

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

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

Sunday Morning Meetings

11:15 AM—Music and Reflections

In the Concert Hall

June 4

**Enlivening the Center and
Brightening the Boundaries of
Ethical Culture**

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh Presides

June 11

**Gay Liberation—From Self
Acceptance to Social Acceptance**

Tom Ferrick

Humanist Chaplain and Activist

Tony Hileman Presides

June 18

**What It Means To Be An Ethical
Culturist**

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

Christine Swann Presides

June 25

Values and Transitions

Young Members Group

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh Presides

June Happenings

Potluck Picnic—Sunday, June 4, 12:30 pm. Join members of the Sunday Ethics for Children program to celebrate the completion of another year. Meet in Room 507. Bring a dish of your choice. (*Continues on page 3*)

Is There a Culture of Corruption in Politics and Business? Wednesday, June 21, 7:00 pm—NYSEC and the New York Salon cosponsor an open dialogue on this often asked question. (*Continues on page 6*)

Summer Membership Retreat—Saturday, June 24, 9:30 am—4:00 pm. Join other NYSEC members for a focused and rewarding day. Led by Tony Hileman, Senior Leader, we'll have sessions exploring how to *really* build community, better ways to interact ethically, and the benefits of living one's values in everyday life. (*Continues on page 6*)

President's Notes

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh



Trust

In Judaism there is a story about Scorpion and Turtle. Scorpion and Turtle arrive at the banks of a river together and Scorpion asks to be taken on board Turtle's back to cross the river. Turtle is understandably afraid of Scorpion and says so. Scorpion replies that he can protect Turtle during the crossing and that, in any case, why would he do anything to harm Turtle when he would be depending on Turtle for his own safety? Turtle is ultimately persuaded to provide transport to Scorpion. Half way across the river, Scorpion stings Turtle in the back of the neck. Just before they both go under Turtle asks Scorpion why? Scorpion replies, "I cannot go against my nature."

(Continued on page 2)

Sunday Morning Meetings

June 4—Enlivening the Center and Brightening the Boundaries of Ethical Culture

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

At the center of Ethical Culture lie uniquely expressed values that belong to all, yet are owned by none. These radiate outward to illuminate boundaries limited only by our knowledge, ability, and aspirations. Existing as it does, and has for 130 years, without creed, dogma, or dictates, Ethical Culture can at first blush be difficult to grasp—and even more difficult to embrace with conviction and passion—until seen and lived from the inside out. From that perspective, it is an inspiring, rewarding, and personally fulfilling life stance that embraces life with exuberance and offers the prospect of a vastly improved global culture.

(Continued on page 3)

*Happy
Father's
Day*

Contents

Sunday Programs 1
 June Happenings 1
 President's Notes 1
 Sunday Morning Meetings 1
 Early Sunday 3
 Sunday Afternoon 3
 Our Ethical Family 4
 Youth and Family Programs 4
 Film Forum 4
 Photography Workshop 5
 Unforgotten Voices 5
 Democracy and Politics Talk 5
 Ethics and the Theater 5
 A Dialogue on Corruption 6
 Membership Retreat 6
 Great Books 6
 Social Service Board 6
 Calendar 7

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 Marlon Rice 107
 Judith Wank 118

President's Notes

(Continued from page 1)

This is a story about trust and the nature of things. It points out, I suppose, that rationality can overcome fear, but not nature. It says, I suppose, that you must understand the nature of those with whom you are in community, and trust them as you ascertain their natures to be worthy of your trust.

I have lately had a number of disparate reasons for thinking about the nature of trust: as a business owner who enters into business relationships with lots of different people, as a member of our ethical community, and as an American who has come to have little trust in my government.

I ponder the significance of Felix Adler's dictum that we behave so as to elicit the best in others and, thereby, ourselves and, I wonder what role trust has in this. Trust on some level is a requirement of all human interaction that is not to end in violence. When we are young, before we learn the nuanced and varied character of human nature, we trust fairly readily and easily. As we age and gain experience, we are more careful with trust and, depending on our experiences growing up, we may learn not to trust at all. But it is telling that some of my saddest experiences have been with people who weren't capable of trusting at all.

