

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

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Sunday Morning Meetings

11:15 AM—Music and Reflections

In the Concert Hall

March 5

Reason and Irrationality—Is It Reasonable To Expect People To Be Rational?

Tony Hileman

Senior Leader

Elaine Berman Presides

March 12

Should Religion Be Immune From Criticism?

Dr. Joseph Chuman

Leader, Ethical Culture Society of Bergen County

Sheila Kleinwald Presides

March 19

On Religion and Spirituality—What's In A Word?

Tony Hileman

Senior Leader

Andra Miller Presides

March 26

Eliciting The Best: Partnerships That Promote Ethical Ideals

Bart Worden

Leader, Ethical Culture Society of Westchester

Muriel Berger Presides

*Invite a
Friend on
Sunday*

March Happenings

Thursday, March 2, 7:00 pm. Nation Books and co-sponsor NYSEC presents: Norman Mailer and John Buffalo Mailer—A conversation between a father and his son on “What it Means to Live in America Today”. Join us as they discuss their new book, *The Big Empty: A Dialogue on Politics, Sex, God, Boxing, Morality, Myth, Poker, and Bad Conscience in America*. Moderator will be Dotson Rader. A book signing will follow. Admission is free, and no reservations are required. Doors open at 6:00 pm.

Wednesday, March 22, 7:00 pm. “Unpacking Humanist Manifesto III”—Join us for the first of a three-session series on Humanism. “Unpacking Humanist Manifesto III” will be the theme for this initial session presented by our **Senior Leader, Tony Hileman**. (For more see page 6)

From The Leader's Desk

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader



Walking Our Talk

One of the keys to making Ethical Culture relevant is awareness. We all, or at least the vast majority of us, are active in or support one social cause or another (or two or three or a dozen). But are we always aware of the expression of Ethical Culture, of the role it plays in this and other of our daily activities?

As Ethical Culturists we aim to cultivate the good life; one guided by reason, inspired by compassion, and informed by experience. This entails the pursuit of happiness not only through personal development but in our care and concern for others. It's difficult to find completeness so long as others are in want. That's where social activism comes in—to provide the good life not only for ourselves but for the many.

(Continued on page 3)

Sunday Morning Meetings

March 5—Reason And Irrationality – Is It Reasonable To Expect People To Be Rational?

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

Americans are a passionate people who find themselves living in an evangelical culture. That's a heady combination that all too often wraps irrationality in the vestments of reason. Our national dialogue is dominated by an ardent and crusading enthusiasm that has invaded all areas of public commentary and discourse and often renders reason the victim of opinion masquerading as knowledge. Is it reasonable to expect more, or must the public square accommodate irrationality?

(Continued on page 3)

Contents

Sunday Programs 1
 March Happenings 1
 From the Leader’s Desk 1
 Sunday Morning Meetings 1
 Ethical Culture: Who We Are 2
 Leader’s Advisory Board Named 3
 Early Sunday 4
 Sunday Afternoon 4
 Our Ethical Family 4
 Film Forum 5
 Ethics and the Theater 5
 Auditions 5
 Cultured Comedy Club 6
 Drawing as a Springboard 6
 Unpacking Humanism Manifesto III 6
 Art Greeting Card Workshop 6
 Social Service Board 6
 Calendar 7

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Marc Bernstein	ext. 112
Gloria Chandler	117
Leslie Doyle	144
Deborah Foster	115
Suzy Frazer	113
Tony Hileman	119
Lynda Kennedy	106
Yolanta Kosmaczewska	104
Robert Liebeskind	116
Maintenance	109
Marlon Rice	138
Judith Wank	118

Ethical Culture: Who We Are

Felix Adler On The Use Of Torture During War

[In April 1902 Felix Adler, addressing the American war in the Philippines, asked a question which has lost none of its relevance: “Are civilized nations justified in adopting uncivilized methods of warfare?” Here are some excerpts from his lengthy argument.]

“There are certain means which may not and shall not be used even if they should serve to bring a war to a speedy termination. There is something worse even than war, namely, the degrading of humanity to the brutal level of using abhorrent means to stop a war.

