

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

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**Sunday Morning
Platform Meetings**
11:15 AM

**January 1—Ceremonial Hall
Celebrate the New Year with
Music, Poetry, and Brunch**

Pat Wictor, folk musician
Sunday Program
Committee Presides

**January 8—Ceremonial Hall
An Ethical Action Agenda
For 2012**

Dr. Anne Klaeysen, Leader
Paula Claycomb Presides

**January 15—Auditorium
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Remembrance Day:**

Occupy Wall Street
Dr. Anne Klaeysen Presides

**January 22—Ceremonial Hall
Why We Keep Losing
Environmental Battles**

Curt Collier, Leader
Nicola DeMarco Presides

**January 29—Ceremonial Hall
SSB Going Strong in 2012!**

*Phyllis Harrison-Ross, MD, Chair,
SSB; Ivan Quervalu, PhD, Vice-
President; Nickolai Parker,
Treasurer; Helen Mecs, Secretary*
Dr. Anne Klaeysen Presides

***New Year's Day
Celebration***

(see page 3 for details)

January Happenings

On **Sunday, January 1, 11:15 am**, we'll be celebrating the **New Year**—again!—at this morning's Platform meeting. Join us for a rousing good time, with music, poetry, brunch, and a chance to raise our voices in song, led by folk musician Pat Wictor. Auditorium. *(See page 3.)*

Come to the Society on **Monday, January 9, 1:00 pm—3:00 pm** where Leader Dr. Anne Klaeysen will host a discussion on Eliza Griswold's *The Tenth Parallel: Dispatches from the Fault Line Between Christianity and Islam*. Griswold, an investigative journalist and poet, will share her experiences during seven years spent traveling in Indonesia, Malaysia, Nigeria, the Philippines, the Sudan, and Somalia, as well as her understanding of the many, and intertwined, reasons for the ongoing conflicts in the region. Elliott Library, Room 507. *(See page 7.)*

President's Notes

Andra Miller



I've just moved to a new apartment, but I'm still in the process of moving—there are 19 boxes left to unpack. Of course, these boxes contain things I need and can't live without, but I've lived without them for the two days I've been in my new place. It is amazing how life keeps calling your attention to things other than what you feel you need to do—and says, "Yes, but there is this other thing which isn't all about you that needs your time."

And so, unpacking takes more time than it should. And there's the additional factor that in being in a new place with different storage problems and opportunities, you have to be mind-

(Continued on page 2)

From the Leader's Desk

Dr. Anne Klaeysen



Making Resolutions Ethical—and Lasting

New Year's resolutions: we all make them in earnest—and break them in shame. It's a tradition that we can't seem to shake. Weight loss and exercise are often involved, a consequence of indulgence and sloth over the winter holidays. Driven by perfectionism and humbled by fallibility, we soldier on for a few months until spring releases us from the bonds of resolution into the arms of sunshine and blossoms—and some residual guilt.

I wonder: if we could break this cycle of setting unrealistic goals and disappointing ourselves, would we experience ourselves differently? Would we then treat others differently?

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President's Notes

(Continued from page 1)

ful of how you're reorganizing yourself so that later you can find things. I'm tempted to label every drawer until I've learned what I've done with my stuff.

And do I have stuff. I—like most of us—have been a collector all my life. Things seem to cling to me—or to be more truthful—I tend to cling to things. I am amazed at the claptrap I drag around. I have huge collections of things like paper clips, old correspondence, clothing that doesn't look quite right because, for example, the shoulder padding bespeaks the fashion of 10 or 20 years ago.

If you suspected the above was laying down a metaphor that would relate to life at the New York Society for Ethical Culture, I would hasten to say no, that was not my intention. I was just blathering about moving from W. 16th Street to W. 46th Street. But hey, now that that thought has surfaced, I wonder if there is any correlation. It occurs to me that NYSEC might possibly be accused of clinging to old things, old ways of thinking and acting, keeping the present and the future limited by ideas formulated in the past.

You have a perfect right to say to me, "What are you talking about, Andra?" And I don't have a real reply. Our history is full of wonderful accomplishments,

and there are the programs of our Social Service Board—dealing with the age-old problems of the disadvantaged. However, times have changed, the world is very different, and many concerns are new. An active, "with-it" organization such as ours needs to keep checking itself against current events and surfacing concerns.

For that reason, I'm thrilled that Anne is keeping so close to the Occupy Wall Street movement. It's something that, if nurtured and encouraged, might find a way to keep citizenry more in control of its own government and do something to bring more equity to the rich/poor equation.