During the 1980's, as the cold war was winding down and arms talks progressed between Russia and the United States, Ronald Reagan told us we had to "trust, but verify." We live in a country where little of any importance is left to trust alone. Even the simplest of business deals require legal advice and relatively complicated documents that lay out the "rules of engagement." Concluding agreements with a verbal understanding and a

handshake is an increasing rarity in this country although, apparently, it does still survive in other parts of the world. We live in a country where even the terms of the dissolution of marriage are negotiated and agreed on in writing in advance, at least among the wealthy who have a great deal of property to lose and can afford the lawyers to hash out the agreements.

One wonders about the quality of commitment in a relationship that assumes dissolution and irrationality as probabilities. We live, I think, in a culture that has a huge trust deficit. I believe that there must be mechanisms and relational structure that help communities avoid misunderstanding and the temptation to behave according to "nature." Even business deals concluded with a verbal understanding and a handshake need to have contracts that lay out the expectations and obligations of the parties involved. These give structure for resolving disputes if they arise, as they inevitably do even in the best of circumstances.

But, in the end, nothing can replace a general faith in the communities of which we are a part, and the trust that must attend that faith. We must be willing to extend trust as generously as possible, and when trust breaks down, we must understand why and take immediate steps to recover it. Trust is not easy, especially in our culture, but it is essential to our well being.

Sunday Morning

(Continued from page 1)

New Member Recognition—This will be a wonderful time to meet members who have joined the Society this year. We'll also have a chance to get to know our new members and celebrate their joining—and enjoy special desserts—during our Social Hour.

June 11 – Gay Liberation – From Self Acceptance to Social Acceptance

Tom Ferrick, Humanist Chaplain

For more than forty years, Tom Ferrick has made Humanism and its advance the number one object of his working life. But for longer than that, he has been a gay man. In most ways, it has been a comfortable fit, without contradictions and with many reinforcements. His main role, Humanist activism, has been his public stance, one overflowing with challenges and satisfactions. His sexual orientation, while never denied or deliberately hidden, reached general notice only occasionally. A Humanist chaplaincy at Harvard and leadership of an American Humanist Association Chapter cornered his energies.

Even so, for several years, he worked publicly against AIDS with “Men of All Colors Together” and openly marched in Gay Pride parades. It has taken a movie of compelling power and sensitivity to give voice to his previously muted thoughts. *Brokeback Mountain* was not just another “love story” or “gay film” for him. Rather, he saw it as a reflection of a cultural phenomenon.

In speaking out at this year’s celebration of Gay Liberation, Ferrick looks back at the movement’s achievements since the Stonewall Uprising in 1969, especially gay marriage, and then turns to face the stormy future ahead due to centuries of hate and conditioning. The modern homosexual has many reasons to be proud. First, however, self-doubt—and worse, self-loathing—must be faced directly and stripped away. And then a faith in winning social acceptance must be adopted and worked at, not as a new religion or a new ideology, but as a genuine way of living, imposed by nature, and brim-

ming with the possibility of achieving enduring happiness.

Tom Ferrick invites us to learn how an inspirational film, depicting in sad, beautiful strokes the wasteful ruin caused by prejudice, has informed his perspective and may well convince a nation of the appealing humanity of so maligned a minority.

June 18 – What It Means To Be An Ethical Culturist

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

Ethical Culture is a challenging life stance that demands much and offers more. As concerned members of our Society, our community, our country, and our world, we often allow the meta-issues of our time to impact our personal lives while losing sight of the opposite cause and effect. Ethical Culture, being a religion of ethical relationships, begins with you and I, and a sense that self includes others. This understanding that the world reflects how you and I treat each other leads us to a deep sense of personal responsibility for the way the world is.

June 25 – Values and Transitions

Young Members Group

This Youth and Family program event will include a special tribute to Lynda Kennedy for the work she has done for the youth and families of the Society.

Early Sunday

10:00 AM

June 4 – Everyday Ethics – Join Eva Yachnes as she helps us ponder the question: “What Difficult Decisions Did You Have to Make Last Year?” Room 408.

June 11 – Colloquy – A meditative hour during which we will explore our

thoughts and feelings about a presented subject. Larry Yates will guide this probing, quiet, and contemplative time. Room 408.

June 18 – Poetry Reading – A peaceful hour with Cheryl Gross reading some of the poems of which we are especially fond. Come to read as well as listen, or just to listen. Room 408.

