

# 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**

### **June 1**

**Torture: The End of Democracy?**

*Tony Hileman, Senior Leader*

Heather Grady Presides

### **June 8**

**Two Possible Futures for  
Ethical Culture**

*Dr. Marc Bernstein, Archivist*

Chris Bernhardt Presides

### **June 15**

**Philosophical Foundations and  
Practical Consequences of  
Religious Humanism**

*David Sprintzen, Professor*

*Emeritus of Philosophy,*

*Long Island University*

Muriel Berger Presides

### **June 22**

**Reclaiming the Politics of  
“Moral Values”**

*David Callahan, Author*

Joseph Marvel Presides

### **June 29**

**1968: A Summer of Discontent**

*Tony Hileman, Senior Leader*

Patricia Bruder Debrovner Presides

## **Sunday Morning Meetings**

Starting Sunday, July 6,  
Sunday Morning Meetings  
will begin at 10:15 a.m. in  
Ceremonial Hall.

## **June Happenings**

**Meet Liberian President Sirleaf at NYSEC Benefit on Wednesday, June 4, 6:00 pm.**

*(See page 7)*

**Conversation With the Leader—An Ethical Democracy on Tuesday, June 10, 6:00 pm.**

*(See page 4)*

## **Annual Meeting**

*Andra Miller, President*



At NYSEC's Annual Meeting on May 4, the members approved a number of appointments and By-Laws changes and heard reports from Society committees. I had provided a written report prior to the meeting, which was included in the members' packets.

I announced that Pat Debrovner, Jim Hyland, Amy Schwarz, and Moira Whittington had been appointed as Inspectors of the Election, and these appointments were ratified by the members.

I introduced proposed changes to the By Laws allowing for more flexibility in scheduling Board meetings and for officers to retain their positions until a successor is elected. These changes were approved by the members. I also introduced a proposal to reduce the number of Trustees from 15 to 12. A discussion followed, with Maria Fridman, Judith

*(Continued on page 2)*

## **From the Leader's Desk**

*Tony Hileman, Senior Leader*



### **The Serious Enterprise of Religion**

*“A religion, old or new, that stresses the magnificence of the universe as revealed by modern science, might be able to draw forth reserves of reverence and awe hardly tapped by the conventional faiths.”*

*—Carl Sagan, Pale Blue Dot, 1994*

What we believe about the world and about ourselves matters. Our beliefs establish the boundaries of our tolerance, shaping what we are willing to accept and what we are not. They likewise shape our hopes, establishing the limits of (barriers to?) what we think we can become.

Much of what we believe was once shaped in the sanctuaries of conventional religions, often the religion of our parents. But an honest evaluation of the efficacy of historical religions today tells us they have weakened in their ability to shape our thinking, let alone to

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**Annual Meeting**

*(Continued from page 1)*

Wallach, and Charles Debrovner speaking in opposition. This was also approved. Another proposal introduced would change the mandatory election of two new Trustees each year to one each year. A discussion followed, and the members voted to have a minimum of one non-incumbent be elected to the Board each year.

Pat Cohen, Chair of the Nominating Committee, reported that the committee is recommending five candidates for the Board of Trustees, four of whom are incumbents. The following were elected to the 2007-08 Board of Trustees: Phyllis Harrison-Ross, Sheila Kleinwald, Andra Miller, and Sylvan Wallach.

Phyllis Harrison-Ross, Chair of the Social Service Board, reported on the SSB's many activities. She said that the DNA project had held a second fundraiser and with a little more fundraising, would be able to pay for an additional DNA test. The SSB page on the Society's website has been enhanced and is more dynamic than in the past. The Women's Shelter is looking for volunteers. The soccer team has been very successful and now has 144 members. The 2007 Audit Report has been completed and approved by the Finance Committee. The Super-

vised Visitation Program is continuing and the All Health Alliance Program is going strong.

Bob Berger, Treasurer, thanked the Finance Committee members—Jim Farer, Phyllis Harrison-Ross, Ivanhoe Ffriend, and Chris Bernhardt—for their dedicated work. Robert Liebeskind, Executive Director and the staff representative on the committee, explained that the committee's mission is to provide for a fiscally sound organization, work with legal counsel on necessary issues, oversee Society investments, and plan for the future. He also reported on the staffing, programming, and budgeting of the Society over the past year.

