and up to \$3 million of additional repairs and improvements that our building will require in the not-too-distant future.

Although there are substantial challenges ahead, I am cautiously optimistic that we can continue to strengthen and ultimately grow. To do that, however, we need everyone's continued and, where possible, increased financial support. The good news is that an increase in your pledge now will help bring about this strengthen-

ing and growth and help us add to our programming and outreach.

Sunday Morning Meetings

(Continued from page 1)

April 8—The Ethics of Chamber Music

Gerald Ranck, Music Director

“The Ethics of Chamber Music,” with Gerald Ranck; Louise Schulman, viola; and William Blount, clarinet, a meditation on the qualities in chamber-music playing that can teach us how listening to one another, working together for a unified goal, and exhibiting sensitivity for the ideas of others combine to help us live a healthier ethical life. Our performers will also play *Six Pieces for Clarinet, Viola and Piano*, delightful chamber works by a woefully underrated composer, Max Bruch.

April 15—The Tao of Ethical Culture

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

The *Tao Te Ching* is one of the oldest religious texts, dating back some 2,600 years. It is one of the most translated, studied, and, I believe, inspiring documents of all time. As evidenced in the opening line of the first of its 81 short chapters—The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao—it is at the same time accessible and opaque. The same can be said of Ethical Culture, easy to understand from the inside but often perplexing from without. What can we as Ethical Humanists learn from the Tao of Lao-tzu—the way of the old master? What does this ancient text have to offer the modern world?

April 22—My (Humanist) Concept of “Sacred”

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh, President

In various religions “sacred” (from the Latin “*sacer*”), “untouchable,”

or “holy” objects, places, or concepts are believed by their followers to be intimately connected with God or a divinity, and are thus greatly revered. For example, some pagans consider the earth sacred, while Roman Catholics consider the transubstantiated host sacred. Reverence is the “deep respect and veneration for some thing, place, or person regarded as having a sacred or exalted character.”

My talk will explore the concept of “sacred” and its place in Humanism.

April 29—The Fire Within: Religion, Prophecy, and Politics Today

Khoren Arisian, Emeritus Senior Leader

In the unimpeachable words of Martin Luther King, “Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.” Emerson once said as much when he observed, “The world in general is as bad as it dares to be. If the tyrants rage, it is because the prophets are silent.” One ceases to be prophetic when the fire within us that drives us toward truth is tamped down. For both Emerson and Adler the imagery of fire was central. Our primary ethical task is to align our most cherished values with how we act in the world. For a world out of joint the time for prophecy is now!

Early Sunday 10 AM

Apr. 1—Everyday Ethics—Foolishness! An important ingredient for a happy life. Andra Miller presides. Room 408.

Apr. 1—Singing Practice—All voices, big and small, are welcome. Led by Pat Debrovner and Jerry Ranck, we’ll practice the songs we sing on Sunday mornings—and get some tips to improve our singing technique. It’s a lot of fun, so come and join us. Ceremonial Hall—4th fl.

Apr. 8—Colloquy—topic, “Living in the Moment.” John Hwang presides. Room 408.

Apr. 15—Singing Practice. Ceremonial Hall—4th fl.

Apr. 15—Poetry Reading—We’ll spend a peaceful hour with Cheryl Gross, reading the poems we especially love. Come to read or just to listen. Room 408.

Apr. 22—No program today.

Apr. 29—Coffee ‘n Chat—Room 508.

Sunday Afternoon 1:45 PM

Ceremonial Hall—4th fl. (Except as noted)

Apr. 1—Meta-Atheism: Religious Avowal as Self-Deception—Dr. John Gurney, a retired computer scientist from the U.S. Harry Diamond Labs, will discuss a paper by Dr. Georges Rey (published in *The Experience of Philosophy*, Oxford University Press). Dr. Rey is a well-known professor of philosophy at the University of Maryland who uses philosophical arguments to support the claim that “despite appearances, not many people—particularly not many adults who’ve been exposed to standard Western science—truly believe in God; most of those who sincerely claim to do so are self-deceived.” This will be followed by an open discussion.

Apr. 8—Public Issues Committee Presentation—Preparation for our Annual Meeting at which members will vote on NYSEC positions on Iraq, stem cell research, and paid family leave, among others. Abe Markman presides. (See page 6)

Apr. 15—Artwork by Society Members. Andra Miller presides. (See page 5 for more information.)

Apr. 22—Life With Health. Jacqueline Pope presides. Room 508.