Which leads me to thoughts of commerce—and to recognize one of the good retailing organizations, Best Buy. I'm delighted to inform you that the local Best Buy store has given our Social Service Board a \$150 camera for the door prize for its New Year's Eve Fundraising Party. It is a beautiful, slim Sony Cyber-shot, with 16.1 mega pixels, 5X optical zoom, 25mm wide-angle lens, and 2.7" LCD screen—great for photos and videos. If you read this January issue before December 31, I hope the chance of winning this door prize helps you decide to attend the party if you haven't already signed up because it will be so much fun. I hope to see you there—or if you read this in January, that I saw you there!

To one and all—Happy New Year!

Leader's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

I learned a mantra from a Children's Sunday Assembly teacher at the Brooklyn Society years ago: "When I'm kind to myself, it's easier to be kind to somebody else. When I'm mean to myself, it's easier to be mean to somebody else." She sang it softly, with slow hand gestures, and she also invited the children in her class to add their own words: "silly," "angry," "loving."

"The mind," said my friend Hindu monk Pandit when he joined us last month for a session of Ethical Mindfulness and Inner Peace, "can be our best friend or our worst enemy. We are quick to judge others, and even quicker to judge ourselves. When we nourish our minds with meditation, we can let go of the past and the future, and bring awareness to the present." It starts with breathing, filling our bodies with air and releasing it, appreciating the gift of life—unbidden and unearned, ever precious.

This New Year's Day, I have decided to reflect upon the past, not in terms of goals met or unmet, but in a more expansive, inclusive, and loving way. When was I really present to myself and others? What did I experience and learn? How did I influence other people in my life? For resolutions to be ethical and lasting, they must be intentional and life-enhancing. At their best, resolutions address the needs of our mind, body, spirit, and relationships; in other words, our whole selves intricately connected to other lives and to the world that we temporarily inhabit.

Perhaps the most significant fact of our lives is our mortality. Some people live in denial of that fact, others seek comfort in the hope of eternal life after

death, still others choose their own time to die. It can inspire hedonism and altruism. It can also offer us an opportunity to create meaning in our lives and to resolve to conduct ourselves ethically.

We may well resolve to lose weight and exercise more. Why? Is the goal to conform to an idealized image of physical beauty? Is it to live more healthfully? Will we make friends at the local Y? We may also wish to learn another language, take dance lessons, or join the Peace Corps. Understanding our intention is critical to making resolutions we can successfully fulfill. It starts with listening, being attentive to our own needs, and accessible to those whom we love.

And what is it that we need? To feel needed, to believe that what we do with our lives matters, and to engage in relationships that make other people's lives better. We can resolve to do just that every day—not just on special occasions—by being present and aware, by connecting to the best in ourselves, and seeking the best in others. It takes practice and support. That's where community comes in. Intentional ethical community offers myriad opportunities for us to experience ourselves as people of worth choosing to attribute worth to others.

Looking ahead...

This year, resolve to participate more in programs offered by the New York Society. Learn about the issues that challenge our mutual welfare and environment, stand up for democratic values that are threatened by the privileged, and find a home in a community dedicated to ethical ideals.

Sunday Morning Platform Meetings 11:15 AM

January 1—Celebrate the New Year with Music, Poetry, and Brunch

Pat Wictor, folk musician

Acclaimed folk musician, singer, and songwriter Pat Wictor will be performing and leading a community sing-along. His music



Pat Wictor

is grounded in the rural country, gospel, and blues traditions of our nation. An innovative slide guitarist known for doing fresh and memorable versions of traditional and contemporary songs. Pat has released five solo CDs and is currently touring as a member of the folk trio Brother Sun. Ceremonial Hall.

January 8—An Ethical Action Agenda for 2012

Dr. Anne Klaeysen, Leader

Each year brings new moral challenges, as well as the continuation of old ones. What's in store for us in 2012? How can we best address the injustices of the world? This platform provides a framework to assess these challenges and work effectively together. Ceremonial Hall.

The shared charity is Hope on Wheels Coats for Kids Drive.

January 15—Martin Luther King, Jr. Remembrance Day: Occupy Wall Street

Dr. Anne Klaeysen, Leader

A panel of activists representing different perspectives on Occupy Wall Street will join us for an in-depth presenta-

tion on the meaning and future of this grassroots movement. Auditorium.

The shared charity is Occupy Wall Street (c/o Alliance for Global Justice).