“...whatever tends to import into the conflict an element of barbarity, whatever tends to lower the standard of humanity, to retard the progress of civilization, is in flagrant contradiction to the objects for which civilized war is deemed permissible, and subjects those who are responsible to the reproach of engaging in uncivilized warfare. It is for this reason that in the Rule 16 of the General Orders approved by President Lincoln we read: ‘Military necessity does not admit of torture to extort confessions.’ Torture may seem to serve its purpose. It may seem the only means of extracting information necessary to the speedy termination of war. But, whether it does or not, like assassination, like poisoning, it is a means which we dare not touch.

“...the American people do not desire, and will not permit, that the methods of the Spanish Inquisition, which we had believed to be a thing of the past forever, shall be revived under the sacred banner of this great Republic.”

Leader's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

But just as any detached philosophy of life can become dry and uninspiring, activism can become goal oriented and corporate. Thus we can easily become overly focused on goals and hence closely tied to, if not defined by, objectives—in this case the ends of social activism. With ethical relationships at its center, Ethical Culture focuses instead on the link between our ideals and that which they seek to achieve. In other words, on the way we live our lives.

....We believe in our ability to change the world, to create—through the way we lead our lives, our good intentions, and our ethical actions and relationships—cultural change that alters for the better the way we act toward one another.

Ethical Culture is life affirming, positive, and progressive. We accept and respect the past, embrace a sober assessment of the present, and have a unique optimism about the future. Ours isn't a lifestance based on dogma, but rather a commitment that rests on ethical convictions that guide our engagement with others and with nature. Ethical relationships are comprised of small, everyday events, not just momentous occasions. Living ethically isn't simply the act of responding compassionately to staggering situations with overwhelming implications. It involves facing the trials of our everyday lives with dignity and caring.

Ethical Culturists have believed long and passionately in humanity's capacity to improve itself. We believe in our ability to change the world, to

create—through the way we lead our lives, our good intentions, and our ethical actions and relationships—cultural change that alters for the better the way we act toward one another.

Our aim is directed toward the vision of fuller, more meaningful lives that add to the greater good of society and all humanity. Being more aware of how Ethical Culture informs and improves our lives—engaging our principles in everything we do—animates that vision and brings meaning to our lives.

It's easy in these times of diminished freedom and restricted liberty to dwell on contemporary political realities and

lose sight of our inherent optimism. Bringing the light of Ethical Culture to every nook and cranny of our lives is part of our work. The character of any

group is a reflection of that of its individual members, and the character of a nation a reflection of its citizenry. We can change our culture, and the way you live your life helps make that happen. So does remembering every now and then just how personally important Ethical Culture is to us.

Leader's Advisory Board Named

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

Tony Hileman has named Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh, Christine Swann, Chuck Debrovner, Theresa Schultz and Jerry Chamlin as members of his advisory board. In their quarterly meetings with him, the group will serve as a

sounding board and will give him their observations and suggestions, as well as those of other members. The Leader's Advisory Board will also participate in the annual leadership evaluation.

Sunday Morning

(Continued from page 1)

March 12—Should Religion Be Immune From Criticism?

Dr. Joseph Chuman, Leader, Ethical Culture Society of Bergen County

We are encouraged to be tolerant of the beliefs of others. But how do we relate to the religious beliefs of people who believe differently from us, when we conclude that those beliefs are politically dangerous? What should be the limits of our criticism of what others deem holy? Can religion claim an immunity from such criticism? How and where do we draw the line?

March 19—On Religion And Spirituality—What's In A Word?

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

Religion and spirituality are two of the most powerful words in the English language, evoking, as they do, strong responses and eliciting definite yet differing opinions. As the meaning and perception of these and other words broaden, shift, and are reinterpreted, how should they be used? How are we to communicate with each other clearly and ethically when the meaning of words central to our lives is no longer as plain as our varying interpretations of them?

March 26—Eliciting The Best: Partnerships That Promote Ethical Ideals

Bart Worden, Leader, Ethical Culture Society of Westchester

This address explores ways in which we can develop “ethical partnerships” with others and how such partnerships help us live in accordance with ethical ideals.