June 25 – Singing Practice – All voices, big and small, high and low, 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. A little rusty voicewise? Don’t worry, it will be lots of fun, so join us and sing out. Ceremonial Hall.

Sunday Afternoon

1:30 PM (except as noted)

June 4 – Picnic – 12:30 pm. Everyone is welcome. Directions to the picnic location in Central Park will be available on Sunday, May 21 and Sunday, May 28. For more information call Lynda Kennedy at 212-874-5210, ext. 106.

June 4 – Ethics in the News – The group’s discussion, led by Abe Markman, will continue the search for ethical positions to urge on 2006 candidates, mentioned in our May issue. We hope to persuade other Ethical Societies and the AEU to join this effort.

June 11 – NYSEC’s Task Force on Corporate Ethics will present a talk by Paula Lukats, of Just Food, about community-supported agriculture. She will show the video, *The Future of Food*.

June 18 – Author Rabbi James Rudin speaks about his book, *The Baptizing of America – The Religious Right’s Plans for the Rest of Us*. Copies of the

book will be available for purchase and signing, or go to www.jamesrudin.com.

June 25—Ethics in the News—The discussion, led by Abe Markman, will continue the group's effort to develop ethical positions on current issues facing our country. The group hopes to gain the endorsement of the AEU and other Ethical Societies. For more information contact Abe Markman at 212-204-0656.

Our Ethical Family

Suzy Frazer

Welcome to our newest members:

Janice Buzby is an office manager who lives in Astoria. She has attended Sunday meetings, social hour lunches, movies, and lectures here at NYSEC. Janice was drawn to Ethical Culture's philosophy of bringing out the best in others.

Linda Enayati, a senior clinical data analyst, lives in Montclair, New Jersey. Among Linda's interests are water color painting and mosaic art work.

Carole Fuenzalida's wide-ranging interests include art, opera, nature, travel through the third world, and politics. Carole is a long-time volunteer for Earth Watch and the International Primate Protection League.

Eileen Kelly is a retired psychotherapist and psychiatric nurse educator. She enjoys all of the arts, as well as playing bridge, and walking. She also attends our Writing Workshop, led by member Elaine Berman. Eileen learned about the Society from members Marcella Montaruli and Carol Rost.

Lynda Kennedy, Director of Family Programs, is leaving her position. We thank Lynda for her leadership and dedication and wish her success and happiness. See article following.

Youth and Family Programs

Lynda Kennedy



Parents and Teens

On April 28, Devorah Weinmann, Director of the Youth Ethics Program at the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island, presented a workshop for parents of teens here at NYSEC. With humor, intelligence, and knowledge drawn from both extensive reading on the subject and her own experience as a mother of four, she introduced the attendees to the results of new brain research on adolescence (no, it's not just their hormones) and offered practical solutions to everyday issues. She is

available to take this workshop to other settings, such as schools or community groups. For more information, contact Devorah at the LI Society.

Sunday School

During the past year, our Sunday Ethics for Children program tripled its attendance over previous years, with particular growth in the six-and-under group. I want to extend a special thanks to the older students who took on the role of assistants and helped the younger students with such care and good humor; very ethical behavior indeed! I also wish to thank the parents who lent their hands in class and helped with clean-up each Sunday.

Farewell

As most of you know, this will be my last school year at NYSEC as I will be embarking on my dissertation research. The last two school years have been lovely, and the Youth and Family Programs Committee and I have reached many of our goals, including getting our name out to a wider audience and serving ten times more children than in previous years through program partnerships and evening and other events, in addition to Sundays.

I have so enjoyed trolling through the works of Adler and the fellow visionaries of Ethical Culture for inspiration and ideas. I trust that everyone will continue to be as open to new people and new ideas as those great minds were, and that the Society will continue to honor the doing of positive deeds over empty talk. It's quite a special place. Thanks for everything.

Film Forum

Valerie Leiman

On Friday, June 2, the NYSEC Film Forum will present *On The Town* (1949). This film is the classic "boy meets girl, boy loses girl" fable set to music, in which three sailors on a twenty-four hour shore leave find themselves for the first time in the Big City—New York.