January 22—Why We Keep Losing Environmental Battles

Curt Collier, Leader

While many strides forward in stricter environmental protections occurred in the early 1970's, since then we've eroded nearly every law designed to safeguard our environment. The problem is not one of concern, but a battle between the rights of all Americans to a cleaner environment and the rights of private land owners and big business to turn a profit. Fracking is yet another example of the rights gap in America. This talk will delve into the legal underpinning of the environmental rights movement and why changes in American law are needed before it's too late. Ceremonial Hall.

The shared charity is The Bellevue/ NYU Program for Survivors of Torture.

January 29—SSB Going Strong in 2012!

Phyllis Harrison-Ross, MD, Chair, SSB; Ivan Quervalu, PhD, Vice-President; Nikolai Parker, Treasurer; Helen Mecs, Secretary.

Members: Rev. Willard Ashley, Sr., D. Min.; Paul Berman; Henry Bunch; Nicola Antonio DeMarco, J.D.; J. Soffiyah Elijah, Esq.; Dr. Maria Fridman; Robert Gangi; Laurette Harper, Esq.; Rob Hofman; Helen Mecs; Eric Norlander; Adrienne Opalka; and Wally Patawaran.

Selected SSB members will present a description of his/her work, background, and support of our Ethical movement, followed by an 11-minute video, and questions and answers.

Supervised Televised Visitation Program: NYSEC and SSB have formed a

collaboration with the Osborne Association of New York in order to reopen and expand our 23-year-old in-person Supervised Visitation Program, which is in the process of writing development proposals. We have been notified that video conferencing equipment will be donated for this program.

Empowering Ethical Elders Program: In addition to its lecture series, EEE provides two Geriatric Care Manager Social Workers, who are available for support, information, and referral, and a Geriatric Care Manager, who is also a Physical Trainer for Elders, who will be available at the EEE lecture series and will lead gentle exercises at each meeting. They can be called at 212-721-4407 or 212-874-5210, ext. 143, and they will call you back as soon as possible.

AHMHA: the All Healers Mental Health Alliance collaborates with clergy and other faith-based leaders and with mental health and educational professionals throughout the United States, Haiti, and West Indies to respond to disasters in a culturally proficient manner. AHMHA leaders are currently working with the American Red Cross to develop a chapter of the American Red Cross' updated training manual for volunteers regarding cultural proficiency in disaster response,

Scholarship Programs: Scholarships are currently given for library services and a college tuition and summer camp program to the Northside Center for Child Development, the Osborne Association of New York, and the Puerto Rican Family Institute, respectively.

The SSB and NYSEC together have done **advocacy** and/or **joint fundraising programs** for the following: Sirleaf Women's Fund (Liberia), NY

Citywide Partnership for the Homeless, American Psychiatric Association, Black Psychiatrists of America, Black Psychiatrists of Greater New York, NYS Office of Mental Health, National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, NYS Office of Children and Family Services, NYS Commission of Correction, and Dance Theatre of Harlem. They have also presented advocacy and/or joint fundraising programs in conjunction with US Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher, including a conference on Health Care Disparities, and held ongoing Interfaith Disaster Response/Care for the Care Givers and Healers healing events in New York, New Orleans and Houston after Hurricanes Katrina and tornados affecting those cities. Ceremonial Hall.

The shared charity is SSB.

Early Sunday 10 AM

(Rooms subject to change)

Jan. 1—Chorus 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. Ceremonial Hall.

Jan. 8—Colloquy—Renewal. Bob Berger presides. Room 408.

Jan. 15—Poetry Reading—Happy New Year! Bring the best of your poetry collection and share them at our gathering. Cheryl Gross presides. Room 508.

Jan. 15—Chorus Practice—Led by Pat Debrovner and Jerry Ranck. Ceremonial Hall.

Jan. 22—Poetry and Nature. Curt Collier presides. Ceremonial Hall. (See article on page 5.)

Jan. 29—Coffee 'n Chat. Room 408.

Poetry and Nature

Leader Curt Collier, Moderator

A new course, **Psalms of the Land: Poetry and the Appreciation of Place**, will be offered on the **fourth Sunday** of each month, starting on **January 22, from 10:00 am to 11:00 am**, in Ceremonial Hall. Part survey, part writing experience, the course will explore the roots of nature-centered poetry, focusing more on our human response to nature and our deep connections to natural “places.”

We will explore the Romantic poets of England’s Lake District (such as Wordsworth and Coleridge); American Transcendentalism (Emerson and Thoreau); Naturalism (Dickinson, Whitman, and Frost); Anti-Industrialists (Lawrence and Abbey), Preservationists (Potter, Muir, Leopold, Carson, and Goodall); Deep Ecologists (Snyder and Duncan); New-Agrarianism (Berry); and Mysticism (Tagore, Yeats, and Oliver), among others. Admission to these sessions is free.

