

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

10:30 AM—Ceremonial Hall

July 1

**Religious Fundamentalism and
the Public Schools in Kearny, NJ**

Matthew LaClair

Joseph Marvel Presides

July 8

**Appreciating Inherent Worth:
From Momentary Sparks to The
Fire of Commitment**

Hugh Taft-Morales

Patricia Berens Presides

July 15

**Can Ethical Culture Help You in a
Time of Personal Crisis?**

Dr. Marc A. Bernstein

Heather Grady Presides

July 22

The Feminine Mistake

Leslie Bennetts

Carol Rost Presides

July 29

**Fostering Ethics in the Face of
Globalization**

John Daken

Suzy Frazer Presides

July Happenings

The Feminine Mistake—On July 22, author Leslie Bennetts will discuss her controversial new book, in which she states that the trend of women pausing in their careers to devote themselves to raising children can be very risky. Ceremonial Hall, 10:30 am. (See page 3)

A Brief History of Disbelief—a three-part BBC television series cosponsored by Ethical Culture on WNET, Channel 13, featuring author Jonathan Miller, will be broadcast on Sundays July 15, 22, and 29, at 10:30 pm. (See page 6)

President's Notes

Andra Miller



Hello, from your new President. Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh has passed the gavel on to me after the election of officers at the June 11 Board meeting, and this is formal notice for those of you who've somehow missed the news that I am the NYSEC CVO (chief volunteer officer). I am awed by the responsibilities ahead, anxious to make good, and enthused by the prospect of getting to know you better as we work together to make our Society stronger. The other new officers are Margaretha Jones, Vice President; Steven Schultz, Secretary; and Robert Berger, Treasurer.

Also on the Board are Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh (yes, he's stepped down but he's not out!), Margaret Chapman, Patricia Cohen, Heather Grady, James Farer, Maria Fridman, Phyllis Harrison-Ross, Henryka Komanska, Christina Nargolwala, Jirina Ribbens, Sylvan Wallach, Charles Debrovner (honorary), and Judith Wallach (honorary). You are wel-

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Sunday Morning Meetings

10:30 AM—Ceremonial Hall—4th floor

July 1—Religious Fundamentalism and the Public Schools in Kearny, NJ

Matthew LaClair

In September 2007, Matthew LaClair's U.S. history teacher began preaching his religious beliefs and politics in class, including stating that: dinosaurs were on Noah's ark; evolution and the big bang are not science (in contrast with the Bible, the truth of which is established by fulfillment of biblical prophecies); and anyone who is not a Christian "belongs in hell." Although he had recorded these remarks, school officials seemed unwilling to do anything about this situation. Matthew will describe the steps he, his

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Please Note:

The Early Sunday (10:00 AM) and Sunday Afternoon (1:45 PM) events will resume in the fall, starting Sunday, September 9.

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 Deborah Foster, Production

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United Social Services, Inc.

Social Service Board Directors

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 Margaretha Jones, Vice Chair
 Kenneth Wernz, Secretary
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 Scholarships: Valerie Leiman
 Soccer Program: Henry Bunch
 Supervised Visitation: Margaretha Jones
 Women's Shelter: Dr. Maria Fridman
 Homeless Artists Workshop: Dr. Maria Fridman
 Brochure Update: Lucile Kleiman and
 Margaretha Jones
 IT and Website: Kenneth Wernz

President's Notes

(Continued from page 1)

come to bring your concerns and ideas to any of these folks, because when the Board meets, its task is to make decisions as your personal representatives.

In the interest of informality, I left out the "Dr." titles for Pat, Jim, Maria, Phyllis, Henryka, Sylvan, Chuck, and Judy, but I would like to point out that with all those doctors (M.D. and Ph.D.) and two lawyers (Steven and Christina), along with two architects (Michael and Meg), three non-profit agency workers (Heather, Margaretha, and Jirina) and a heating/cooling expert (Bob), we've got a whip-smart, deeply motivated, and experienced group of Trustees. Add to that the leadership of Tony Hileman, the executive guidance of Bob Liebeskind, and what I bring from my business background (and my typical-of-middle-daughter's skepticism), I figure we have the experience and talent to lead us into an exciting and productive future.