They seek adventure and romance and find both with a brazen woman taxi driver and a Coney Island dancer masquerading as a Hollywood star. Marvelous dancing by Ann Miller adds to great singing and dancing by Jules Munchin, Gene Kelly, and Frank Sinatra. Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly collaborated in directing this film, which was adapted from a Broadway musical.

The Film Forum Team, Cheryl Gross and David and Valerie Leiman, will host the evening, introduce the film, and lead a lively discussion with the audience following the showing. Doors open at 6:30 pm, and the film will begin at 6:45 pm. Admission is \$3.00 for members and \$4.00 for non-members; popcorn is included.

Photography Workshop

Patricia Bruder Debrovner



Dr. Larry Yates

Digital cameras and scanners have widened photographic horizons greatly for amateur photographers. However, they also demand new skills. We are pleased to

announce the start of our first photography workshop, which will help participants explore those horizons and learn those skills.

The workshop, led by NYSEC member Larry Yates, will help you sharpen your eye to the basic elements of fine images: composition, lighting, color, depth, texture, movement, and impact, so that your photos will more truly reflect your vision.

Throughout the eight-session course, Larry will offer analyses of attend-

ees' photographs and advice about equipment. Classes will be held on Thursdays: June 8 and 22; July 13 and 27; August 10 and 24; and September 14 and 28, 7:00 - 9:00 pm. Larry is President of the Manhattan Miniature Camera Club, Vice-President of the Metropolitan Camera Club Council; and Treasurer of the Cosmopolitan Chapter of the Photographic Society of America. He also judges and presents his work regularly at regional camera clubs, and has won numerous awards, both regionally and nationally. The fee for all eight sessions is \$100 for members and \$150 for nonmembers. Contact Gloria Chandler at 212-874-5210, ext. 117, to register.

Unforgotten Voices

Maria Feliz Fridman

On Friday, June 9, at 8:00 pm, NYSEC, the Social Service Board, and Unforgotten Voices, a creative workshop directed by Judith Ginsburg, will present works by a collective of visual and performing artists who are or have been homeless, or are otherwise living on the edge. There will be singers, dancers, musicians, and artists, all sharing their talents and joy. Please join us for a wonderful and inspiring evening. Admission is free, and refreshments will be served.

From a review by member Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross of the group's December 13, 2005 presentation: "*It was very cold, icy rain was falling but the warmth from the good feeling and wonderful, talented artists took away all our shivers and chills. There were painters, singers, pianists, poets, rappers, drummers, and tambourine players—and all were first class. This event is a true neighborhood treasure.*"

US Democracy and Politics

Leslie Doyle

Join us at the Society on Tuesday, June 13, at 7:00 pm, for what promises to be an exciting and very informative evening of discussion about the current state of American democracy and politics. At this event, cosponsored by NYSEC and WBAI Pacifica Networks, well-known US and international journalists will share their insights and views.

The evening's speakers will include: investigative reporter Greg Palast (*BBC Newsnight, UK Guardian, and Harper's*), author of *Armed Madhouse* and *The Best Democracy Money Can Buy*; Paul Krugman, *New York Times* op-ed page columnist and author of 20 books; and Amy Goodman, host of *Democracy Now!* and co-author of *The Exception to the Rulers: Exposing Oily Politicians, War Profiteers, and the Media That Love Them*.

A \$10 donation is requested for this event. If you want to have more information, please contact Leslie Doyle at NYSEC, 212-874-5210, ext. 144.

You can visit our website: www.nysec.org for more details.

Ethics and the Theater

Patricia Bruder Debrovner

On Wednesday, June 14, at 7:00 pm, our Ethics and the Theater group will present *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, Eugene O'Neill's Pulitzer Prize-winning theater classic. O'Neill's unflinching and moving portrayal of his family is an act of courage and deep love. The play dramatizes the struggle of the two sons of a retired matinee idol and his morphine-

addicted wife to survive the family's past failures and its present painful truths. No other play he wrote speaks more eloquently, or reveals more about the playwright.

We are pleased to welcome back as our director Elaine Berman, who directed *A Streetcar Named Desire*. The cast includes: Pat Debrovner, Dan Frazer, Mark Hofmaier, and Jon Liechty. Muriel Berger will lead our discussion of this rich study in family dynamics. Call Suzy Frazer at 212-874-5210, ext. 113, to register.

