

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

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Sunday Morning Meetings

11:15 AM—Auditorium

December 2

The Frontier of Truth

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

Heather Grady Presides

December 9

Can Shopping Make Us Free?

Sharon Zukin, Broeklundian

Professor of Sociology

Brooklyn College and

City University Graduate Center

Henryka Komanska Presides

December 16

Winterfest

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh Presides

December 23

Panel—A Humanist View

Of Christmas

Joseph Marvel

Carole Chamlin Presides

December 30

Human Rights, Ethics, And Globalization

Heather Grady

Andra Miller Presides

*A healthy and
happy New Year
to all !!*

December Happenings

Conversation With the Leader—On Wednesday, December 5, at 6:00 pm, Senior Leader Tony Hileman will discuss his concerns about the future of Ethical Culture with members in Ceremonial Hall. *(See page 4)*

Winterfest—Come for a celebration of warmth and life on Sunday, December 16, at 11:15 am, at the Society as we gather to share the spirit of the season. *(See page 3)*

From the Leader's Desk

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader



The Next Phase

For those of you who were not at the Community Membership Meeting on November 18, as part of my report I announced that I will not be continuing as Senior Leader. As I explained, I came here on October 2, 2005 on a three-year agreement. I have not asked and the Trustees have not offered to renew that agreement. As a result, my tenure as your Leader will come to an end on October 1, next year.

That gives the Trustees ample time to consider how the obligations and duties normally associated with the office of the Leader should best be filled. And it gives me time to prepare for the next phase of my life.

I am proud of my service to the New York Society and I will remain forever grateful for the opportunity to have worked for you and for the Ethical Culture Movement. It

(Continued on page 2)

Sunday Morning Meetings

11:15 AM—Auditorium

December 2—The Frontier of Truth

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

Ethical Culture is a progressive religion “dedicated to the ever-increasing knowledge and practice and love of the right.” As such, we have a particular interest in truth—not necessarily truth as scientific fact, however, although we certainly strive to remain consonant with our ever-increasing knowledge and understanding of the universe.

Our interest lies rather in the truth of our ideas, of our thinking. Keeping our ideas in agreement with each other and with our understanding of ourselves is no less difficult than keeping them in harmony with our understandings of the world we inhabit. Truth as such is not a static, absolute truth but one that resides at the leading edge, at the frontier of human progress.

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Leader's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

has been one of the most enlightening periods of my life, and it is with considerable mixed emotions that I move forward in hopes that the Society will do the same.

I have long held that the best institutional governance arises from decisions made without respect to specific circumstances. Free of current considerations, the Society, or more specifically its elected Trustees, can now examine the office of the Leader in a more general way.

From my perspective and experience, those considerations should begin with whether or not the position of Leader is a necessary and viable one in the New York Society today. Some contend that it's a concept that belongs to a bygone era—that, having become predominately lay-led, the Society no longer needs or can support the office of Leader. That's a consideration that begs the participation of all involved, especially the primary stakeholders in the Society—the members—as it is you who must shoulder the additional responsibilities of becoming an entirely lay-led Society.

On the other hand, if the office of Leader is to be retained, serious consideration needs to be given to its

relationship to the Board of Trustees and to just how it functions within the Society. This needs to be clearer than it has been in the past, especially to the Trustees and anyone who would consider the position. Only then can attention be turned to who, if anyone, should hold the position.

For my part, I stand ready to do whatever is appropriate to ensure an orderly transition to whatever model the Trustees choose for the Society. In the interim, I assure you that my dedication is unabated and that I will continue to serve this Society with the same vigor and dedication as I have since coming here.

I love this Society and stand in awe of its heritage, its prospects, and the principles and people it represents. It has been a privilege to be a part of it.



In Memoriam

Leon Cowen, 1920–2007

A member since 1967

A Memorial Service will be held on Sunday, December 16, at 2:00 p.m., in Ceremonial Hall.

Sunday Morning

(Continued from page 1)

In order for us to pursue our aim of right relationships, of an ethical culture, our thinking, our truth, must accommodate not only our scientific and psychological understandings. It must also continually advance and adjust to our expanding concepts of the virtues that guide our behavior—sincerity, good faith, honesty, and respect. Ethical Culturists are explorers of the frontier of truth. It is in this quest that we find meaning, and that the spiritual and religious aspects of life are deepened.