**Leader's Desk**

*(Continued from page 1)*

inform our internal lives, to inspire our external actions, or to foster deepening relationships. Where they once stood as beacons of hope, today many stand as lighthouses marking the shoals of terrorism and theocracy. Others have simply lost their luster as increasing numbers drift away from the rocky moorings of their religious homeland and become spiritual wanderers in search of an unknown home.

That's a familiar scenario to many of us here at the New York Society for Ethical Culture. More than a few

of us now firmly anchored in Ethical Humanism have made that sometimes tumultuous journey from the eroding banks of tradition to the firmer footing of a rational religion. When life becomes economically or psychologically crushing and appears bereft of hope humanity has throughout history turned to the promise of another, better life to come in order to make this one bearable. The religion Felix Adler founded in 1876 does not offer that kind of assurance, but it does offer something far more useful and far more powerful.

In placing our faith in each other and our demonstrated ability to improve conditions and insure fairness, we are not only inspired and compelled to strive toward the aims of our ideals, we are empowered to do so. Through a religious expression of Humanism in which ethics is central, we are made deeply aware of “the magnificence of the universe” of which Sagan spoke. And we develop a profound appreciation for the revelations of modern science.

Just as science has an important message for our times, so, too, does Ethical Culture. As Humanists we do not seek betterment elsewhere, but strive to make the world—the world of today and the world of the future—better for all. Ours is not a quest for eternal happiness in the presence of a supreme being but rather a religious pursuit of the ideal of a supreme way of being.

And it is in that effort that we find the significance of our ethical religion. Religion is, indeed, a serious enterprise. And even those of us who reject the tenets of conventional religion do so religiously, as an expression of our innermost faith in each other. And an

honest examination of our history in this regard fills us with awe and wonder at humanity’s ability to do wonderful things, things that have improved the condition of life for so many and that have created this wonderful and improving culture from which we benefit.

## Sunday Morning Meetings

### 11:15 AM—Auditorium

#### June 1—Torture: The End of Democracy?

*Tony Hileman, Senior Leader*

*“The use of torture is the most extreme violation of the principles to which Ethical Culture is dedicated.”*

—Dr. Joseph Chuman, *Paper in Support of the American Ethical Union Resolution in Opposition to Torture\**

The contrived U.S. policy of redefining torturous acts as an acceptable means of interrogation threatens the viability of that which it pretends to defend—democracy. Ethical Humanism and democracy both rest on respect and reverence for the dignity of human beings. Torture aims to strip its victims of every shred of dignity as it strips its perpetrators of even the appearance of being civilized. Claims of a perpetual state of emergency in which torture is necessary and permitted tarnish our country’s reputation, diminish our national security, and send a chill through compassionate people everywhere. Join in our call to immediately and unconditionally end the practice of torture everywhere.

\* The full resolution can be found on page 10 in this newsletter, and both it and Dr. Chuman’s supporting paper can be found at [www.aeu.org](http://www.aeu.org).

#### June 8—Two Possible Futures for Ethical Culture

*Dr. Marc Bernstein, Archivist*

Will Ethical Culture survive the next century? Given the aging of our membership and the decline in our numbers, it’s a fair question. Here’s another: What strategy that we could adopt now would most likely assure our movement’s vitality in the long term? Should we coalesce with Humanists, or should we try to preserve our unique message? If the latter, how can we best do this? Marc Bernstein addresses all of these questions in “Two Possible Futures for Ethical Culture.”

Marc is the archivist for the Ethical Culture Movement. Since he took this position in 2001, he has worked to raise public awareness about the movement and has made documents and photos available to Societies interested in offering programs about Ethical Culture’s past. He has drawn on these materials in his public speaking and has written about unusual archival finds in *Dialogue*.

Marc is also editing a volume of Joseph Chuman’s platform addresses, *Speaking of Ethics*, scheduled to appear this fall. When that project is completed, he will devote himself to writing new material for *Toward Common Ground*, the history of the Ethical Culture Movement. Marc works with researchers and is also a writer whose articles have appeared in *The New York Times*, *New York Newsday*, and other publications.