Sunday Afternoon 1:30 PM

(Except as noted)

Jan. 8–*Bubby*, a new documentary film, which is co-hosted by EEE and the Caring Committee, recounts the life of Shura Saul, teacher, author, poet, social worker, and social activist, who celebrated her 90th birthday in 2010. As she shares some of her life’s rich experiences, which range from the student peace and antifascist movements of the thirties, the McCarthy days of the fifties, the civil rights movement of the sixties and beyond, to the present, she reflects on the people and events that moved her. Her profes-

sional life as a teacher and social work pioneer in gerontology touched many lives. Continuing to work tirelessly well into her eighties, she taught graduate courses in a women’s prison. Her story in her own words and those of many colleagues is viewed and documented through the loving heart and thoughtful eye of her writer-director grandson, Matthew Rosvally.

Join us and meet the EEE team and members of the Caring Committee. Admission is free. For more information call 212-721-4407. Ceremonial Hall.

Jan. 8–Ethics in the News. Mary Ellen Goodman presides. Room 508.

Jan. 8–Photography Club—A chance to show, discuss, and learn about photography (1:45-3:15 pm, in the Adler Study, Room 514).

First, we’ll view the “American Experience” documentary, *Ansel Adams*, followed by a discussion of Adams as a photographer and a showing and discussion of his photographs in terms of their composition, technique, social relevance, and personal relevance for viewers.

Then we’ll show and discuss our own photos. Anyone attending is welcome to show some of his/her own photos (a maximum of three 8”x10” or larger prints), or to just view the photos and participate in our discussion. For more information, contact Moe-Swe Myint at 212-874-5210, ext.113.

Jan. 15–Life with Health: Depression Fallout, with author Anne Sheffield. Surveys indicate that one in every 10 Americans has depression at any given time, yet only half seek help and even fewer receive adequate treatment. Hiding behind these statistics is an epidemic of what Anne Sheffield terms “depression fallout”—countless broken marriages and families in turmoil because of an ill-

ness termed “mental” and thus subject to stigma. Identifying and solving these problems is the topic of her presentation.

Anne Sheffield, author of *How You Can Survive When They’re Depressed: Living and Coping With Depression Fallout* (winner of the Books for a Better Life award); *Sorrow’s Web: Overcoming the Legacy of Maternal Depression*, and *Depression Fallout: The Impact of Depression on Couples and What You Can Do to Preserve the Bond*, is a frequent speaker at mental health events, including a Veterans Administration day-long seminar on depression. She grew up with a depressed mother, and both she and her daughter have depression. Ceremonial Hall.

Lunch Discussions Thursdays, 12:00 Noon

Bring your lunch and join Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyesen and members in the Elliott Library, Room 507, from **12:00 noon to 1:30 pm**. This month’s topic will be: **The Human Condition**.

Jan. 5–“Teaching Good Sex” by Laurie Abraham, *The NY Times*, 11/16/11.

Jan. 12–“Sleeping With the Enemy” by Elizabeth Kolbert, *The New Yorker*, 8/15/11.

Jan. 19–“It Does Take a Village” by Melvin Konner; review of “**Mothers and Others: The Evolutionary Origins of Mutual Understanding**” by Sarah Blaffer Hardy, *The NY Review of Books*, 12/8/11.

Jan. 26–“Does Evil Exist? Neuroscientists Say No” by Ron Rosenbaum, *Slate*, 9/30/11.

Folders with relevant articles will be available from Yalitza Garcia in the Leaders’ office. Please come and join the discussion.

Our Ethical Family

Moe-Swe Myint

We want to say “Happy New Year 2012!” to all our members and the NYSEC community at large. This past year, we were very busy, but it was a productive year and we plan to keep ourselves busier still with interesting programs, inspiring talks, and stimulating discussions. By the time you receive this issue we should have the 2012 Spring Ethical Enrichment brochure ready for your perusal and mailed. We would like to thank, from the bottom of our hearts, all those members who have volunteered (too numerous to list individually, but you know who you are) tirelessly each Sunday as Greeters, Lunch Coordinators, and Newcomer Hosts. Without your efforts and generosity of spirit our Sunday experience would not be the warm and welcoming one that it always is. Also, to a cadre of members (the usual suspects) who always can be relied upon to volunteer for all other events: THANKS!