Apr. 29—Getting Out and Staying Out. Mark Goldsmith, former volunteer principal of the Riker’s Island school—one of the city’s toughest—and now head of his own firm, Getting Out and Staying Out, will speak. His organization’s methods have cut the recidivism rate and turned incarcerated student’s lives around. Come and learn how he is doing this. Andra Miller presides.

IHEU General Assembly

The International Humanist and Ethical Union General Assembly 2007 will be held in Torino, Italy, on Sunday, June 17 and Monday, June 18. At the General Assembly, elections will be held to fill two Executive Committee vacancies. Roger Lepeix (Treasurer) and Jack Jeffery (Vice President) will be completing their terms; but are eligible for re-election.

The IHEU invites registered delegates—representatives of IHEU member organizations, IHEU international representatives, IHEU officers, paid-up IHEU individual supporters and invitees—to attend. For details and forms to register for the Assembly, make EC nominations, and propose resolutions, contact the website: *IHEU.org*.

Congress Member ID’s as Nontheist

Representative Pete Stark (D-CA) “came out” in March as the first openly nontheistic member of Congress. His courageous public announcement was applauded by the American Humanist Association. Said Roy Speckhardt, AHA Executive Director, “It is our hope that he will

become an inspiration for others who have hidden their conclusions for far too long.”

In acknowledging his nontheism, Rep. Stark was responding to an inquiry by the Secular Coalition for America, which has launched an advertising campaign congratulating Stark. The first of the ads will appear in *The Washington Post*.

Pete Stark has represented the 13th district of California since 1973. He is a senior member of the House Ways and Means Committee and Chair of the Health Subcommittee. He is an outspoken progressive on issues of the war in Iraq, healthcare, the economy, and the environment.

Ethics on the Air

Andra Miller, Phyllis Harrison-Ross, Marc Bernstein

Listen up! Our programs on Ethical Humanism, which have been aired occasionally on WBAI-99.5 FM have now been assigned a regular time-slot. Except during the station’s pledge drive (May and July), “Ethics on the Air” is scheduled for the fourth Friday of the month (11:00 to 11:55 am). Scheduled so far are April 27, June 22, August 24, and September 28. The October through December dates will be finalized later in the year.

So, mark your calendar and be sure to tune in. Programs also will be available afterward for “computer listening.” The last forum programs are available at *WBAI.org* (on the left-hand side at “24/7 Audio Archive”): speakers Anne Klaeyen on “Buddhism and Ethical Humanism,” January 5; Klaeyen on “Forgiveness,” January 12; Dr. Marc Bernstein on “Ethical Culture and African-Americans,” February 23; and Dr. Joseph Chuman on “Religion and Ethnicity,” March 23.

The Radio Committee is in the process of scheduling future guests. We’ll let you know as soon as they are set.

Sunday Greeter Coordinators Wanted

Amy Schwarz

It has been nearly 13 years that I have been coordinator of the Sunday morning greeters. For much of that time, there was a team of coordinators taking turns arranging for the people who give out programs and handle the weekly collection. Now it’s time for new volunteers to take on this role. I’ll continue to volunteer as a greeter whenever I’m attending the Sunday morning programs, but after this June I’ll no longer be the coordinator.

I’m very grateful to all of the Society members and friends who have volunteered to help out with such good cheer and loyalty.

Our Ethical Family

Suzy Frazer

We have sad news to report. Longtime member **Claude Weiler** has died. Claude, a Korean War veteran, was a member of the Society for 50 years. A memorial for him was held on Sunday, March 2 at 10 am, in Ceremonial Hall, led by Senior Leader Tony Hileman. Members of Claude’s family attended and were very moved by the large turnout to honor Claude.

* * *

Member **Eva Yachnes** was recently featured in a documentary film!

In mid-March, Eva traveled to Austria to attend the opening of the documentary *Vienna’s Lost Daughters* at a film festival there because she was one of the women whose stories were told in the film. The documentary deals

with the past and present lives of eight Jewish women who escaped from Nazi Vienna as children, and who came to live in this country. Some of us at the Society saw the film crew that was following Eva around, and we are excited to know that the documentary is finished and is now beginning its rounds of film festivals.

You can learn more about it and about Eva at <http://viennaslostdaughters.at/>.
—Elaine Berman

Meet the Author!

Patricia Debrovner

The Adult Education Committee is pleased to announce the first in a new series of Meet the Author events that will explore the ethical aspects of the media. On Wednesday, April 4, 7:00 to 8:30 pm, in Ceremonial Hall, we'll meet Robin Anderson, Associate Professor of Communication and Media Studies and Director of the Peace and Justice Studies Program at Fordham University. She will discuss her book, *A Century of Media, A Century of War*.