#### June 15—Philosophical Foundations And Practical Consequences of Religious Humanism

*David Sprintzen, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, Long Island University*

Religious Humanism considers what it means for us to be self-conscious natural animals. As self-conscious beings, we can envision our future, but must existentially confront our mortality. As creators and users of tools, we can remake the world around us, but must continually confront both our material and social limits and the contingencies of natural existence. As products of evolution, we know we are rooted in and sustained by a biosphere undergoing continual transformation, much of it increasingly a result of our collective action. With what resources—practical, ideal, theoretical, and emotional—can we act so as to bring out the best in others, and by so doing bring out the best in ourselves?

David Sprintzen has served as Chair of the Philosophy Department at C. W. Post College, Vice-Chair of the College's Faculty Council, and Vice-President of the University Senate. He is the author of *Camus: A Critical Examination* and *Sartre and Camus: An Historic Confrontation*. He is also the founder and past Co-Chair of the Long Island Progressive Coalition, the Citizen Action of New York affiliate on Long Island, and its current Board Secretary. He served on Governor Mario Cuomo's Shoreham Commission and was the prime author of LIPC's path-breaking 1996 plan "Long Island 2020: A Greenprint for a Sustainable Long Island," which catalyzed the movement for sustainability on Long Island.

**June 22—Reclaiming the Politics of “Moral Values”**

*David Callahan, Author*

While Iraq and the economy have been dominating the 2008 election season,

the polarizing debate over “moral values” is never far from the surface of American politics. David Callahan will look at how values issues have been narrowly defined for a generation—with a focus on divisive topics like abortion and gay marriage—and why a major opening now exists for a broader debate over values that speak to the real concerns of Americans.

David Callahan has written seven books, including *The Moral Center* (2006) and *The Cheating Culture* (2004). His articles have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Nation*, and *The American Prospect*, and he has appeared on numerous television and radio programs. David is also cofounder and a Senior Fellow of Demos, a New York City think tank.

**June 29—Closing Sunday—1968: A Summer of Discontent**

*Tony Hileman, Senior Leader*

*“The question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be ... The nation and the world are in dire need of creative extremists.”*

—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The aftershocks from four decades ago still tremble through our country; 1968 was a watershed year for our nation and for many of us personally. It was a year of war, riots, assassinations, revolt, backlash, and music that defined a generation. Throughout it all ran a palpable sense of change, a deep understanding that the world we thought we knew was no more. Old ways of thinking and doing do not give way easily and the chaos of that defining period of American history was that of a people struggling to give voice to a new way of being. Is our nation now experiencing the foreshocks of another seismic cultural upheaval?

**Conversation With The Leader: An Ethical Democracy**

*Tony Hileman, Senior Leader*

*“Consider what the need of humankind is at the present day. Consider what your own strengths are, and where you can best make them count.”*

—Felix Adler, December 1923

At our last conversation we considered the above question, which Felix Adler posed 85 years ago, against the backdrop of today. What we found most lacking is a sense of true democracy that balances the will of the many with the rights of the few through a deep appreciation of the worth and dignity of all. Not only did we find a critical lack of that attitude on global, national, and personal levels, but we felt that this is an area where the voice of Ethical Humanism can be heard and make a difference. Please join us on **Tuesday, June 10, 6:00 pm**, as we try to give shape to this concept.

**Early Sunday 10 AM**

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

**June 8—Colloquy—Words We Live By.** Rather than reading from the usual text, we'll bring in our own most treasured words, phrases, and quotes. Please type them, if you can. For those of us who cannot bring our own favor-

ites, there will be many quotes available for us all to share. Harriet Bigus presides. Room 408.

**June 15—Singing Practice**—Led by Pat Debrovner and Jerry Ranck. Ceremonial Hall—4<sup>th</sup> fl.

**June 15—Poetry Readings.** Please bring a favorite poem to read, and if possible, prepare a few sentences about the poet's life that you can also share. Cheryl Gross presides. Room 408.