Wrapping up the last few weeks of 2011: Members of NYSEC participated at **Winter’s Eve @Lincoln Center**, on November 28 for the third year. Our goal this year was to teach children to be environmentally aware, so we set up a table with tubs of soil, small seed

starters, decorative stickers, and lettuce seeds so the children could learn how to plant seeds. More than a hundred children stopped by to have fun, learn about planting, and take home a little planter that they have decorated and planted with a seed. They were all thrilled to get a chance to see something wonderful grow at home. Thanks to **Meg Chapman and daughter Clara Malekshahi; Lulu and her mom, Lisa Smith; Anne Klaeyesen; Beth Zucker; Chris Everett; and Bob Liebeskind**, who all came to help at the table.

On Wednesday, December 7, **OUT@NYSEC** in partnership with Gay Men’s Health Crisis (GMHC) presented “Different Voices in the Epidemic: A Community Discussion on the 30th Year of HIV and AIDS and How We Can Help.” Panelists included Mark Milano of AIDS Community Research Initiative of America (ACRIA), Ivan Monforte of GMHC, Charles Shorter of Ryan/Adair Community Health Center, Carl Siciliano of Ali Forney Center (AFC), and Claire Simon of Young Women of Color HIV/AIDS Coalition (YWCHAC). Our own **Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyesen** served as the moderator. Launched to specifically serve the LGBTQ (Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender-Questioning) community, **OUT@NYSEC** is an innovative series of workshops, lectures, and social

events with a broad spectrum designed to foster awareness, wellness, and fellowship. This is the third in a series and a large crowd of passionate, warm, and caring people came together to make this a very successful event. Kudos go to Director of Special Events **Antonio Pagliarulo** for coming up with this fantastic concept and through his indefatigable efforts making it a real success. Not to forget Leaders’ Assistant **Yalitz Garcia** for her coordination of catering and all the beautiful flyers she churned out.

* * *

Bonnie Bean and Barbara Levenson have been keeping everyone, and themselves, busy scheduling very exciting Ethical Adventures. The latest was a trip on Saturday, December 10, to the Rubin Museum, which included a guided tour of the museum and a film. **Carol Rost**, a member of the Ethical Adventures Committee, is planning a **Bowling Night Out** in the near future. Please contact her (phone: 212-260-4703 or email: carri888@nyc.rr.com) if you are interested in participating. This should be a real fun night out!

* * *

A major shout-out to **Nicola DeMarco and the SSB team** for a great job making our **2011 New Year’s Eve Party and Fundraiser** Fun and Ethical! The proceeds will go towards supporting the ongoing projects of the Social Ser-



The kids at Winter’s Eve decorate their pots and plant lettuce seeds. Thanks to Groundwork USA for donating the pots, soil, and seeds! Photos by Beth Zucker.

(L-R) Moe-Swe Myint, Bob Liebeskind, and Anne Klaeyesen help the children.

vice Board/United Social Services, Inc., such as the Shelter for Homeless Women; Supervised Visitations for troubled and separated families; Homeless Artists and Writers Workshops; scholarships for underserved kids programs; La Liga Soccer project for isolated immigrant children; support of local, national and international disaster relief initiatives; collaborations in Justice for Juveniles initiatives; and Empowering Ethical Elders programs for seniors and their families and caregivers. A very enthusiastic crowd rang in 2012 with live jazz/opera sung by Yumi Thomas, The Lucky Dogs New Orleans Jazz Band, an open bar, dancing, door prizes, a raffle, a midnight countdown and champagne, as we viewed the wonderful fireworks from our rooftop overlooking Central Park!

* * *

And, of course, a new year means it's time for another **Pledge Party!** The date is **Saturday, January 28, at 5:00 pm**, in Ceremonial Hall, and the theme is "There's No Place Like Home." The members of the Pledge Committee are planning a potluck dinner and will contact you for donations of your favorite dishes. Check your "snail" and electronic mail for an invitation, new pledge brochure, and further details. Join Society members for an evening of fun, food, and fellowship.

* * *

Member News:

The following members are celebrating birthdays in January: **Nancy Ambruster**, 1/6; **Elizabeth Ungar**, 1/6; **Frances Tait**, 1/7; **Tunç Iyriboz**, 1/9; **Sylvan Wallach**, 1/9; **William Charlton**, 1/13; **Bonnie Bean**, 1/14; **Stephanie Rosenblatt**, 1/14; **John Hwang**, 1/16; **Robert Berger**, 1/17; **Chester Lane**, 1/21; **James Gara**, 1/24; and **Ed Gross**, 1/31.