Bart Worden is the Leader of the Ethical Culture Society of Westchester in White Plains, New York. He is also the current President of the National Leaders Council of the American Ethical Union and member of the AEU Planning Committee. He and some others in the Ethical Movement are in the process of developing a congregational songbook for Ethical Societies.

Early Sunday

10:00 AM

March 5—Everyday Ethics—“Chasing the Blues”—Under Andra Miller’s guidance, we’ll talk about the best things to do when we’re feeling less than par.

March 12—Colloquy—A meditative hour exploring thoughts about a presented subject. Phyllis Kreuttner will guide this probing, quiet, contemplative time.

March 19—Poetry Reading—A peaceful hour to read the poems we are especially fond of led by Cheryl Gross. Come to read and listen. Or just come to listen!

March 26—Coffee ‘n Chat—Bring your friends for a cup of coffee and an open discussion of whatever comes to mind.

Sunday Afternoon

1:30 PM (except as noted)

March 5—Ethics in the News—Discussion, led by Mary Ellen Goodman,

will continue the search for ethical positions to urge on 2006 candidates. We hope to persuade other Ethical Societies and the AEU to join us.

March 5—Yoga for Seniors—Start the Spring right with armchair yoga! Join us for an informative and fun yoga class with Edya Kalev, Certified Yoga Instructor. You’ll learn about the 5 points of yoga from a traditional Indian perspective, and how to incorporate simple breathing and stretching exercises into your everyday routine, anywhere you may find yourself sitting. Comfortable clothing is recommended. Participation in the exercises is optional.

March 12—1:45 pm. A Reading by Our Workshop Writers—Please come and hear the wonderful work of the writers, society members and nonmembers, in our Monday and Thursday Personal Writing Workshops. They will read short pieces for a little bit more than an hour.

March 19—All About Hearing, Arnold Kahgan—The lecture covers how we hear, disorders of the auditory system and advances in hearing aid technology. Dr. Kahgan will devote a substantial portion of the lecture to answer specific questions from the audience. Hearing loss among the general public is rising and affects over 50% of the population over 65.

March 26—Amy O’Meara of Amnesty International will speak on “Wherever Business Goes, Human Rights Were There First.” There will be questions and answers to follow. This afternoon program is presented by NYSEC’s Task Force on Corporate Ethics.

Our Ethical Family

Suzy Frazer

Please welcome these new members:

Alvin Brehm is a professor of music at Mannes College of Music and has an extensive performing background. He enjoys sailing, French and some Italian and was drawn to NYSEC because it corresponds to his views.

Elizabeth Hileman is a community association attorney and has her own firm, Hileman and Associates, in Washington, DC, where she’s a member of the Washington Ethical Society. Betty is also married to our Senior Leader Tony Hileman and she’s attended many NYSEC events, including our fall retreat.

Lee Smalley is a longtime and continuing member of the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island, where he was the president in the past. Since 2001 he has been the editor of AEU’s newsletter, *Dialogue*. He and his wife have recently moved to Manhattan.

About Former Member:

After over a year of coping with her mother’s death, member Carla Stea wrote this tribute. She hopes that all who knew her mother, a long-standing member—and those who didn’t—will appreciate her wonderful spirit.

“My mother, Henriette L. Stea can best be described by a metaphor borrowed from F. Scott Fitzgerald: she was ‘God’s most precious possession.’ Her beauty was dazzling and ethereal, her capacity to give and inspire love was inexhaustible, her passion for justice, her compassion for the vulnerable, her intellect of incendiary brilliance, her formidable, penetrating wit, her instantaneous grasp of truth, her elec-

trifling command of information, her unwavering commitment to the ethical, and often most difficult choices in life, her heartrending sensitivity to human need, and her great culture were among the infinitely rich facets of her irresistibly lovable personality.

“As a mother to my brother, David, and to me, and as a wife to our father, Armand Stea, Henriette gave heroically of her heart and soul. As a teacher, who worked for many decades for the Board of Education of the City of New York, also serving there as a guidance counselor and artistic choreographer of school operettas, my mother was worshipped by many of her students. She was radiantly alive, her presence illuminating every room she entered, enriching every moment of the lives she graced, everyone she touched thrived. Henriette Stea was described by Mrs. Leonard Holland as “magic, the essence of glamour.”