December 9—Can Shopping Make Us Free?

Sharon Zukin, Broeklundian Professor Of Sociology, Brooklyn College and City University Graduate Center

Challenging both the simple idea that Americans are addicted to shopping and the pervasive ideology that we can shop our way to social and economic salvation, Sharon Zukin suggests that shopping is a more complicated process. Everyday stories show how we use shopping to search for a way to realize our ideals but are blocked by stores, manufacturers, and our inability to get the right information—while the local stores on which local communities depend disappear.

Professor Zukin recently received the Lynd Award for career achievement in urban sociology from the American Sociological Association. Her book, *Landscapes of Power: From Detroit to Disney World*, won the C. Wright Mills Award from the Society for the Study of Social Problems. Her latest book is *Point of Purchase: How Shopping Changed American Culture*.

December 16—Winterfest

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader, and Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh, Past President

Though often celebrated in darkness, Winterfest is dedicated to the light of a brighter future. This oldest and grandest of all seasonal festivals is known by many names and has been observed at the time of the winter solstice since the earliest days of humanity. Unlike other celebrations of the solstice season, Winterfest is not about the life of any single heroic figure. It is about all of us coming together in community to share our common hope for the future and to share generously the light we find within us and among us.

Join us in a celebration of warmth and comfort, of life and growth, and of happiness and joy. Once again, the Sunday School children will play a key role in our Winterfest experience. And, in keeping with the spirit of the season, there will be a special, extended Social Hour. Be sure to come and help us celebrate together!

December 23—Panel—A Humanist View of Christmas

Joseph Marvel

What do Humanists do on Christmas? Some might say we celebrate the winter solstice, but do we get co-opted by the Christmas holidays and go along with the festivities of the season? Do some of us just ignore the whole experience, which admittedly is difficult? Is it possible to stay Christmas-free?

After short presentations by several panelists giving some historical background of holiday celebrations and their own personal experiences in regard to celebrating or not celebrating the Christmas season, participants will share their own “take” on the holidays and ways of “enduring” or “enjoying” the season.

It should be noted that for thousands of years, various communities have celebrated life and their survival in the depths of winter, and there was nothing

contrived or artificial about it. The shortest day of the year was chosen for these celebrations because humankind’s precarious survival depended upon the vagaries of nature and the resourcefulness of community members, more so at this time of year than at any other.

Can we suggest ways in which we, as Ethical Culturists, could shape our own celebration of the season?

December 30—Human Rights, Ethics, and Globalization

Heather Grady

In September 2000, 189 of the world’s leaders gathered in New York and committed to the Millennium Declaration. The vision and call to action expressed in this UN document arose out of recognition that the international development efforts of previous decades had failed large numbers of the world’s people. The declaration has language reminiscent of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which incorporated notions of universal human rights standards and principles that states and non-state entities should respect, our shared responsibilities, and our individual duties to community.

The beginning of 2008 provides a moment to reflect on the challenges of living up to, and putting into practice, a values-based framework, whether as organizations promoting ethical globalization or as individuals striving for ethical action in the face of globalization.

Early Sunday 10 AM

December 2—Singing Practice—Join us as we practice the songs we sing on Sunday mornings and get tips from Pat Debrovner and Jerry Ranck on how to improve our singing technique. Everyone is welcome, whether your voice is

big or small. It's a lot of fun, so come and sing out! Ceremonial Hall—4th fl.

December 9—Colloquy: Nature and Nurture—Michelle Rickborn presides. Room 408.

December 16—Poetry Readings—We'll read poems from various cultures throughout the world. Come to listen or to read some of your favorite poems. If you plan to read, we'd welcome your preparing a few sentences about the poet's life. Room 408.

December 16—Singing Practice—Ceremonial Hall—4th fl.

December 23—No program.

December 30—No program.

Sunday Afternoon 1:45 PM

Ceremonial Hall—4th fl.

December 2—PIC: Single-Payer Health Care. Speaker, Marilyn Clement of HealthCare NOW! Abe Markman presides.

December 9—Life With Health—Vegetarianism. Jacqueline Pope presides.