A Dialogue on Corruption

(Continued from page 1)

Aiming to generate honest dialogue and stimulate critical thinking and debate, the speakers, who include Rob Pollock, a senior editorial page writer for *The Wall Street Journal* and a Pulitzer Prize finalist; David Callahan, author of *The Cheating Culture: Why More Americans Are Doing Wrong to Get Ahead*, and numerous other books and newspaper articles; and Daniel Ben-Ami, a UK financial journalist who has written for many major publications, including the *Financial Times*, *Guardian*, *Independent*, *Prospect*, *The Sunday Times* and *Which*.

Audience participation is welcomed. For more information, contact Alan Miller, of the NY Salon at 646-321-0452 or www.nysalon.org.

Membership Retreat

(Continued from page 1)

This is your chance to hear others' ideas and share your own thoughts and aspirations for our community.

Lunch will be provided (donations appreciated), and there will be a cookout on our terrace. Call Suzy at 212-874-5210, ext. 113, for further details and to RSVP.

Great Books

Charles Debrovner

Great Books II is about to complete its second year of stimulating discussions about literary works, encompassing short stories, excerpts from longer works, poetry, and plays. Our final work will be *Clashes of Civilization*, Wednesday, June 21, 7:30 p.m.

Norma Hymes and Charles Debrovner, who have led the group since its formation, invite members and friends who would like to join next year to let us know as soon as possible, so that you can share in deciding our future reading directions. The group meets on the third Wednesday of each month. An annual fee of \$35 covers the cost of most of the reading materials and refreshments. If interested, contact Charles Debrovner at Cdebrovner@aol.com.

Social Service Board

East Harlem School

Valerie Leiman

Graduating students of the East Harlem School at Exodus House participated in a workshop on Friday, April 28, which was sponsored by the Scholarship Committee of the Social Service Board.

The close attention, keen interest, and skills displayed by the students resulted in over 50 beautiful, hand-made invitations for the school's Board of Directors to the first Graduation Program, to be held in the auditorium of the Ethical Culture Society on Saturday, June 17.



Katrina Clothing Drive

Maria Fridman, Lucile Kleiman, Valerie Leiman

A special "Thank You" to all of you who contributed to the New York Katrina Evacuees Clothing Drive, sponsored by NYSEC's Social Service Board. The SSB worked with Proxis Housing Initiative, Inc., in this effort to alleviate some of the suffering of the Katrina evacuees.

As yet, we have not been able to learn to whom the items of clothing were distributed, and we are still working on gathering the data. We do know the clothing was given with love, and graciously welcomed with respect and dignity. We all appreciated everyone's efforts.

June 2006

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

Friday, 9:00 am–1:30 pm

Shelter: Monday-Thursday, 7:30 pm

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Great Books: June 7 – Thoreau, <i>Civil Disobedience</i> June 14 – J. M. Coetzee, <i>Disgrace</i> ECRDG: (Ethical Reading Discussion Group) Great Books: “Clashes of Culture” June 21 – To be chosen						
4 10:00 am – Everyday Ethics 11:15 am – New Member Recognition Day 12:30 pm – Picnic with Sunday School 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:30 pm – Ethics in the News	5	6	7	8	9	10 9:30 am – Supervised Visitation
11 10:00 am – Colloquy 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:30 pm – Corporate Ethics Task Force	12	13	14	15	16	17 9:30 am – Supervised Visitation
18 10:00 am – Poetry Reading 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Orientation 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:30 pm – Author Rabbi James Rudin	19 6:30 pm – Social Service Board 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop	20	21	22	23	24 9:30 am – Membership Retreat 9:30 am – Supervised Visitation
25 10:00 am – Singing Practice 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:30 pm – Ethics in the News	26 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop	27	28	29	30	
				1 July 2006 Newsletter Deadline	2 7:00 pm – Film Forum: <i>On the Town</i> (1949)	3 9:30 am – Supervised Visitation
				7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop	7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop	
				6:00 pm – Men’s Group 7:30 pm – Great Books	7:00 pm – Photography Class 7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop	
				3:00 pm – ECRDG	7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop	
				7:00 pm – Ethics and the Theater		
				6:00 pm – Socrates Café 7:00 pm – A Dialogue on Corruption 7:30 pm – Great Books: Clashes of Culture		
				7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop		
				7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop		

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.

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