Ethical Enrichment

Ethics in Film



Chris Everett

Join us on **Friday, January 6, 7:00 pm** (the doors open at **6:30 pm**), in Ceremonial Hall, to see the 1982 film, *The Thing*, directed by John Carpenter.

Scientists working in Antarctica are forced to abandon their research after a helicopter crashed near their camp, bringing a long dog into their midst. But the plot thickens when the otherworldly canine changes form in the middle of the night. As it turns out, the dog is a shape-shifting alien that can attack animals—and unsuspecting humans. Kurt Russell stars in this creepy remake of the 1950s classic.

I will lead our post-film discussion. The suggested donation: \$5.

Ethics in Literature Reading Group

Come on **Monday, January 9, 1:00 pm–3:00 pm**, to the Elliott Library, Room 507. Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyen will host a discussion of Eliza Griswold's *The Tenth Parallel: Dispatches from the Fault Line Between Christianity and Islam*.

More than half of the world's 1.3 billion Muslims and sixty percent of the world's two billion Christians live along the tenth parallel, the line of latitude 700 miles north of the equator. Their encounter is shaping the future of each faith, and of whole societies, as well. Investigative journalist and poet Eliza Griswold spent seven years traveling between the equator and the tenth parallel in Nigeria, the Sudan, Somalia, Indo-

nesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. The stories she tells in *The Tenth Parallel* show us that religious conflicts are also conflicts about land, water, oil, and other natural resources, and that local and tribal issues are often shaped by religious ideas.

There is no charge for members; the public's suggested donation is \$5.

Seminar on Evil

Terry M. Perlin, Ph.D

Join us starting **Tuesday, January 10**, for a six-session seminar on **Evil: Ethical, Psychological, and Social Issues**, which will be led by me. We'll meet the **second Tuesday** of each month, **7:00 pm to 8:30 pm**, in the Adler Study, Room 514.

The problem of evil, its definition and description, its causes and possible "cures," is both very ancient and very contemporary. This discussion-based seminar will examine a variety of theories about evil—ethical, theological, psychopathological, and social—in the context of actual historical, moral, legal, and biographical cases. Our discussions will be based on readings to be done in advance of the sessions. Select handouts will also be provided. The fee is \$20 per person. Participants must sign up for the entire sequence of seminars, and are responsible for acquiring the following texts: Adam Morton, *On Evil*; Deborah Lipstadt, *The Eichmann Trial*; Simon Baron-Cohen, *The Science of Evil: On Empathy and the Origins of Cruelty*; Hannah Arendt, *On Violence*; and Emmanuel Carrere, *The Adversary*.

To register, email Yalitzza Garcia at ygarcia@nysec.org or phone 212-874-5210, ext. 118.

Ethics and the Theater

Patricia Bruder Debrovner

On **Friday, January 20**, from **7:00 pm–9:00 pm**, Ethics and the Theater will present Amy Herzog’s play, *After the Revolution*, a very funny, nuanced, and intelligent play about the Joseph family, three generations of radical leftists. The patriarch, Joe, stood up to the House UnAmerican Activities Committee and, though deceased, is both a potent presence in the lives of those he left behind and the catalyst of the drama. A revelation about him unmoors comfortable certainties. The play is about politics and apathy, the complexity of truth, and the corrosiveness of silence. As one of the characters states, “It can be hard, can’t it, even for very bright, well-meaning people in a tough situation to know what’s right?”

Susanna Frazer directs our cast, which includes Lisa Anderson, Carole and Jerry Chamlin, James De Lorenzo, Tess Frazer, Dan Hanson, and Anne Newhall. Come at **6:30 pm** for a wine and cheese reception and, after the reading, participate in our discussion of the ethical issues of the play, led by Muriel Berger. The suggested donation is \$5. Ceremonial Hall.

Excursions in Environmental Ethics

Curt Collier, Leader

America’s Energy Past and Future—Join us on **Saturday, January 21, 9:00 am**, at NYSEC, the pick-up point for our all-day excursion to the newly expanded **Thomas Edison National Historic Park** in West Orange, NJ, where we’ll learn about the efforts of that great scientist and tour his labora-

tory. Our conversation will begin here and we’ll discuss the role Edison played in shaping America’s future. Afterward, we’ll travel to Ogdensburg, NJ, to visit the **Sterling Hill Mine**. This historic mine tour includes a visit inside the original mine tunnels. We will discuss America’s energy needs, how energy fuels our economy, and the ethical ramifications of various technologies. After a busy and most enlightening day, we’ll return to NYSEC at **6:00 pm**.