December 16—Winterfest continues.

December 23—Open PIC Meeting. Agenda, new proposals concerning opposition to U.S. military action against Iran, and family-friendly issues. Abe Markman presides.

December 30—No program.

Sunday Morning Greeters

Amy Schwarz

Each Sunday at the morning meeting, two volunteers and a coordinator hand out programs and gather the collection. We need some new faces at the doors, and this is a great way to get to know the members and friends of the New

York Society for Ethical Culture. All you need is a smile and the ability to be here before 11:15 am.

Also, we need to have more than one coordinator responsible for this activity, as it is impossible for me to attend every Sunday of the year.

Please volunteer to share the responsibility—and the enjoyment—that I have shared for more than 13 years. It's interesting and fun. Please see me or contact me at 212-666-5219 (home) or 212-547-0659 (work). Many thanks.

Conversation With the Leader

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

Last month a number of you gathered to hear my concerns about the future of our Movement. Now I would like to hear your thoughts about our Movement and/or our Society. I invite you to meet with me on Wednesday, December 5, at 6:00 pm, in Ceremonial Hall. Then in the New Year, we can revisit the key issues that arise with a fresh attitude toward resolution.

Issues of Concern

To keep the conversation going, the concerns I shared with you were four: 1) that we do not consistently communicate a clear and consistent message; 2) that we are operating below the level of sustainability in numbers, both of members and budget; 3) that while we say we want to be different from what we are, we have not demonstrated the capacity for change; and 4) that our progressive religion seems to be better suited to another time long ago, not having kept pace with the progress around it.

I appreciated your input during our first conversation, welcome additional comments any of you may have, and look forward to hearing your thoughts at our meeting.

More Personal Writing Classes

Elaine Berman

It's a brand new year for NYSEC's very popular Joy of Personal Writing workshops. These ten-week Monday and Thursday classes will begin again in mid-January.

Here is an opportunity to hone your writing skills. We welcome both new and experienced writers who want to start or continue writing in a supportive class setting where they can grow and develop. The cost is \$160 for members, and \$250 for nonmembers. If you are interested in this class, please contact Gloria Chandler at 212-874-5210, ext. 117.

Drawing Class Will Return

Barbara Litke

Our fall nine-week drawing class concluded a most satisfying season, with seven students, several of whom were first-timers who had never held a pencil or crayon since their kindergarten days. All the participants accepted the challenge, took risks using new materials, and created beautiful drawings in pencil, charcoal, and pastel. Several of the returning students continued to develop artistically and made amazing progress. The class ended with all the student-artists expressing themselves in new ways and with new perspectives.

The spring drawing class will start at the end of March, 2008. I look forward to sharing another wonderful experience at that time, and to helping participants explore their personal visions and express themselves through a variety of techniques.

Information about registration will appear in an upcoming issue of our *Ethical Outlook*.

Ethics and the Theater

Patricia Bruder Debrovner

On Wednesday, December 19, 7:00-9:00 pm, the Ethics and the Theater players will present *The Little Foxes*, by Lillian Hellman. Please join us for a reading of Hellman's masterful play and a post-performance audience discussion of the values, behavior, and ethics of the people we'll get to know only too well.

Southern charm cannot disguise the greed that motivates the Hubbard family, whose members spoil whatever they touch. And yet, is it greed that motives them, or just old-fashioned capitalism and American entrepreneurship?

Elaine Berman will direct; our cast includes Muriel and Bob Berger, Jerry Chamlin, Pat Debrovner, Cheryl Gross, Candida Guevara, John Gurney, Jimmy Juste, and Scott Willett. Come and watch, listen, think, and discuss. Admission is \$5.00 for everyone.

Stained Glass Windows Concert

Ruth Cohen

The Ninth Annual Benefit Concert for our stained glass windows, on October 21, was a delightful experience—and a rousing success.

