

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 (except as noted)

January 1—11:30 AM

Ceremonial Hall—4th floor

Open Mike

Andra Miller Presides

January 8

Living Naturally in a

Transcendental World

Tony Hileman

Senior Leader

Dr. James W. Farer Presides

January 15

On being “Unlike”—Some

Thoughts on Uniqueness, Its Joys
and Difficulties

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh

Society President

Carol Nadell Presides

January 22

Five Spiritual Practices Needed to
Save the Soul of America

Curt Collier

Leader of the Riverdale/Yonkers

Society

Tony Hileman Presides

January 29

A Poverty of Purpose

Tony Hileman

Senior Leader

Dr. Judith D. Wallach Presides

January Happenings

Sweet Smell of Success—Friday, January 6, 6:30 pm. This brilliant classic film (written by Clifford Odets and Ernest Lehman, with camera work by James Wong Howe) offers a scathing look at how the lust for success utterly corrupts those who fall victim to it.

A Psychoanalyst Looks at Corporate Corruption—Sunday, January 15, 2:00 pm. Ken Eisold, Ph.D., of the William Alanson White Institute of Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis and Psychology, will lead a discussion on a troubling aspect of business today.

Five Spiritual Practices Needed to Save the Soul of America—Sunday, January 22, 11:30 am. Curt Collier, M.S., Leader of the Riverdale/Yonkers Society, shares his ideas for bringing out the best in all Americans.

From the Leader's Desk

Tony Hileman



T'is the Season

Winter is a time of contemplation; a time for thanks, for giving, for appreciating and for renewing. It is a time when we create opportunities and search for words to express the things that go unsaid the rest of the year—things like expressing thanks for what we have, sharing our time and resources with others, deepening the ethical relationships that sustain us, and renewing our commitment to eliciting the best in others and ourselves. That's how the world is made better for us and for all.

The winter holidays have always been special to me, playing a more prominent role in my life than summer celebrations. One of the advantages of years is the formation of
(Continued on page 3)

Sunday Morning Meetings

January 1—Open Mike—11:30 AM—Ceremonial Hall—4th floor

Andra Miller presides

For the first program of the new year, we're presenting a very casual, low-key program in Ceremonial Hall with no set speaker. Depending on the mood of the crowd, we'll talk amongst ourselves or encourage performances by our more talented members who are willing to volunteer. Please call Andra Miller at 212-627-3944 if you have an idea for subjects to discuss or something you'd like to do for this day's program. Brunch will also be casual.

January 8—Living Naturally in a Transcendental World

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

As Humanists, we have chosen to live a life based on the natural, rather than the mystical. Yet we do so in a global culture dominated by a transcendental worldview—a society of the supernatural. While we derive our ethics through human need and experience,
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Ethical Culture: Who We Are

Excerpted from Alfred Martin, Distinctive Features of the Ethical Movement

“Foremost among the distinctive features of the Ethical Movement is the supremacy it assigns to the ethical end. It declares that there is a sovereign end to be acknowledged, one to which all the superior and inferior aims of men must be subordinated; and that this supreme end can be none other than the ethical.

“To it all other ends, scientific, aesthetic, economic, social, must be made tributary. And by the ethical end is meant the formation of right relations between personalities. It is supreme because nothing under heaven counts for so much as human personality with its latent potentialities and the existence of right relations among beings so endowed.

“He is most entitled to be called ethically-minded who believes, and acts on the belief, that nothing exceeds in importance the establishment of right personal relations, as between husband and wife, parents and children, the social classes, nation and nation. Nor is this highest place assigned to the ethical end because of the happiness that right relations, when established, may bring in their train, for that would be to make the ethical end a means to something beyond itself. No, the creating of right relations is valued above all else because such spiritual activity is the very highest kind in which a human being can engage.

“The supreme good of life is to be found in the act of creating harmonious relations. And for the dissemination of this viewpoint touching ethical-mindedness –i. e., recognition of the supremacy of the ethical end, the formation of right relations between personalities—for this an Ethical Movement is indispensable. Why? Because the opposite viewpoint so widely obtains. Outside the Ethical Movement morality is looked upon as a means to the securing of some non-ethical objective as the real end.

“There are those who put scientific pursuits above all else as being most worthy of human endeavor, but in the estimation of the Ethical Movement science is only a superior, not a supreme end. It owes its worthwhileness chiefly to the fact that it can increase the fund of knowledge wherewith right personal relations may be established. Similarly, the creation of beautiful artworks is only a superior, not the supreme human pursuit; for art derives its highest value from the power of the created harmonies to put the mind into at-one-ment with the most entrancing harmony of all: the right interrelationship of personalities.”