Reservations are necessary! You must RSVP by Friday, January 13. The cost of the excursion is \$25 per person. For more information and to reserve a place, please contact Yalitza Garcia at 212-874-5210, ext. 118.

Ethics in Film: Contemporary Documentaries

On **Monday, January 23, 1:00 pm–3:00 pm**, join Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyen in the Adler Study, Room 514. We’ll be showing *Inside Job*. (2010). Filmmaker Charles Ferguson’s Oscar-winning documentary presents in comprehensive yet cogent detail the pervasive and deep-rooted corruption that led to the global economic meltdown of 2008. Through unflinching interviews with key financial insiders, politicians, journalists, and academics, Ferguson paints a portrait of an unfettered financial system run amok—without accountability.

The film showing is free to members, and \$5 for guests.

Personal Writing Classes Are Back!

Our two popular **Joy of Personal Writing** workshops, led by mem-

ber Elaine Berman and now in their eighth year, continue with a 10-week winter term. One workshop meets on **Mondays**, beginning on January 16 (but moved to January 17 in honor of Martin Luther King Day). The other meets on **Thursdays** starting on January 19. Classes last from **6:30 pm to 8:30 pm**, in Room 508.

Writers with and without experience are welcome to join and work in a warm and supportive atmosphere that helps everyone write freely and with focus and skill. Fees for the course are \$160 for members and \$260 for nonmembers. For more information, call Yalitza Garcia in the Leaders’ office at 212-874-5210, ext. 118; see the December issue of *Ethical Outlook*; or visit our website, www.nysec.org/workshop-writers-space, where you can read some examples of work by current and past workshop writers.

Building Committee

Robert Liebeskind

The **Building Committee** would like to report that preliminary research has begun to allow us to commence work on the possible construction of an equal-access ramp to the lobby of the Society building. To date, we have interviewed several architects and have now hired Boling Architect to work with us in the design and approval process. We look forward to the work commencing upon receiving the necessary approvals from the NYC Building Department, the NY Landmark Conservancy, and the local Community Board.

Please understand that we are committed to moving forward as is permitted, but we expect this to be a lengthy process.

OUT@NYSEC EVENT

On Wednesday, December 7, OUT@NYSEC held an event titled “Different Voices in the Epidemic: A Community Discussion on the 30th Year of HIV and AIDS and How We Can Help.” This was GMHC’s first partnership with NYSEC.



(L-R) Leader Dr. Anne Klaeysen, Claire Simon, Carl Siciliano, Charles Shorter, Ivan Monforte, and Mark Milano.



Claire (YWCHAC) stirs up smiles as she describes her experiences with youth. Photos by Yalitza Garcia.

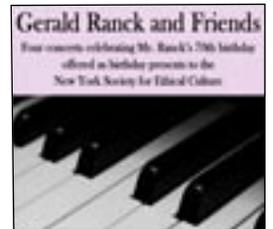


Curt Collier and young people from our Sunday School joined us for a lovely Winterfest on December 18. Photo by Beth Zucker.

Concert Series: A Birthday Present For Ethical Culture

Gerald Ranck and friends

I'll be presenting **four concerts** celebrating my 70th birthday in our Auditorium, for the benefit of the NY Society, on the first **Tuesday evenings of February through May, at 8:00 pm.**



Feb. 7, with Jon Liechty, a piano duet program of music by Schubert and Mozart.

Mar. 6 and **Apr. 3**, with Mark Shuman, violoncello, we'll present all of Beethoven's music for cello and piano.

May 1, Gerald Ranck, harpsichord—an all-Bach program featuring the “Goldberg Variations.”

Tickets for members (including seniors and students) are \$15. All others: \$25.

Please mark your calendars and support the sound of great music in our marvelous Auditorium.

Poetry Corner

An Ode to Why

Abe Markman

Why not ask, "Why are we here?"

Why don't we challenge those who say,

"Why bother, it is beyond us to know, and we have plenty to worry about right now"?

Why isn't it crucial to see ourselves across all boundaries as one people needing each other to not only know but to survive long enough to know?

Why wouldn't a unifying search slow down the self-destructive, head-long march to destroy life on this planet?

Why can't the search be a unifying vision for humanity?

Why isn't it true that if more and more people see the search to know as a unifying force that good things may be possible?

Why not identify with those who do think we should try to know –
Why we are here?

Why not consider that humans could be more accepting and nurturing of each other wedded in a universal search?

Why do people ask, "Why me, I am not an astrophysicist?"

Why not answer, "Let's appreciate the work of those who are"?