I'd like to recognize the work done by those who have just retired from the Board. We will be building our future on the foundation that has already been set through the wisdom of Barbara Levenson, John Kreuttner, Carol Nadell Van Deusen, and Christine Swann,

among others. I express the Board's and my own deep appreciation for all that they have done both through and outside of their service on the Board—and to the additional Board members who have preceded us—with special mention of Michael, Chuck, and Judy for their service as past Presidents.

Right now, the Board is working on the budget for the 2007/2008 fiscal year and redoing past accounting, so that we are clear on the balances and income in each of our endowment funds. We're also concerned with completing the Pledge Drive (have you made your 2007 pledge yet?). Also, we've been working on raising the funds to activate the \$50,000 one-for-three matching grant for building repair made by Judy and Sylvan Wallach. The grant is applicable through June 30.

As of press time, we're not going to earn the entire grant, but so far our match makes the Wallachs' contribution a whopping \$8,885. To all of you who have already paid your pledges, thanks for your fundraising ideas and for your donations to the building fund. Special thanks also to those involved in fundraising through events: Carol and Richard Van Deusen for their contributed wedding gifts, the Younger Group for the MegaMixer, Eva for the special

birthday party; and Pat Debrovner and the Adult Education Committee for the Ethics in the Theater event (bringing in \$1,800, \$327, \$4,695, and \$4,365, respectively). We now have \$26,657 in the fund, or \$35,542 with the Wal-lachs' 1/3 match. We have enough now to start work on the most pressing repairs: to find and fix the source of a leak in the front wall, redo the wall around it, and repair the door frame.

Clearly, we need additional dona-tions. With deep thanks to those of you who have contributed, if you can give even more we'd be extremely grateful. For those who wish to respond to our plea, please take a moment to talk with Sylvan or me. With your help, we can bring our dear old building up to a bet-ter condition and be sure that we are taking good care of our heritage. In the meantime, your fundraiser volunteers (Sylvan, Jirina, Dr. Ruth Cohen, and I) are learning more about how to raise money and are seeking to reach out to those outside the Society who may be concerned about the care of this his-torical treasure.

That aside, your Board, our Senior Leader, and our staff are busy setting plans and goals for programs and part-nerships to entwine us more firmly into the life of New York City.

Sunday Morning

(Continued from page 1)

family and their attorneys had to take to induce the school to take appropri-ate corrective actions.

Matthew, whose strong stances for taking religion out of education have garnered much print, television, and radio coverage, as well as awards from the Freedom From Religion Founda-tion and the American Ethical Union, will start his senior year in September at Kearny High School. He will discuss

the precarious state of church-state separation in America, the widespread ignorance of science, the willingness of some individuals to "lie for Jesus," and the difficulty and importance of stand-ing up to preserve our most essential principles, including religious freedom, the integrity of education, and the criti-cal role of science in modern life.

July 8—Appreciating Inherent Worth: From Momentary Sparks to The Fire of Commitment

Hugh Taft-Morales

In the whirlwind of our busy lives, it is a special moment when we experi-ence another person as unique and of inherent worth: the quick glance into a stranger's eyes, the extra pause and embrace of a loved one going off to work or school, the spontaneous appreciation of a colleague. The brief moments of recognition of someone else's humanity offer us a form of tran-scendence that seems both personal and universal.

What form do these flashes of con-nection take, and how do we make sense of them? How can we use these moments to ignite and sustain the fire of commitment to build a better world?

Hugh Taft-Morales taught philoso-phy and history at the Edmund Burke School in Washington, DC, for 19 years. He left teaching in summer 2007 to train for leadership in Ethical Cul-ture, and is now in a three-year lead-ership certification program with the Humanist Institute.