Leader's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

annual habits that shape themselves into personal traditions. For Betty and me, that includes spending Thanksgiving with her family, Christmas with mine, and Winterfest and New Year's with friends and community.

As I write this, Thanksgiving is past and the rest of the season lies ahead. I found the sharing of thanks at our Sunday meeting following Thanksgiving especially moving, and I look forward to my first Winterfest and New Year's with NYSEC.

During these, the shortest days of the year, when I burrow into the comfort of family and friends, I can't help but shudder when thinking of the fear that our ancient ancestors must have experienced as the cold of the long nights gripped them, and the lack of food gnawed at them, a fear that the warmth of the sun and the bounty of the earth had gone, a fear that gave rise to all manner of superstitions, and rituals. Free of these, the long nights of winter offer a time of personal introspection and renewal.

We are fortunate as few, if any, within our immediate circle want for food or warmth. The basic comforts of life are taken for granted by those of us who sustain and are sustained by a community such as ours. But with that good fortune comes the responsibility to make available to others that from which we ourselves benefit so greatly. A large segment of the global population and many within or within close reach of our immediate community still experience the fear brought on by a want of food and warmth, and suffer the loneliness known only by those who are not sustained by the community of others.

The long nights of winter, and the rejuvenation of community through the

sharing of traditions, give us the opportunity to begin the New Year with renewed energy and optimism. This is a time to reconfirm our commitment to share the richness of our lives with others, and to rededicate whatever time and resources are available to us to bring peace and happiness to as many as we possibly can. Ours is a world in need and we can help. Together we can make a difference.

Sunday Morning

(Continued from page 1)

and consider circumstances when determining the right and wrong path of action, others depend on divine revelations to ancient prophets to form absolutist concepts of the good and evil nature of individuals.

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader, shares his thoughts on how to cope when these cultures clash, and how to stand up for our monistic view and promote universal, naturalistic ethics.

January 15—On being “Unlike”—Some Thoughts on Uniqueness, Its Joys and Difficulties

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh, Society President

Felix Adler wrote: “For it is the unlikeness that is the foundation of the reconstructed ethical ideal, the unlikeness of the functionary in the infinite *corpus spirituale*. It is the unlikeness that makes him [the individual—*MB-K*] indispensable, and the being indispensable is the essence of his moral character.” This talk will explore Adler's foundational concept.

January 22—Five Spiritual Practices Needed to Save the Soul of America

Curt Collier, M.S., Leader of the Riverdale/Yonkers Society

Mr. Collier says, “Aristotle once suggested that if you want to know about the character of an average citizen

within a nation, you need to look at his or her community, because the community is the ‘soul of the individual writ large.’” If that is true, and I believe it does have merit, then I would have to say that the soul of our nation, of each citizen, is in trouble and our image abroad mostly ruined.

America's approach to “war without end,” our advocating of torture and secret prisons, our failure to ratify or adhere to international treaties, and our bullying of the UN are on a par with political corruption and infighting at home. The current scandal-plagued administration, multiple indictments, and party bickering have driven public trust in our government to an all-time low.

“I think the US needs another religious revival, one that can become the rallying cry for all Americans.”

Curt Collier, M.S., is Leader of the NY Riverdale/Yonkers Ethical Society, and initiator of the Family Service and programs and curricula for the moral development of children.

January 29—A Poverty of Purpose

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

Ethical Culture is by its very nature opposed to poverty, economic or otherwise, and has since its inception 130 years ago stood for equal opportunity, equal justice, and an equal respect for all. But all of these together cannot assure a bounty of purpose or a meaningful life.

Many today, out of fear, cling to increasingly strident world views. They see the merit in the logical and scientific arguments against their views, yet cling to them in desperation. Others are simply numbed by the realization that traditional views no longer animate their lives. As a result, millions suffer from a poverty of purpose.

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader, explains how the promise of Human-

ism and the practice of Ethical Culture provide a rich and textured purpose to our lives.

Early Sunday 10:00 AM

Jan. 1—No program

Jan. 8—Everyday Ethics: “Difficult Decisions.” An informal discussion on how we face those hard turning points in life when important things are on the line. Eva Franz will lead.

Jan. 15—A meditative hour—probing, quiet, contemplative—exploring our thoughts about a presented subject. Harriet Bigus will lead.