We owe many thanks to Jon Liechty for arranging for all of the wonderful artists. Among these, we heard composer-pianist Peter DiZozza sing a group of his songs before leaving us to give an early performance downtown at La Mama, as well as a captivating selection on the sitar performed by Neel Murgai. We listened to soulful violin solos played by Diane Howard and rousing Azerbaijan music, masterfully arranged by Jon. Our caba-

Public Issues Committee

Abe Markman

Here is what PIC has been doing and what you can expect in the near future:

On October 7 Eric Volpe made a compelling case against the U.S. taking military action against Iran. He presented PIC's new proposal on staying out of Iran on November 25. On October 28 Hamilton McLean, an expert on energy efficiency and a consultant to the NYS Energy, Research, and Development Authority, made a Power Point presentation on energy efficiency and global warming. Andra Miller is quite interested in meeting with him to discuss ways to make our building greener.

On the afternoon of November 25 PIC held its first open meeting. The agenda included two new proposals for member input: one was a strengthened position on such family/work issues as paid sick leave, flextime, and a ban on forced overtime, and the other one was in opposition to the U.S. taking military action against Iran. Abe Markman and Eric Volpe were the presenters. These resolutions are scheduled to be presented for adoption by the Board in December.

The eight-state Paid Family Leave Coalition met in November. The New York Society for Ethical Culture is an active member, as well as many unions and other non-profits. As a result of an Albany lobby day in March, at which Andra Miller, JoAnn Mason, and I participated, the Assembly passed a strong paid family leave bill. While a Senate bill is pending, the Senate recently held a hearing on the issue and Donna Dolan, Coalition Chair, was invited to speak. Please see the January newsletter for an updated report.

On Sunday afternoon, December 2, Marilyn Clement of Healthcare NOW! will make her persuasive case for a single-payer health plan. The Social Service Board and PIC are exploring the possibility of holding a forum on the subject in 2008. We might have more news at PIC's afternoon open meeting on December 23.

We are pleased that so many people attend our monthly morning business meetings, but it is difficult to give non-PIC members as much time to speak as we and they would like. We often have to take time to explain background and context to them. As a result, PIC's Sunday morning meetings will be by invitation only. However, starting in January PIC will hold open afternoon meetings on the second Sunday of each month. We encourage interested members and guests to participate and help us build an ethical consensus. More to come in 2008. We hope it will be a great year for you, and for the planet!



(L-R, back) Eric Volpe, Barry Snider, Hugh McGuire, Lee Loshak, Abe Markman, Virginia Arnold, Jim Hyland, Eric Norlander

(L-R, front) JoAnn Mason, Pat Cohen. Also attending: Nancy Ambruster, Pat Berens, Phyllis Harrison-Ross, Alan Gardner, Ken Gans, Pearl Katz, Carol Rost, Maria Fridman, Alex Mogieleff

ret-style concert came to a close with audience participation, led by singer Sadia Carone.

We thank all of our donors and sponsors who provided complementary tickets, as well as a selection of wine and cheese refreshments. We are most grateful to everyone for making this concert possible, and a lively success.

Social Service Board

Phyllis Harrison-Ross

This fall I had the rewarding experience of participating in a truly historic event, a celebration honoring those in the healing professions who have volunteered to identify and meet the unique needs of underserved mental health populations in the Gulf Coast region in the context of the disaster caused by Hurricane Katrina. On October 12, the All Healers Mental Health Alliance, of which the SSB is a founder and financial partner, sponsored the Gulf Coast Heroes of Healing Celebration at the Southern University at New Orleans School of Social Work's temporary campus. AHMHA is made up of professionals of color across the country in the fields of psychiatry, psychology, social work, pastoral counseling, and public policy. Co-sponsors included the university, the American Psychiatric Association's Office of Minority and National Affairs, and the Black Psychiatrists of America. The event provided a forum in which to discuss the mental health impact of trauma and disaster on students, staff, and faculty at historically black colleges and universities.

This collaborative event was held during the American Psychiatric Association's 59th Institute for Psychiatric Services, October 11-14. The APA Office of Minority and National

Affairs developed a special track within the Institute focusing on these populations and many of its sessions featured presentations by members of the BPA and the Alliance. SUNO was the perfect setting, as the campus had been totally destroyed by the hurricane, and two years later very little progress has been made to restore it. The university is operating in modular units and trailers on a temporary campus with many physical challenges.