“For half a century my mother was devoted to the Society for Ethical Culture, she marched on Washington to help end the war in Vietnam, and was tear-gassed there for her decency; while United States corporations trading with the Nazis during World War II were never held accountable for treason, my mother wept when the innocent Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were executed during the un-American scourge of McCarthyism; she condemned the unnecessary and horrific bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; she campaigned for Adlai Stevenson; and together we grieved at the memorial service held by the Society for Ethical Culture, following the assassination of John F. Kennedy, as together

with so many of us, she mourned the tragic loss of our young President.

“During my childhood, she read to me from the writings of Bertrand Russell and George Bernard Shaw; she encouraged my father and brother incessantly, and she was, simultaneously with all this, a fabulous cook, and great fun to be with.

“My mother, Henriette L. Stea can only be described with reverence, and, finally, the words of Shakespeare begin to capture her loveliness:

She doth teach the torches to burn bright!

It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night

As a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear:

Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!”

Film Forum



Cheryl Gross

Join us on Friday, March 3, to watch *Serpico* (1973) based on Peter Maas' best-selling nonfiction book of the same name. Al Pacino plays an idealistic and honest cop, officer Frank Serpico, who blows the whistle on police corruption on the New York City Police Force. With the streets of New York City as background, we see the cost of Serpico's integrity on his career, the connections in his personal life and his emotional state of mind. Quote from the film, “Who can trust a cop who don't take money?”

Join us for a stimulating discussion on the issues raised in this film. Doors open at 6:30 pm, and the movie begins at 7:00 pm. Admission: \$3.00 for members and \$4.00 for nonmembers. Popcorn and beverages are included.

Ethics and the Theater



Patricia Bruder Debrovner

On March 8, 7:00-9:00 pm, and in honor of Women's History Month, our popular and fun Ethics and the Theater series will present Henrik Ibsen's, *A Doll's House*. Our favorite guest director, Nancy Robillard, will be on hand to inspire our cast, which includes Carole and Jerry Chamlin, Suzy Frazer, Mary Ellen Goodman, John Hilberry, John Lovelady, and Carol Rost. Decide for yourself if this wife and mother has the right—or duty—to find her own soul before all else. Following the famous “door slam heard ‘round the world,” join in the discussion, led by our moderator, Penelope Ghartey, of the many ethical issues this renowned play dramatizes.

Auditions!

Andra Miller

Want to be a star? Come audition for “The First Day of the Society for Ethical Culture.” The playlet will be presented in the afternoon for our celebration of Founders Day, May 21. There are four men's parts and five women's parts. Number of lines to memorize (rough count): Lady reporter, 42; first worker, 20; second worker, 12; nursemaid, 17; Julius Henry Cohen, 7; Mrs. Cohen, 7; Mrs. Julius Rosenbaum, 12, Dr. Felix Adler (at 26), 21. Auditions will be in Room 514 at 6:30 pm, Wednesday, March 15. If you are unable to make that date but would like to be in the play, please call Andra Miller at 212-627-3944.

Cultured Comedy Club

Suzy Frazer

The Cultured Comedy Club and Membership Activities Committee present “Asking For It”—a razor sharp one-woman comedy written and performed by Joanna Rush and directed by Lynn Taylor-Corbett. Thursday, March 16 at 8:00 pm, in CCC’s basement lounge. All tickets \$10. Please call 212-874-5210, ext. 113, or go to www.Theatremania.com.

Drawing As A Springboard

Barbara Litke

The drawing class is designed to enable participants to freely express their individual interpretation of objects using drawing materials on paper. Accepting challenges as you learn, or refining already built-up artistic skills will take you beyond the classroom with newly-discovered competence.