Jan. 22—Poetry Reading—A peaceful hour to read the poems we especially love. Come to read your favorites, or just to listen. Cheryl Gross will lead.

Jan. 29—Singing Practice—All voices, big and small, are welcome. We’ll practice the songs we sing on Sunday mornings—and get some tips to improve our singing technique. Jerry Ranck will lead.

Sunday Afternoon 2:00 PM

Jan. 1—No program

Jan. 8—Ethics in the News, lead by Mary Ellen Goodman;

The Corporation, (abridged) an award-winning documentary, followed by a discussion on big business ethics—(an oxymoron?) Suzy Frazer presides. (Note: Program begins 1:30 pm.)

Jan. 15—Following up on the Jan. 8 film, Ken Eisold, Ph.D., of the William Alanson White Institute will give a talk titled “A Psychoanalyst Looks at Corporate Corruption.” Q & A follows.

Jan. 22—Anne Hastings, executive director of Fonkoze, Haiti’s largest microfinance institution, will talk about Fonkoze’s program to eliminate

illiteracy and bring people out of poverty.

Jan. 29—Greeting Card Workshop (free), sponsored by the Sunday Afternoon Program Committee and led by teaching artist Ms. Chi Nguyen.

If interested, fill out the form below and mail it to: The New York Society for Ethical Culture, 2 West 64th Street, New York, NY 10023, Attention: Valerie Leiman, Membership Office, by December 30.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Our Ethical Family

Suzy Frazer

Carina Still Needs Our Help

Our young member Carina Tam, about whom we wrote in the December issue, will still be needing platelets every day through January. If you can donate platelets (which will be done at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, 68th Street and First Avenue) call MSKCC at 212-639-7643, or call Suzy Frazer at 212-874-5210, ext. 113.

Well-Deserved Recognition

Christine Swann, Society Trustee, was recently honored with the International Philanthropy Award by The Community Hospice at its annual dinner in Albany, NY.



Christine Swann bathing an infant

The Community Hospice partners with three programs in sub-Saharan Africa to assist with the worst hospice issue in the world today,

global HIV/AIDS. Christine, an active volunteer and donor to the partnership since 1999, heads the New York City division of the partnership program and has made five partnership visits to South Africa. In November she led an orientation trip which included three Ethical Culture members.

Condolences

Sadly, Antony McPherson, our Maintenance Supervisor, recently lost his beloved sister, Pamela Audrey McPherson. We extend our condolences to him and his family and will send a contribution to the American Cancer Society in Pamela’s honor.

Members’ Meeting

The **Members’ Community Meeting** on November 20 proved lively and informative. President Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh spoke of our going—but not yet gone—deficit, and the many rentals and pledges needed to support NYSEC. Members also offered a number of excellent suggestions including daytime classes, special presentations each month by a committee during and after the platform, and a spring one-day retreat nearby at which members would reflect and plan for our future. Members were urged to wear their name tags, and to keep an eye out for visitors or members who might need a friendly hello and some company at gatherings.



Happy New Year!

We’re having a New Year’s Eve Concert and Party on December 31. The concert by the Strathmere Ensemble will begin at 8:00 pm in the Concert Hall; the party will begin at 9:30 pm in Social Hall. See December issue for ticket information.

Caring Committee Can Help

Are you in need of care? Do you know of someone who is? Please call the Caring Committee: Ben Bean at 212-580-1757, Christine Swann at 212-787-4567, or Suzy Frazer at 212-874-5210, ext. 113.

For an appointment with Senior Leader Tony Hileman, please call Judy Wank at 212-874-5210, ext. 118.

Social Service Board

Valerie Leiman

The **Social Service Board** wishes to thank Society members for their generosity in contributing to the Board's November Clothing Drive for Hurricane Katrina Evacuees to New York City.

The drive resulted in almost 90 pounds of clothing, and two teddy bears.

Youth and Family Programs

Lynda Kennedy

First, I would like to thank all those who brought in their pennies and donated toys for the children's service projects to help homeless children during the holiday season.

New for Adults and Children

In addition to our Sunday exploration of ethics with children and other family events, we have begun offering yoga for children here at the Society. For regular class times and schedules, please go to the Youth and Family Programs area of the NYSEC website. In the coming weeks we will also be offering evening workshops for adults and families.