July 15—Can Ethical Culture Help You in a Time of Personal Crisis?

Dr. Marc A. Bernstein

What is Ethical Culture's answer to the problem of suffering? If it does not believe in prayer or eternal reward, what, then, does it offer to those under-going travails? Marc's talk will address this question.

July 22—The Feminine Mistake

Leslie Bennetts

Leslie Bennetts' new book, *The Femi-nine Mistake*, has inspired a firestorm of controversy, along with fervent testimonials from readers and stellar reviews from critics, who have com-pared her to Betty Friedan. Responding to the current trend of women leaving the work force to become stay-at-home mothers, she demonstrates what a risky choice that is. Over time, most home-makers end up on the wrong side of the odds, she says, with many plunged into dire financial straits by the loss of a breadwinner. Her message is that 21st-century families are far better protected by more egalitarian marriages in which men and women share both the bread-winning and the childrearing.

Ms. Bennetts has written for major national magazines and newspapers for many years, including *The New York Times*, where she was the first woman to cover a presidential campaign, and has won numerous awards.

July 29—Fostering Ethics in the Face Of Globalization

John Daken

The world seems to be getting smaller all the time. Interlinked economies, ecologies, and cultures make the term "global village" more accurate every year, raising important moral ques-tions. But when religious leaders speak out, their mutually exclusive dogmas stymie their efforts. Aware of the reli-gious elements of modern terrorism, liberal theologians have grappled with the viability of creed in a post-9/11 world. Our pluralistic world calls for pluralistic ethics rooted in a faith in the unique ethical capacities of every per-son and played out through an inclu-sive, elevating discourse.

John Daken, an Ethical Culture Leader-in-Training who is also pursu-

ing a Masters Degree in Divinity, is a member of both the Washington and Baltimore Ethical Societies. Earlier, as a US Navy psychiatrist, he participated in responses to terrorist attacks against the USS Cole and the Pentagon, and later spent five weeks deployed to western Iraq. Having lost faith in the ability of military force to adequately address the terrorist threat, he left the Navy in October of 2006 to pursue a religious career.

Our Ethical Family

Suzy Frazer

Welcome to our new members:

JoAnn Mason is a social worker and resident advisor at the Stanley M. Isaacs Senior Center. She enjoys reading, theater, movies, and visits from her grown children. JoAnn is a valuable member of NYSEC's Public Issues Committee.

Matthew Mallinson is a film and video editor and the cofounder of NY Avid Users Group. His wife, Lynn, has been a member of the Society for many years and their daughter, Elizabeth, has attended our Sunday School from childhood. She had her "Coming of Age" ceremony at our platform meeting on June 3.

Founder's Day – By all accounts, our Founder's Day celebration was a big success! It was wonderful to see so many friends, members, Leaders, and supporters of the Society, some who had long been away. Donna Fetonte, well-loved former Membership Director (before Ben Bean), arrived with her



family, having flown in from Texas. She was greeted very warmly by all who knew her and singled out by president Jim Farer at our platform meeting. Also in attendance, and speaking eloquently at the afternoon Remembrances program, were former Leader Paul Migliore and David Black, the son of famed Leader Algernon Black. Members Elaine Berman and Carole Chamlin spoke movingly of their experiences and growth here at the Society, and Carlos Martinez recalled vivid stories of his formative years at the Encampment for Citizenship, the legendary progressive camp run by Algernon Black.

Thanks again to Jean Donnay, Sheila Kleinwald, Eva Yachnes, and our staff for the well-run, excellent celebratory lunch. The social hour had to be extended for all the "catching up" being done. In all, a great day, observed by our founder Felix Adler's portrait from his honored place, the platform. NYSEC mementos were for sale and went at a fast clip, raising needed funds.

Happy Birthday, Eva—As reported in the June issue, **Eva Yachnes** celebrated her 75th birthday here at the Society, a truly delightful benefit event that raised a handsome contribution to our building fund. And now, a word from Eva.