Why should we be involved if it may be a multi-millennium quest?

Why not relish every inch forward?

Why not join hands, hearts, and souls in a common enterprise, a common purpose?

Why shouldn't we wonder why we are here?

Why not?

Save the Dates!

Seminar on Hearing Loss

Barbara Litke

It's never too early to "Save the Date," **Sunday, March 18**, a date you won't want to miss, is just around the corner (time to be announced).

You're invited to attend a **Seminar on Hearing Loss** conducted by Leader Curt Collier and Barbara Litke, and hosted by our Living Healthy Committee, Phyllis Kreuttner and Jackie Pope, co-chairs. You'll learn about the functions of the ear and why a loss of hearing may occur—at any age, and about something you can do about it.

"Talk out loud," people say. "Loud" is natural." But sometimes we may need a little help, and there's nothing wrong with that. After all, it didn't take long for people to decide to put on bifocals at 40, if they needed them. Then why not avail ourselves of hearing aids? No more excuses, no more saying, "What," "Excuse me," "Please don't talk with your back turned away from me," or "By the way, would you mind turning up the volume on the TV?" and other such things. So, come, and bring friends. They may be thankful for what they hear and learn!

Stained Glass Windows Benefit Concert

Dr. Ruth L. Cohen

Welcome to the new year! And welcome to a new spring! The Benefit Committee for the Stained Glass Windows is



pleased to announce our **2012 Spring Concert**. So, mark your calendars! The concert is scheduled for **Sunday, March 18, at 2:00 pm**, in Ceremonial Hall.

Prepare to enjoy a wonderful new concert, with new musicians and new music. We look forward to seeing all of you here.

A Healthy and Happy New Year to All!!

January 2012

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 |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| 1 10:00 am – Chorus Practice 11:15 am – Platform Meeting New Year's Day | 2 Society Offices Closed New Year's Day Observance | 3 February 2012 Newsletter Deadline | 4 | 5 12:00 pm – Leader Lunch Discussion | 6 7:00 pm – Ethics in Film: <i>The Thing</i> (1982) | 7 |
| 8 10:00 am – Colloquy 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:15 am – Platform Meeting 12:45 pm – Light Brunch 1:30 pm – Ethics in the News 1:30 pm – <i>Bobby</i> (film presented by EEE and Caring Ctm) 1:45 pm – Photography Club | 9 1:00 pm – Ethics in Literature 6:30 pm – Board of Trustees | 10 7:00 pm – Evil: Ethical, Psychological and Social Issues | 11 | 12 12:00 pm – Leader Lunch Discussion | 13 | 14 |
| 15 10:00 am – Poetry Reading 10:00 am – Chorus Practice 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:15 am – Platform Meeting 12:45 pm – Light Brunch 1:30 pm – Life with Health | 16 Society Offices Closed Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday observed | 17 6:00 pm – Socrates Café 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop 7:00 pm – Felix Adler Seminar | 18 | 19 12:00 pm – Leader Lunch Discussion 6:30 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop | 20 7:00 pm – Ethics and the Theater | 21 9:00 am – Excursions in Environmental Ethics |
| 22 10:00 am – Poetry and Nature 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:15 am – Platform Meeting 12:45 pm – Light Brunch 1:30 pm – Ethical Economics | 23 1:00 pm – Ethics in Film: Contemporary Documentaries 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop 7:00 pm – Prospective Members' Reception | 24 | 25 | 26 12:00 pm – Leader Lunch Discussion 6:30 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop | 27 | 28 |
| 29 10:00 am – Coffee 'n Chat 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:15 am – Platform Meeting 12:45 pm – Light Brunch | 30 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop | 31 | <p>Ethics in Literature: A Reading Group <i>Jan. 9 – The Tenth Parallel: Dispatches from the Fault Line Between Christianity and Islam,</i> by Eliza Griswold</p> <p>Ethics and the Theater <i>Jan. 20 – After the Revolution</i> by Amy Herzog</p> <p>Ethics in Film: Contemporary Documentaries <i>Jan. 23 – Inside Job</i> (2010)</p> | | | |

The New York Society for Ethical Culture is a welcoming home for humanists. We've provided nontheistic services in a congregational setting since 1876. We embrace the diversity of our city and invite all to join us in celebrating life's joys, supporting one another through life's crises, and working together to make the world a better place.

Ethical Culture is a religion centered on ethics, not theology, whose mission is to encourage respect for humanity and nature and to create a better world. Members are committed to personal ethical development in their relationships with others and in activities involving social justice and environmental stewardship.

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