No previous drawing experience is required. Artists at all levels are encouraged to “take the plunge,” Tuesdays, March 21–May 9 at 6:15 pm. Cost is \$70 for members. \$120 for nonmembers. To register, call Gloria Chandler, at 212-874-5210, ext. 117, or in person at: The New York Society for Ethical Culture, 2 West 64th Street, New York City.

Barbara Litke is an artist and teacher who has exhibited her paintings and drawings throughout the tri-state area. She taught art to adults and youngsters. Barbara received a Master of Fine Arts degree from Brooklyn College.

Unpacking Humanism Manifesto III

(Continued from page 1)

Humanism means different things to different people in different contexts. For those of us who identify as Humanists, and practice it in community with others as Ethical Culturists, it is a rich and vibrant life stance that adds meaning and purpose to our lives. Hear humanism come alive as Tony Hileman, who served on the Drafting Committee for Humanist Manifesto III, explains its conceptual boundaries in a positive, accessible way, and unpacks its central elements in plain and simple terms. An open exchange during a question and answer session will follow his presentation.

Additional sessions will take place in April and May. Cost is \$15 for members per session, or \$35 for all three. \$20 for nonmembers per session, or \$50 for all three. Please contact Judy Wank at 212-874-5210, ext. 118 to register.

Art Greeting Card Workshop

Valerie Leiman

A cold, rainy Sunday afternoon in January did not discourage the spirits of seventeen participants assembled in Ceremonial Hall for an Art Greeting Card Workshop.

The teaching team of Chi and Jillian expertly guided their students through the construction of an assortment of 3-dimensional cards and a tiny gift box containing six chocolate kisses! The workshop continued much longer than was expected; the best indication that everyone had a wonderful time, and the satisfying afternoon ended with a surprise raffle.

Social Service Board

Dr. Maria Fridman

The following poem was read by Iris Elizabeth Sankey at the Homeless Artists Workshop that was held on December 13.

It Would Be Appropriate

*It is appropriate we chose each other,
Hoping, together we'd be enough...
Melting clouds of uncertainty,
Letting reflections of you and me
Like soft melody, agree.*

*It would be appropriate I reach for you,
In places I can.*

And call your name

In the quiet confines of my mind,

In languages only the heart can comprehend.



Iris Elizabeth Sankey

March 2006

Office hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00 am – 6:00 pm
 Shelter: Monday-Thursday, 7:30 pm

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p align="center">Great Books March 1 – Shakespeare, <i>Antony and Cleopatra</i> ECRDG: (Ethical Culture Reading Discussion Group) March 8 – Margaret Drabble, <i>The Seven Sisters</i> Great Books: “Clashes of Culture” March 15 – E. M. Forster, <i>Questions for a Passage to India</i></p>						
5 10:00 am – Everyday Ethics 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 11:30 am – Ethics for Children 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:30 pm – Ethics in the News 1:30 pm – Yoga for Seniors	6 6:00 pm – Board of Trustees 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop	7	8 3:00 pm – ECRDG 7:00 pm – Men’s Group 7:30 pm – Great Books	9 6:00 pm – Anyone Can Sing 7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop	10 7:00 pm – Film Forum, <i>Serpico</i> (1979)	11 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
12 10:00 am – Colloquy 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 11:30 am – Ethics for Children 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:45 pm – A Reading by Workshop Writers	13 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop	14 6:00 pm – Women’s Group	15 6:00 pm – Socrates Café 6:30 pm – Auditions 7:30 pm – Great Books: Clashes of Culture	16 6:00 pm – Anyone Can Sing 7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop 8:00 pm – Cultured Comedy Club	17	18 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
19 10:00 am – Poetry Reading 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 11:30 am – Ethics for Children 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:30 pm – All About Hearing – Arnold Kahgan	20 6:30 pm – Social Service Board 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop	21 6:15 pm – Drawing Class	22 7:00 pm – Unpacking Humanist Manifesto III	23 6:00 pm – Anyone Can Sing 7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop	24	25 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
26 10:00 am – Coffee ‘n’ Chat 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 11:30 am – Ethics for Children 12:45 pm – Social Hour 1:30 pm – Amy O’Meara of Amnesty International	27 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop	28 6:15 pm – Drawing Class	29	30 7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop	31	

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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