**June 22**—No program today.

**June 29—Coffee 'n Chat.** Room 508.

## Sunday Afternoon 1:45 PM

**June 1—PIC Program** in connection with Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's visit to the New York Society on Wednesday evening, June 4. Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross presides. Ceremonial Hall—4<sup>th</sup> fl.

**June 8—Open PIC Meeting.** Agenda TBA. Abe Markman presides.

**June 15—Life With Health: Men and Women, Living With Menopause.** Dr. Charles Debrovner, a graduate of Yale University and NYU School of Medicine, is a board-certified specialist in obstetrics and gynecology, practicing infertility and reproductive endocrinology for over 40 years. Phyllis Kreuttner and Jacqueline Pope preside. Room 514.

**June 22—Sunday Poetry Group.** We'll meander over to Central Park's Literary Walk at 66<sup>th</sup> Street and stand at the statues of William Shakespeare, Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott, and Johann C.F. von Schiller as we read their poems. We hope to reach Jose Marti's statue at 59<sup>th</sup> Street. We'll meet in our lobby at 1:45 pm, and leave

promptly at 2:00 pm. Feel free to join us as a listener or reader. Rain cancels and the rain date will be Sunday, June 29, same time.

**June 29—Disaster Spiritual Care Panel.** Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross presides.

## Board Meeting Highlights

*Sheila Abrams Kleinwald*

Approval of the minutes of this year's Annual Meeting was tabled, as the By-Laws Committee is reviewing them. Newly-elected Trustee Sheila Abrams Kleinwald (yours truly) was welcomed to the Board. It felt so good to sit at the table and vote! Thank you to those who voted for me regardless of the confusing directions.

President Andra Miller announced that this year's Lay Leadership Summer School will be attended by Janice Buzby, Pat Cohen, Law'nence Miller, and Eva Yachnes. The course, offered by the American Ethical Union, involves one week of intensive seminars, workshops, personal exploration and group planning. It is an exhilarating, hard-work, summer camping experience in the mountains with leading members of Ethical Culture societies from all parts of the United States. Subjects include ceremonies, organizational development, and the history of the Ethical Culture Movement.

Written reports to the Board were available at the meeting from President Andra Miller (including her report on the AEU Assembly and its Statement Reaffirming its Opposition to Torture); Senior Leader Tony Hileman; Executive Director Robert Liebeskind; Social Service Board Chair Phyllis Harri-

son-Ross; and Membership Associate Moe-Swe Myint. The House Committee report was presented by Chair Robert Berger.

The Board approved five new Society members. Welcome to Michael Darnell Dawson, Susan Horowitz, Jesai Jayhmes, Sujata Patel, and Neil Sukoff.

A committee was appointed to nominate Board officers. James Farer, the Chair, met immediately after the Board meeting with Charles Debrovner and Sheila Kleinwald. Pending confirmation of their willingness to serve, the names of the nominees will be presented to the Board for approval at the next meeting.

Executive Director Robert Liebeskind presented his budget for the next fiscal year. Although a few details remain to be resolved, he assured the Board that they would not involve meaningful alterations. A motion to approve the budget was approved.

Andra Miller announced that a motion for NYSEC to join the National Religious Campaign Against Torture has been approved between meetings via e-mail. A banner has been ordered, to be displayed on our east wall for one month.

Society member Ruth Cohen is working to have a plaque installed on the memorial wall in our lobby honoring Leon Cowen, in appreciation of his bequest to the Society.

Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross gave a progress report on the upcoming June 4 Sirleaf Market Women's Fund benefit, which NYSEC and the Social Service Board are cosponsoring. The goal is to raise a million dollars to build permanent, sheltered marketplaces for the women in Liberian villages, who support their families and the economy as

vendors in ramshackle stalls that are repeatedly destroyed by weather. The new facilities will have running water and spaces for childcare. Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is expected to attend, as are Mary Robinson (former President of Ireland and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights), and actress Cicely Tyson.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Founder's Day At Fieldston School

*Andra Miller*

As a new member of the Board at the Ethical Culture Fieldston School, I was invited to come to the school's Founder's Day program, which was held on May 2, an event that also serves as a kind of countdown to graduation. The event celebrates the founding of the school, its founder, and its mission.