Thank You
Eva Yachnes

A great big "Thank You" to everyone who made my 75th birthday party such a success! I'm especially grateful to Sheila Kleinwald, Alex Mogieieff, and Michelle Rickborn for their hard work. Kudos to Jean Donnay for the wonderful food, and to our staff for all the work that made the



evening move so smoothly. All of you who were able to come to the party and those who couldn't but contributed to the building fund in my name filled my heart with joy. It was worth waiting so many years for such a happy event. If I had known that a birthday party could be so much fun, I would have turned 75 sooner!

As we all know, membership in the Humanist movement and Ethical Culture, in particular, requires a truly independent thinker and seeker—usually a perennial "non-joiner." Added to this is the competition in NYC from other worthy, liberal, non-theistic institutions, and we at NYSEC face an ongoing challenge. So, all your ideas and efforts are not only welcome, but crucial to the growth and even survival of the Society. Please volunteer and join in on matters about which you care.

On a personal note, I've waited until this issue of *Ethical Outlook* to announce that this summer I'll be leaving my position as Membership Director. It's been a very fulfilling and stimulating three-and-a-half years at our revered Society and I've learned so much. I think we've been able to accomplish a great deal together and I'm most pleased that I could be a part of such new ventures as the creation of our NYSEC brochure, On-Ramp to Membership materials, and a new Statement of Commitment as a member, as well as the Cultured Comedy Club, Ethics and the Theater series, the Task Force on Corporate Ethics, and our second annual one-day NYC Members Retreat. I hope to remain a member and I'll see everyone "around the quad..." Love, peace, and *Avanti!*



Shelter Volunteers Are Honored

Andra Miller

A festive banquet in Ceremonial Hall on June 6 marked the 25th anniversary of our Homeless Women's Shelter, which was inaugurated on June 19, 1982, and honored the 34 volunteers who stay overnight to be on hand for guests, as well as those who do related work. The event also recognized the individual who, for many years, has been responsible for maintaining the Shelter and scheduling the volunteers—Dr. Maria Fridman. Attended by several Shelter guests, it featured speakers from The Partnership for the Homeless, sponsor of the faith-based network of shelters, and the Olivieri Center for Homeless Women, the agency that works each day with the homeless, providing special counseling and training programs. The celebration was sponsored by the Ethical Culture Society and United Social Services (the “good works” arm of our Society), with its chairperson, Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross, serving as M.C.

Maria commended Elizabeth Mallinson, who represented the Sunday school, and her friend, Phoebe Cohn, who created and sold jewelry to Society members during the Sunday social hour lunch—and donated the proceeds, \$100, to the Shelter! She also thanked



(L-R) Elizabeth Mallinson and Phoebe Cohn, with Matthew and Lynn Mallinson

Columbia University coordinator of student volunteers Lauren Biggs for her faithful service during the 2006-2007 school year, and thanked Doris Carrion, who was unable to attend.



Senior Leader Tony Hileman and Social Service Board Chair Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross at the Shelter's 25th Anniversary

Phyllis praised the Social Service Board, the Society, and its Trustees for their support, as well as the Society's administrative and maintenance staff for their work for the Shelter. On behalf of the Board, David Leiman presented Maria with a bouquet and a hand-crafted wall hanging by Valerie Leiman, as “tokens of our esteem” and Lucile Kleiman read a card created by Valerie for Maria that contained an Apache blessing. Phyllis acknowledged guests from the Partnership and pledged to continue working with them in the future to prevent people from “coming into homelessness.” Gail Maynor, Partnership director of community relations and volunteers, also praised Maria for her tireless efforts, and observed that our Shelter was an important part of a larger network of many that serve women in the city. She presented a plaque to the Society and the SSB. Nick Whitehouse and Elana Shneyer also attended the celebration on behalf of the Partnership.

Judy Vincinaza, director of programs for the Olivieri Center, presented the SSB and the Society with a commemorative plaque. Michelle Hall and Vera Osipya, of the Olivieri staff, also attended the event.