Family Yoga

January 13, February 3, March 3, and April 7; 6:30–8:00 PM

Bring the family together for a night of yoga movement and play, music, storytelling, and expressive art. Each class includes training in breathing techniques, partner poses, cooperative games, and quiet meditation. Fees are \$30 per session for a family of two; \$15 for each additional participant. You can pay for the entire four-session series and save. Members: \$100 for a family of two, \$150 for a family of three, and \$200 for a family of four. Nonmembers: \$110 for a family of two, \$165 for a family of three, and \$220 for a family of four.

On Nutrition: What Are Our Children Eating?

February 10 and February 17, 6:30–8:00 PM

During the first evening, parents will participate in a workshop on the current state of nutrition and simple ways for families to eat a healthy diet, while children will learn the basics of nutrition and try out some new foods. The second evening will involve the whole family in cooking and experimentation. Younger children can take part in separate but related activities. Adults may attend alone. Fees: Members, \$40 per person for one evening, \$70 for both; \$60 per family (up to four people) for one evening, \$100 for both. Nonmembers: \$45 per person for one evening, \$75 for both; \$75 per family (up to four people) for one evening, \$120 for both.

Film Forum

Cheryl Gross

Join us on Friday, January 6, at 7:00 pm, to see *Sweet Smell of Success* (1957), a brilliant film with witty dialogue (scripted by Clifford Odets and Ernest Lehman) and portrayals of two self-indulgent and remorseless characters, J. J. Hunsecker (Burt Lancaster) and Sidney Falco (Tony Curtis). The plot

centers on the mean-spirited and powerful gossip columnist, J. J. Hunsecker, who is neurotically attached to his sister and decides to shun the obsequious and sleazy publicist, Falco, refusing to publish his tidbits because Falco has failed to carry out Hunsecker's order to break up the engagement between his sister (Susan Harrison) and a jazz musician (Martin Milner).

The camera work by James Wong Howe, with shots on location in 1950's night spots such as the Stork Club and 21 Club, as well as the Brill Building on Broadway where Hunsecker and his sister live, provides a striking setting.

Once again, film historian Richard Bruno will host the evening and lead a lively discussion. Doors open 6:30 pm. Admission is \$3.00 for members and \$4.00 for nonmembers. Refreshments will be served.

Ethics and the Theater

Patricia Bruder Debrovner

David Mamet, with his unique voice, explores ethics on the college campus in his unsettling play, *Oleanna*. The play, which will be presented on Wednesday, January 11, 7:00–8:30 pm, will leave you puzzled, shocked, and spellbound. Playing the two delicious, perplexing leads are Mark Hofmaier, and Karen Contreras. We are happy to welcome back director Nancy Robillard, who will lead our discussion after the reading.

Thursday Writing Workshop

Elaine Berman

The new semester of "The Joy of Personal Writing," our ten-week Thursday writing workshop led by Elaine Berman, will begin on January 19. This

workshop welcomes both new and experienced writers. For information, call Suzy Frazer at 212-874-5210, ext. 113.

To Forgive and Be Forgiven

Patricia Bruder Debrovner

Join us on Fridays, January 20 and 27, 7:00–8:30 pm, as Anne Klaeyens, Leader of the Long Island Ethical Humanist Society, presents this two-part workshop.

We live with many misconceptions about the nature of forgiveness that keep us from repairing our relationships. Forgiveness is not an automatic act but, rather, an important process, an ethical struggle that takes time and needs to be understood and honored. Our forgiving self allows us to voice our anger without doing damage, acknowledge our part in what has gone wrong, and see the flaws in ourselves and others as part of our humanity. The workshop will introduce participants to some key concepts in the process of forgiveness and invite them to examine their own ethical struggle to forgive and be forgiven.

The “Crime of the Century”

Leslie Doyle

Who planned the murder of JFK, who carried it out, and who covered it up?

On Tuesday, January 24, at 7:00 pm, join author Dr. Joan Mellen for a discussion of her comprehensive exposé, *A Farewell to Justice*, which draws on previously undisclosed evidence from the National Archives’ JFK Assassination Records Collection, as well as interviews with 1,200 people. Admission is free. For more information, call Leslie Doyle at 212-874-5210, ext. 144.

Dr. Joan Mellen is a professor of English and creative writing at Temple University in Philadelphia and the author of 17 books.

For more information, visit www.joanmellen.net.