It began anything but quietly. After all the other classes from the "Ethical" campus (the building next door) and the "Fieldston" campus (in the Bronx) were seated, the senior class entered from



*Enthusiastic seniors at Founder's Day. Photo credit: Stan Schnier*

the backstage door, and as those 100 or so young people walked single-file across to the side stairway and down the steps to their seating section, the pandemonium—screams, yells, applause—was non-stop and high-level. I was fascinated by the extreme enthusiasm. I have to say I remember no such boisterous admiration at my public high school in California, and so I wonder if this is standard private school behavior or simply something special about Fieldston.

The cheering continued after speeches were made, retiring teachers and administrators were honored, the chorus sang and the orchestra played, valedictorians spoke, and joke gifts were given out. Even Felix Adler got a huge share of loud admiration from the students—obviously he's their hero.

I found it all inspiring, and I think some of that enthusiasm rubbed off on me. Now I have to find a way to spread it around!

## Our Ethical Family

*Moe-Swe Myint*

Please welcome our new members!

**Michael Darnell Dawson** is a bank examiner for the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, where he is involved with international financial policy and issues. Michael studied Mandarin Chinese in college, lived in Hong Kong for a year and in mainland China for two years, and speaks Mandarin fluently. Walking past the Society's building

one afternoon, he was fascinated by the structure and came in out of curiosity. Since then, he's enjoyed attending our Sunday Platforms and Sunday Social Hour, as well as the PIC meeting on world trade.

**Susan Horowitz** works for New York State and was introduced to the Society by our member, Joan Klips. She has been attending the Sunday Platforms and the Social Hour on and off for nearly a year and she also enjoys the Ethics and the Theatre

series. Susan was drawn to the important work the Society does towards creating a more humane society and the interesting people she has met here. She loves working with children.

**Jesai Jayhmes** is an actor, director, and teacher. He has attended several Sunday Platforms and he read the Declaration of Independence at the Sunday Platform on April 27. Jesai has expressed a desire to form a group to present the Declaration through choral speaking. He also likes taking long walks.

**Sujata Patel** is a nutritionist at the Yorkville Dialysis-Beth Israel Medical Center. She holds certificates in clinical nutrition, functional medicine, and green medicine. She is drawn to the ethical nature of the Society and has attended Sunday Platforms, “Drop the Rock,” and “The God Delusion” lectures together with her husband, Neil Sukoff. Sujata is interested in art and travel and speaks Hindi and Gujarati.

**Neil Sukoff** has an MBA and a JD. He likes the Society’s philosophical perspective and has attended Sunday Platforms, “Drop the Rock,” and “Iraq Human Shield” lectures with his wife, Sujata Patel. His hobbies include skiing and tennis. He found the Society through the Yellow Pages.

\* \* \*

**NYSEC’s Annual Meeting** on Sunday, May 4, was followed by the Annual Membership Lunch, at which we honored 31 members for their anniversaries ranging from five to 70 years. Elaine Berman spoke for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary class and Paul Berman spoke for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary class. We welcomed 24 new members who had joined the Society since January, 2007. We also remembered the members who had died.

Certificates of Appreciation were presented by Senior Leader Tony Hileman and Society President Andra Miller to some of our many “unsung heroes” – Ben Bean, Pat Berens, Carole Chamlin, Alan Gardner, Jim Hyland, Sheila Kleinwald, Barbara Levenson, Joseph Marvel, Amy Schwarz, and Eva Yachnes – for their extraordinary services to the Society.

I would like to thank Suzy Frazer, who guided me gently through my first week as Membership Associ-

ate, and all the staff and members of NYSEC who were extremely helpful and welcoming and made me feel part of the family right away.

P.S. Please let me know if you need an updated Membership Directory.

## Meet More of Our Unsung Heroes

*Helen Mecs*

Last month we introduced three of our “behind the scenes” maintenance staff members, who work tirelessly to keep things at the Society running smoothly—a big and much appreciated job. Due to lack of space, they didn’t make it into the May issue. So, here they are!

### **David McCants**—

Seven years ago, Leonardo Gibson, a friend (profiled in the May issue), asked David to fill in one Sunday because of an emergency—and he never left. At the request of the then Director of Facility, he quickly learned everything about how to set up and manage the audio and video systems that are so much a part of the job. What he likes best about the work, David says, is that it’s always interesting and always different, and that he likes his colleagues and the Society itself.