Phyllis expressed her appreciation to several people for their support of the Shelter. She thanked Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh and Win Jackson, a long-time Society friend and Shelter volunteer, who contributed \$1,000 to the Olivieri Center (a gift of his employer, Disney), to honor the time he has volunteered for the Shelter. She also thanked Jimmy Mills, who is the superintendent of the building across the street, for volunteering to supervise the repair of the Shelter's floor.

Certificates of appreciation were presented to Friends of the Society volunteers, including Lauren Biggs, Grace Campagna, Leah Freedman, Diana Glantecnick, Katrina Lear, Elder Maxwell, Jonna McElrath, Deborah Titus, Jane Touttle, and Belle Wiggins. Briana Blasco, Kathryn



(L-R) Olivieri Center staff: Vera Osipya, Maria Felix Fridman, Michelle Hall, and Judy Vincinaza, and (front) Center guests Casey, Ed Fitzgerald, Jim Heaney, Win Jackson, Amy Lewis, Julia Millstein, Jamila Williams, and Doris Carrion, who were unable to attend, will receive theirs later.

Also receiving certificates were member volunteers Talat Ali, Ben Bean, Margaretha Jones, Chester Lane, Andra Miller, Paula Miller, David and Valerie Leiman, Marcella Montaruli, Virginia Scherer, and Moira Whittington, as well as Ella Campi, Pat Cohen, John Hwang, Jane and Elizabeth Ungar, who were unable to attend the celebration.



(L-R) Grace Campagna, Andra Miller, Belle Wiggins, and (foreground) Barbara Levenson at the Shelter dinner

At the close, Maria expressed special thanks to members Virginia and Moira, Shelter volunteers for many years, and remembered the late Fred Garel, who was instrumental in starting the Shelter. Mimi Lamb, Fred's widow, remarked that the two had met at a Coalition meeting. In response to the question, "What do the homeless look like?" Fred would answer, "Go into the men's room or the ladies' room and look in the mirror; that's what the homeless look like!"

In Memorium

Suzy Frazer

The Society hosted a wonderful memorial for Kurt Vonnegut in our Auditorium on May 31. A full house included many NYSEC members and friends, plus devoted fans of the great novelist. Although not a member of NYSEC, Vonnegut had always been a staunch supporter of Ethical Culture, the entire Humanist Movement, and, in particular, the American Humanist Association. On the podium were Senior Leader Tony Hileman; Amy Goodman, of Democracy Now; Howard Zinn,



Kurt Vonnegut's caricature-signature

noted historian; Joel Bleifuss, editor of *In These Times*; and Fred Edwords, AHA Director of Communications.

This was a night of deep emotion, great stories, and very fond memories of this profound and beloved writer.

A Brief History Of Disbelief

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

Cosponsored by Ethical Culture, *A Brief History of Disbelief*, a highly-acclaimed BBC series featuring Jonathan Miller, author, director, and commentator, is a series of three one-hour programs that will air locally on WNET (Channel 13) on Sundays, July 15, 22, and 29, at 10:30 pm.

In this series Miller methodically and dispassionately delves into the history of the lack of supernatural belief. The series is being made available for the first time in the United States through the efforts of the American Ethical Union, the national fellowship of Ethical Societies, and others, and will be shown on more than 60 public television stations across the country.

Full listings and more information about the series can be found at www.abriefhistoryofdisbelief.org.

Summer Writing Workshop

Elaine Berman

We'll be presenting a five-week writing workshop this summer, on Thursday evenings from July 26 to August 23. Our workshops here at Ethical Culture are open to beginning writers, as well as people with more experience.

For information, and to register, please call 212-874-5210, ext. 117. To check out some of the writing our workshop participants are doing, please go

to www.nysec.org and look for the Workshop Writers' Space in the Table of Contents. The cost for members is \$100 and for nonmembers, \$125.