The book chronicles how our various forms of media have turned war into entertainment, and how media systems deceive us into avidly or passively supporting the latest war. After her talk, Professor Anderson will answer questions and sign copies of her book. Call Suzy Frazer at 212-874-5210, ext. 113, to register, or just come and pay at the door; admission is \$5.

Ethics in Film

Cheryl Gross

The next film in our 2006–2007 series, “Reel Justice: Courtroom Dramas” will be *Inherit the Wind* (1960), directed by Stanley Kramer (*The Defiant Ones* and *Judgment at Nuremberg*). The film, an adaptation of the Jerome Lawrence–Robert E. Lee play based on the Scopes

Monkey Trial of 1925, will be shown on Friday, April 6, at 7:00 pm.

We'll see outstanding performances by Spencer Tracy and Frederic March as adversaries battling over the theory of evolution versus literal interpretation of the Bible in the trial of John T. Scopes, a teacher arrested for breaking a state law against the teaching of evolution. Tracy plays Henry Drummond, attorney for the defense (Clarence Darrow) and Frederic March plays Matthew Harrison Brady, the prosecutor (William Jennings Bryan). Dick York plays Bertram T. Cates, the teacher in this legendary courtroom drama. Will the basic tenets of our society be defended or abrogated?

Join us for another stimulating discussion of the issues raised. The doors open at 6:30 pm. Admission is \$3 for members and \$4 for nonmembers.

Calling All Artists

Andra Miller

Have you a work of art or craft that you would like to exhibit at our April 15 Art Show? We'll display work on tables and easels and as slide shows for our afternoon program that Sunday. (Ceremonial Hall, 1:45 pm). The idea for this exhibit came up during the discussion that followed last February's Sunday afternoon show of videos by Benny Andrews and Romaine Bearden. We encouraged several artists to commit to bringing in their work for our next show. Here's your chance to join them! If you want to show and share, call me at 212-627-3944.

Spring Hike

Henryka Komanska

Join us on Saturday, April 21, for a hike to Mt. Taurus in Cold Spring, New York. This five-hour hike will take us to a summit over the Hudson River.

We'll take a scenic train ride to Cold Spring, located on the eastern bank of the Hudson, which has many antique stores, a nice coffee shop, several restaurants, and a lovely small park. This town is worth a day's visit even if you do not hike.

The hour and a half ride on the Metro North Hudson line offers spectacular views of the river and, on a clear day, Manhattan. A one-way ticket is \$11. We will meet at the information booth in Grand Central Station at 8:35 am. If you arrive later, you can find us on the train that leaves at 8:50 am. Bring a water bottle, a light lunch and/or snack for the trail, and money for a coffee stop at a local café. Wear hiking or sturdy walking shoes, and dress in layers. Rain cancels.

Save the Dates

Don't miss NYSEC's **Spring Fling Pot Luck** on Friday, April 27, 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm, in Ceremonial Hall. Join members and friends as we enjoy delicious dishes that we've all brought in to share, as well as lots of good conversation and camaraderie. Please call Suzy at 212-874-5210, ext. 113, to talk about what to bring.

The annual NYSEC **Fall Retreat** will be held at Jeronimo's in Walker Valley, New York the weekend of Sept. 21-23. More information about the retreat, will appear in upcoming issues of the newsletter.

Writing Workshop

Elaine Berman

We will begin a new ten-week semester of “The Joy of Personal Writing,” our popular Thursday writing class, on April 26. The workshop welcomes both new and experienced writers. For information, call Suzy Frazer at 212-874-5210, ext. 113.

PIC Urges Vote on NYSEC Positions

Abe Markman

Make history for the ethical movement by your vote at the Annual Meeting on May 6. Positions on five new and challenging issues have been adopted by the Board and are now NYSEC policies. In addition to voting for new Trustees, ratification of these policies will be on the ballot. They deal with war and peace, care for families, health insurance for children; and ethical issues on the frontiers of science. Ratification by our members will give us more leverage in advocating for these policies and will give you an opportunity to be fully acquainted with them when we ask for your support.

On the afternoon of Sunday, April 8, you will have another chance to participate in a give-and-take session on these policies before the Annual Meeting. There will be little opportunity at the Annual Meeting to ask questions before you are asked to vote on them.

You can send a comment or a question to the Public Issues Committee's web message board. The best ones will be posted, with your name if you wish; and they will be added to the *Discussion* section on each Idea or Position page. To do so, log on to: <http://www.nysec.org/pic/>. You might, for example, ask why policies that may seem so disparate were chosen. What do our stands on Iraq, stem-cell research, global warming, paid family leave, and child health insurance have in common?