*David McCants*

An avid sports and movie fan, David roots for the Mets and the Pittsburgh Steelers. He is the father of a 26-year-old daughter.

**Jason Vasquez** has been with the Society for five and a half years. He is a regular on the weekend shift and also works varying night shifts. He particularly appreciates the flexibility

and time his schedule allows him to pursue his interests: writing songs and poetry and composing rap music. High school gave Jason the opportunity to perform his songs and poems; now he mostly does this for his friends. He performs elsewhere, when he can, although he says it is hard to break into the music business.

Jason also enjoys playing baseball with his friends. He is the proud father of a six-month-old boy.

**Rodney Williams**, the most recent addition to the maintenance staff (he arrived a year-and-a-half ago), works part-time and as a substitute, as needed, but hopes he will have the opportunity to become a full-time staff member. To this end, he follows his fellow-workers around to learn as much as he can, especially the working of the A/V systems. His previous jobs were with Fed-Ex and with Washington Mutual Bank.

Rodney was recommended for the job by his cousin, who works here at our security desk. He baby-sits for her regularly and also helps take care of his grandfather.

A sports fan, he enjoys pick-up basketball games and roots for the Yankees and the Giants.

## Liberia’s President Sirleaf at Benefit

*Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross*

On Wednesday, June 4, the New York Society for Ethical Culture will play host to H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Liberia’s and Africa’s first elected female Head of State. President Sirleaf, the granddaughter of a market woman, will be here to launch the Sirleaf Market Women’s Fund “Adopt-

A-Market” Campaign to rebuild Liberia’s economy. The gala fundraising event is cosponsored by the African Women’s Development Fund, the New York Society for Ethical Culture and the Social Service Board.

You are invited to be part of this tribute and benefit for Liberia’s Market Women, who are the backbone of their national economy.

The VIP reception will begin at 6:00 pm, and the program begins at 7:00 pm. Ticket prices for both the reception and program begin at \$1,000. Tickets for the program only range from \$50 to \$500. For more information about this event or to purchase tickets, contact Mary-Lou Amarosa at 212-997-0100 or [mamarosa@projectsplusinc.com](mailto:mamarosa@projectsplusinc.com).

## Film Forum

*Sue Dye*

Join us on Friday, June 6, at 7:00 pm as we show *The Third Man*, a classic film noir based on a thriller by Graham Greene that takes place in post-war Vienna. The film was produced by London Film Productions and won a number of prestigious awards in Europe and the U.S., so I can justify it a “foreign film.”

Star Joseph Cotton is invited to Vienna to visit his old war buddy Harry Lime, played by Orson Welles. Ring a bell? When he arrives, he learns Harry has been killed in an auto accident. So who killed Harry Lime, and is he really dead? Then he appears mysteriously, and Cotton has a harrowing time tracking him down and uncovering his nefarious story.

The black and white film won an Oscar for best film cinematography

and the overall Grand Prize at the Cannes Film Festival 1949, among other awards, and the haunting *Third Man Theme* is unforgettable. Enjoy! The admission fee of \$5 will cover the cost of refreshments.

## Ethics and The Theater

*Patricia Bruder Debrovner*

On Wednesday evening, June 25, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm, Ethics and the Theater will present a reading of Robert Penn Warren’s *All The King’s Men*. Filled with ethical dilemmas, the play is an exploration of political power through the rise and fall of the populist Willie Stark.

Stark is a simple man with plans to help his community. Ironically, he must compromise his ideals to gain the political power he needs to realize them. At a certain point, power becomes an end as well as a means and a corrupting force, as well as a force for good.

Jesai Jayhmes directs our cast and also acts in the play. The cast also includes Carole and Jerry Chamlin, John Gurney, David Waltzer, Pat Debrovner, John Kreuttner, Maria Demarse, and James de Lorenzo. Following the reading, Betsy Ungar will lead our discussion of the ethical issues raised in the play. Admission is \$5.