The purpose of the celebration was to make a contribution to the community and expand the groups' presence in New Orleans during the APA conference. The event aimed to raise awareness of the mental health needs of these populations and college students of color in the wake of disasters, facilitate the networking of mental health professionals with other healers, recognize the heroism and sacrifices of individual healers in the region, and promote collaborations on strategies to bring hope and healing to underserved populations locally and nationally.



(L-R) Recipients of the AHMHA Heroes of Healing Award: Elliott Hill, LCSW, BCD Vice President, Outreach and Education; Mtangulizi Sanjika, Professor, Dillard University; Anne Dalferes, J.D., Plaquemines C.A.R.E Center; Rev. Tyrone Edwards, Zion Travelers Cooperative Church; Phyllis Harrison-Ross, MD, SSB Chair and AHMHA President; Dean Millie Charles; Larry Hayes, LCSW, New Orleans Recovery School District; Annelle Primm, MD, Convener and Chair, AHMHA; and Clark Richardson, student at the University of New Orleans

In the AHMHA Heroes of Healing tradition, local healers were honored. One of the highlights of the evening was the keynote address by Professor Gail Mattox, M.D., Morehouse School of Medicine and Chair of the Department of Psychiatry. She discussed the mental health of the students in the face of trauma and described how, with mentoring, they have responded in creative ways to develop programs on their campuses to foster resilience.



New Year's Day Party Time!

Barbara Levenson

It's that time of year again! All New York Society for Ethical Culture members and their friends are invited to celebrate New Year's Day together here at the Society.

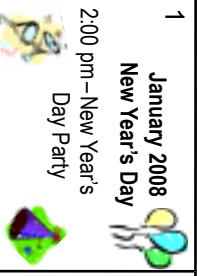
Join us on Tuesday, January 1, 2008, for an afternoon of rollicking fun and friendship. The festivities will be in Ceremonial Hall, from 2:00 to 5:00 pm. We'll enjoy snacks, music, drinks, prizes, and lots of good talk and cheer. Tickets are \$20 per person.

We need to know how much food and drink to provide, so please make your reservations as soon as possible. You can contact me by phone at 212-799-2920, or by e-mail at bar.lev@verizon.net. Tickets will also be on sale during Social Hour beginning on Sunday, November 25.

December 2007

Office hours for the month are: Monday-Friday, 9:00 am–6:00 pm

Shelter: Monday-Thursday, 7:30 pm

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Great Books: December 5 – Schopenhauer, <i>Indestructibility of our Inner Nature</i> Weber, <i>The Spirit of Capitalism</i> ECRDG: (Ethical Culture Reading Discussion Group) December 12 – Phillip Roth, <i>I Married A Communist</i> Great Books: Great Conversations I December 19 – Tille Olsen, <i>Tell Me a Riddle</i>					
2 10:00 am – Singing Practice 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:45 pm – PIC Single-Payer Health Coverage	3 January 2008 Newsletter Deadline 6:30 pm – Board of Trustees	4	5 6:00 pm – Men's Group 6:00 pm – Conversation with the Leader 7:30 pm – Great Books	6	7 14 11:00 am – Ethics on the Air WBAL-99.5 FM	8 9:30 am and 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
9 10:00 am – Colloquy 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:45 pm – Life with Health	10	11 6:00 pm – Women's Group	12 3:00 pm – ECRDG 8:00 pm – Unforgotten Voices Creative Workshop	13	14 11:00 am – Ethics on the Air WBAL-99.5 FM	15 9:30 am and 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
16 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 – Winterfest 2:00 pm – Memorial Service for Leon Cowen	17	18	19 6:00 pm – Socrates Café 7:00 pm – Ethics and the Theater 7:30 pm – Great Books: Great Conversations I	20	21	22 No Supervised Visitation today
23 10:00 am – No program 11:00 am – No Ethics for Children program today 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:45 pm – PIC Open Meeting	24 6:30 pm – Social Service Board	25 Christmas Day Society offices closed	26 6:00 pm – Ethical Culture Today?	27	28 11:00 am – Ethics on the Air WBAL-99.5 FM	29 No Supervised Visitation today
30 10:00 am – No program 11:00 am – No Ethics for Children program today 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:45 pm – No program	31	1 January 2008 New Year's Day 2:00 pm – New Year's Day Party 				

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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