Mixer a Success

Suzy Frazer

Our recent **Mega-Mixer** of different Society groups, arranged via *Meetup.com*, was a huge success.

Cultured Comedy Club stalwarts Scott Blakeman and Barry Weintraub gave their usual rollicking performances at the party, we had tasty barbecue and other great food thanks to Jean Donnay's wizardry, and we also earned a tidy profit, which the Society's very active Younger Members' Committee has donated to the NYSEC Building Fund.

The event provided a wonderful opportunity for members who might not often get together to get to know each other better.

Seen Around the Society



Card Workshop: Member Elizabeth Jacobs creates greeting cards to go to members who haven't been able to attend Society meetings, an SSB project. The next workshop will be on Monday, April 23, at 4:00 pm, in Room 507. Come!



Pledge Party held on Friday, March 2: (L-R) Society members Bonnie Bean, Barbara Levenson, Theresa Schultz, Christine Swann, Talat Ali, and Ruth Cohen



New Member Celebration held on February 18: (L-R) New members Jennifer Ellen Frank, Michael Sands, and Linda Moody



PIC Meeting held on Sunday, March 11: (L-R) Stanley Aronowitz, Abe Markman, and Dr. Lee Loshak

Mark your calendar to attend the

Founder's Day Family Reunion Celebration

Gather with former Leaders and members of the
New York Society for Ethical Culture on

Sunday, May 20, 2007

11:15 ~ Music and Platform Address in the Auditorium ~
~ Introduction of special guests ~

Ethical Humanism, Cult or Culture
Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

~ Social Hour follows immediately ~
Please be our guest for a special
Founder's Day Luncheon in Social Hall
where you can make and renew acquaintances.

1:45 ~ Afternoon Program in Ceremonial Hall ~
Leaders and members share their personal
remembrances of the Society

Further details in May's *Outlook* or call Sheleigah Grube, 212.874.5210 Ext. 118

April 2007

Office hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00 am–6:00 pm

Shelter: Monday-Thursday, 7:30 pm

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:00 am–Everyday Ethics 10:00 am–Singing Practice 11:00 am–Ethics for Children 11:15 am–Morning Meeting 12:45 pm–Social Hour 1:45 pm–Meta-Atheism	2 May 2007 Newsletter Deadline	3 6:00 pm–Drawing Class	4 6:00 pm–Men's Group 7:00 pm–Meet the Author 7:30 pm–Great Books	5	6 7:00 pm–Ethics in Film: <i>Inherit the Wind</i> (1960)	7 No Supervised Visitation today
8 10:00 am–Colloquy 11:00 am–Ethics for Children 11:15 am–Morning Meeting 12:45 pm–Social Hour 1:45 pm–Public Issues Committee presentation	9	10 6:00 pm–Drawing Class 6:00 pm–Women's Group 6:30 pm–Board of Trustees	11 3:00 pm–ECRDG	12	13	14 9:30 am and 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
15 10:00 am–Poetry Reading 10:00 am–Singing Practice 11:00 am–Ethics for Children 11:15 am–Morning Meeting 12:45 pm–Social Hour 1:45 pm–Art Show	16 6:30 pm–Social Service Board	17 6:00 pm–Drawing Class	18 6:00 pm–Socrates Café 7:30 pm–Great Books: Great Conversations I	19	20	21 8:35 am–Spring Hike 9:30 am and 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
22 10:00 am–No program 11:00 am–Ethics for Children 11:15 am–Morning Meeting 12:45 pm–Social Hour 1:45 pm–Life with Health	23 4:00 pm–Greeting Card Workshop 6:30 pm–Monday Writing Workshop	24 6:00 pm–Drawing Class	25	26 7:00 pm–Thursday Writing Workshop	27 5:30 pm–Spring Fling Potluck	28 9:30 am and 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
29 10:00 am–Coffee 'n Chat 11:00 am–Ethics for Children 11:15 am–Morning Meeting 12:45 pm–Social Hour 1:45 pm–Getting Out and Staying Out	30 6:30 pm–Monday Writing Workshop	Great Books: April 4–Chaucer, <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> ECRDG: (Ethical Culture Reading Discussion Group) April 11–Albert Camus, <i>The Plague</i> Great Books: “Great Conversations I!” April 18–Henrik Ibsen, <i>An Enemy of the People</i>				

NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR
ETHICAL CULTURE 

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