PIC In the News

Abe Markman

PIC Issues Win Overwhelmingly—With few "no" votes, all of the Public Issues Committee's issues were ratified by the membership at the May 6 NYSEC Annual Meeting.

Regarding the cloning of human tissues for therapeutic purposes, however, there were three "no" votes and six abstentions. This has sent a signal that we have more work to do on this important issue.

PIC Issues-in-Motion

- Governor Eliot Spitzer supports Paid Family Leave—By the end of the current legislative session, due to strong support from Governor Spitzer and the State Assembly, New York State workers may be eligible to receive up to 12 weeks of paid leave to tend to a new child or care for a seriously ill family member.
- Lawmakers in New Jersey advance bill on Paid Family Leave.
- Mayors from around the world take action on Global Warming.

E-Mail Action Alerts—Every weekly events calendar highlights an Action Alert. Although these are posted by PIC, the action may involve any issue endorsed by NYSEC.

We are very pleased that a remarkable result was achieved in May: The Save Darfur Coalition's divestment campaign, in which the New York Society participated, resulted in Fidelity's disinvestment from PetroChina. This sent a signal to China to fully join multinational efforts to stop the genocide in Sudan.

Programs and Plans—In May, Dr. Radley Horton of Columbia University presented a Power Point analysis of Al Gore’s testimony to Congress. He was positive about some alternative energies but not about nuclear power, because although it is a carbon-free energy source, there is no known technology that can safely dispose of nuclear waste.

Question of the Month—Does immigration help or hurt the Labor Movement?—In a paragraph or two, post your answer on PIC’s message board by going to: <http://www.nysec.org/sitemap/ethical-action/public-issues-committee/>. The deadline is July 19. The best answer will get you two admissions to NYSEC Adult Education Committee events and you’ll be invited to read it at an upcoming PIC event. The answer will also be posted on PIC’s web page by August 1, and will appear in the September *Ethical Outlook*.

Summer Film Showings

Abe Markman, Christina Nargolwala, and Heather Grady

The members of PIC, the Young Members Group, and the Corporate Ethics Task Force invite you to attend two film showings here in Ceremonial Hall this season, *Who Killed the Electric Car?* (Wednesday, July 11) and *Black Gold: Fair Trade Coffee* (Wednesday, August 8). Schedule: 6:30 pm, doors open; 7:00 pm, screening; 8:30–9:30 pm, socializing.

Suggested contributions are \$10 (a beer and popcorn are included). For more details, go to: <http://www.nysec.org/sitemap/ethical-action/public-issues-committee/>.

To RSVP, please contact Gloria Chandler at 212-874-5210, ext. 117.

July Calendar

Office hours for the month:
Monday–Thursday, 9:00 am–6:00 pm
Friday, 9:00 am–1:30 pm
Shelter: Monday–Thursday, 7:30 pm

Ethical Culture Today?
Wednesday, July 25, 6:00 pm

Thursday Writing Class
Thursday, July 26, 6:30 pm

Morning Meetings
Sundays, 10:30 am
(Ceremonial Hall, 4th floor)

Society Offices Closed
Wednesday, July 4

PIC Film Showing
Wednesday, July 11, 6:30 pm

Board of Trustees
Thursday, July 12, 6:30 pm

Socrates Café
Wednesday, July 18, 6:00 pm

August Calendar

Office hours for the month:
Monday–Thursday, 9:00 am–6:00 pm
Friday, 9:00 am–1:30 pm
Shelter: Monday–Thursday, 7:30 pm

Socrates Café
Wednesday, August 15, 6:00 pm

Ethical Culture Today?
Wednesday, August 22, 6:00 pm

Morning Meetings
Sundays, 10:30 am
(Ceremonial Hall, 4th floor)

Men’s Group
Wednesday, August 1, 6:00 pm

Thursday Writing Class
Thursdays (August 2, 9, 16, 23), 6:30 pm

Board of Trustees
Monday, August 6, 6:30 pm

PIC Film Showing
Wednesday, August 8, 6:30 pm

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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