## The “PIC” of The News

*Abe Markman*

**Family Paid Leave and Health Care Coverage Approved**

These two new programs, as reported in the press, not only provide aid to families in distress, they highlight the best aspects of the American spirit.

“Corzine Signs **Family Leave Bill** With Nod Towards State’s Values,” by Susan K. Livio, *The Star-Ledger*, May 3, 2008. “Declaring it a ‘legacy’ moment in New Jersey history, Gov. Jon Corzine signed legislation yesterday granting employees up to six weeks off with limited pay to take care of a new child or a sick parent, child, or spouse. With the stroke of the governor’s pen, New Jersey became the third state in the nation to create a paid family leave program, although benefits will not be available until July 2009.”

“Paterson Announces State Budget Expands **Health Care Coverage** To Every Uninsured New York Child.” *New York Governor/New American Patriots*, April 9, 2008. “New York Governor David A. Paterson today announced that the Enacted State Budget ensures that nearly every one of the 400,000 uninsured children in the state will have access to health insurance and reforms the state’s reimbursements system to shift dollars to more effective primary and preventive care.” (New York may need a waiver from the federal government to insure children whose family income is 400 percent above the poverty level.)

## Social Service Board

*Valerie Leiman*

The Social Service Board Development Committee capped its 2007-2008 DNA Test programs with a Flea Market/White Elephant Sale on April

20, which raised \$640. We now only need \$94 more to complete the total DNA test cost of \$2,500, which will be the Society's fourth test, working in partnership with the Innocence Project of Yeshiva University Law School. Members generously donated a variety of items, and came in support of this event, despite many competing programs available on that Sunday. We especially wish to thank Society members Virginia Arnold, Bonnie Bean, Paul Berman, Ken Gans, Phyllis Harrison-Ross, Marcella Montaruli, and Eric Norlander for contributing their interest and considerable labor to this event.

## Humanist Life Stories Wanted

*Andra Miller*

With the aim of promoting Humanism by providing models of how Humanists meet life's challenges without divine guidance, two members of the Humanist Community in Silicon Valley, California (Arthur Jackson, President, and Armineh Noravian, Vice-President) are compiling a series of true life stories contributed by Humanists throughout the world, to be published in a book tentatively titled *Humanist Life Stories—Sharing Our Experiences With Difficult Problems*.

Jackson and Noravian are calling for stories, based on personal experiences or events, which describe the difficult circumstances and challenges faced and tell, among other things, how you dealt (or are dealing) with them, how the experience changed you or those around you, and what

you have learned and could share with others. The stories, which must be received by September 30, should be no longer than 5,000 words.

If you are interested in contributing to this project and would like to learn more about submitting your story, please contact Jackson and Noravian at: [humanist-stories@live.com](mailto:humanist-stories@live.com). Their mailing address is: The Humanist Community in Silicon Valley, Humanist Stories, P.O. Box 60069, Palo Alto, CA 94306-0069.

## How to Spend That Rebate

*Andra Miller*

The rebate from Uncle Sam is intended to help jump-start our ailing economy. How about using some of this US Treasury bonus to improve your Society's financial picture by adding it towards your pledge or using it to pay your pledge up front?

That is the suggestion made by Bob Gordon, President of the Bergen Society, to the rest of us Society presidents, and one that I heartily endorse. To help keep NYSEC vibrant, increase and diversify our membership, develop new programs to attract younger people, keep staff for finding new sources of funding and new members, reduce energy costs by replacing windows, and upgrade our 98-year-old building, consider chipping in some or all of your rebate.

Bob has asked his membership to see their way to donating 10 percent of the "government handout." That might be a good idea for us at NYSEC too.

## Save the Dates!

### 2008 Membership Retreat

*Moe-Swe Myint*

Our Annual Retreat will be held from Friday, October 3, through Sunday, October 5, at the Warwick Center in Warwick, Orange County, New York. If you have any ideas to share for planning the weekend or are interested in attending and want more information, please get in touch with Janice Buzby, Sheila Kleinwald, or me. You can e-mail Janice directly at [janice345@verizon.net](mailto:janice345@verizon.net), or reach me at the Society at 212-874-5210, ext. 113.

### Benefit Concert

*Ruth Cohen*

Join us for a most enjoyable afternoon of new music and new and old friends, with conversation and tasty refreshments—all for a wonderful cause. Come to the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert to benefit NYSEC's Stained Glass Window Fund on Sunday, October 19, at 2:00 pm.

\* \* \*

### AEU Lay Leadership Summer School

August 9–16

The twelfth annual Summer School is an opportunity to learn more about Humanism. For more information contact the AEU at 212-873-6500.



## **AEU Ethical Action Resolution**

### **Statement Reaffirming Its Opposition to Torture**

(Adopted by the 93<sup>rd</sup> Assembly of the AEU, Austin, Texas, April 2008)

WHEREAS: Respect and reverence for human dignity is the foremost principle of Ethical Culture, and the use of torture is the most heinous violation of human dignity, and

WHEREAS: The American Ethical Union remains absolutely and unalterably opposed to the employment of torture by the military, intelligence agencies, law enforcement agencies, or other actors public or private, and

WHEREAS: The employment of torture in direct and willful violation of the United Nations Convention on Torture has become a component of American policy in its “War on Terror,”

THEREFORE: The American Ethical Union calls upon the Congress and President of the United States:

- \* To immediately and unconditionally cease the practice of torture everywhere, including the transfer of prisoners to other jurisdictions where torture may be employed, and
- \* To allow unfettered access and inspection of any and all sites and facilities, and
- \* To avow without reservation to abide by its international agreements and honor the highest standards of human rights, and
- \* To openly recognize and apologize for all transgressions, to allow for due process, and, whenever and wherever possible, to make restitution to their victims.

FURTHERMORE: We call upon the Leaders and members of The American Ethical Union to inspire and advocate for the end of present American policy and the “torture debate” through Sunday addresses in accord with the National Leaders’ Council Paper in Support of the Resolution Against Torture.

1. The resolution and a supporting paper by Dr. Joseph Chuman, Leader of the Ethical Culture Society of Bergen County, New Jersey, can be found on the American Ethical Union’s website at [www.AEU.org](http://www.AEU.org).

2. UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE (Article 1) The term “torture” means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity.

# June 2008

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
1 10:00 am – Singing Practice 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:45 pm – PIC	2 <b>July 2008 Newsletter Deadline</b> 6:30 pm – Board of Trustees 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop	3	4 6:00 pm – Men’s Group 7:00 pm – Liberian President Sitseat at NYSEC Benefit 7:30 pm – Great Books	5 7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop 8:00 pm – Untorgotten Voices Creative Workshop	6 7:00 pm – Film Forum	7 9:30 am – Supervised Visitation
8 10:00 am – Colloquy 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:45 pm – PIC: Open Meeting 7:00 pm – Kafka Comes to America	9 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop	10 6:00 pm – Women’s Group 6:00 pm – Conversation with the Leader	11 3:00 pm – ECRDG 5:00 pm – Orientation	12 7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop	13 20	14 9:30 am – Supervised Visitation
15 10:00 am – Poetry Reading 10:00 am – Singing Practice 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:45 pm – Life with Health	16 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop	17 7:00 pm – Adult Education	18 6:00 pm – Socrates Café 7:30 pm – Great Books: Great Conversations I	19 7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop	20 <b>August 2008 Newsletter Deadline</b>	21 9:30 am – Supervised Visitation
22 10:00 am – No program 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:45 pm – No program 2:00 pm – Walk in Central Park	23 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop	24	25 6:00 pm – Discussing Ethical Issues Group 7:00 pm – Ethics and the Theater	26 7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop	27 11:00 am – Ethics on the Air (WBAI-99.5 FM)	28 9:30 am – Supervised Visitation
29 10:00 am – Coffee “n Chat 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:45 pm – Disaster Spiritual Care Panel Discussion	30 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop	<b>Great Books:</b> June 4 – Gogol, <i>The Overcoat</i> (complete work) Diderot, <i>Rameau’s Nephew</i> <b>ECRDG: (Ethical Culture Reading Discussion Group)</b> June 11 – Milan Kundera, <i>Book of Laughter and Forgetting</i> <b>Great Books: Great Conversations I</b> June 18 – To be decided				

**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  
**ETHICAL  
CULTURE** 

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