DNA Project

Barbara Levenson

Our recent raffle to raise funds for a DNA test for a prisoner convicted of a serious crime produced three winners:

1st prize: Dan Morgan, \$200. Barnes & Noble gift certificate

2nd prize: Lori Berliner, two orchestra seats to the NY Philharmonic

3rd prize: Betty Henderson, one-year subscription to *The Nation*

The raffle raised \$862. Adding that to a generous matching grant of \$1,000 from a member and funds from our last book sale, we now have the \$2,500 necessary to purchase our third DNA test. The first two prisoners for whom we purchased tests were exonerated. Thank you to everyone who contributed for your generous support of this vital cause. We’re all winners!

Concert Lovers, Unite!

Dr. Ruth Cohen

It’s time for us to talk. We’d like to know what additions or changes you feel would make the Fall Benefit Concert a fun and successful event. Would you like all strings, piano duets, solo dancers, or vocal soloists or groups? Would you like all-poetry performances, or poetry and music, or jazz, or classical music?

We take all suggestions seriously and are anxious to hear from you. Please call me at 212-860-4096 and leave a message with your ideas.

Dedication of UN Flag

Tony Hileman, Senior Leader

[The flag of the United Nations went on permanent display on our Concert Hall stage on December 11. During the dedication ceremony, Senior Leader Tony Hileman, spoke.]

“There was a time—one among many—when individuals were harshly judged by where they came from and what they thought, a time when the founder of Ethical Culture, Felix Adler, felt it necessary to state that it is not national origin or supernatural opinion that unites us but, rather, a dedication to a common set of values that renders one patriotic. He made that statement by displaying the American flag on our stage, where it has remained since.

“The Board of Directors of the New York Society for Ethical Culture thought it appropriate that on the sixtieth anniversary of the formation of the United Nations and particularly on this, the weekend of Human Rights Day (which was Dec. 10) we expand upon that sentiment and show our respect for the proposition of a universal ethics by also permanently displaying the flag of the United Nations.”

Following the dedication, “United Nations on the March” was sung.

Next Month — Black History Songfest

The New York City Labor Chorus will perform for us on Sunday morning, February 19 as part of our Black History Month Celebration.

January 2006

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:00 am – No program 11:30 am – Morning Meeting in Cerebral Hall – 4 th floor 2:00 pm – No program	2 Society offices closed	3 February 2006 Newsletter Deadline	4 6:00 pm – Men's Group 7:30 pm – Great Books	5	6 7:00 pm – Film Forum, <i>Sweet Smell of Success</i> (1957)	7 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
8 10:00 am – Everyday Ethics: "Difficult Decisions" 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 11:30 am – Ethics for Children 1:00 pm – Cafeteria 1:30 pm – Movie: <i>The Corporation</i> (abridged) 2:00 pm – Ethics in the News	9 6:00 pm – Board of Trustees	10 6:00 pm – Women's Group	11 3:00 pm – ECRDGD 7:00 pm – Ethics and the Theater	12	13 6:30 pm – Family Yoga	14 No Supervised Visitation today
15 10:00 am – Colloquy 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 11:30 am – Ethics for Children 1:00 pm – Cafeteria 2:00 pm – A discussion lead by Ken Eisold, Ph.D.	16 Society offices closed	17 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop	18 4:45 pm – Yoga (ages 5 – 10) 7:30 pm – Great Books: <i>Clashes of Culture</i>	19 4:00 pm – Yoga (ages 5 – 10) 5:15 pm – Yoga (ages 10 – 14) 7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop	20 7:00 pm – To Forgive and Be Forgiven	21 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
22 10:00 am – Poetry Reading 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 11:30 am – Ethics for Children 12:45 pm – Orientation 1:00 pm – Cafeteria 2:00 pm – Talk on Fonkoze's program led by Anne Hastings	23 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop 6:30 pm – Social Service Board	24 7:00 pm – Dr. Joan Melan discussion of her book, <i>A Farewell to Justice</i>	25	26 4:45 pm – Yoga (ages 5 – 10) 7:00 pm – Thursday Writing Workshop	27 4:00 pm – Yoga (ages 5 – 10) 5:15 pm – Yoga (ages 10 – 14) 7:00 pm – To Forgive and Be Forgiven	28 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
29 10:00 am – Singing Practice 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 11:30 am – Ethics for Children 1:00 pm – Cafeteria 2:00 pm – Greeting Card Workshop	30 6:30 pm – Monday Writing Workshop	31	<p style="text-align: center;">Great Books January 4 – Bible, <i>Exodus</i> Hobbes, <i>Origin of Government</i> ECRDG: (Ethical Culture Reading Discussion Group) January 11 – Ian MCEwan, <i>Enduring Love</i> Great Books: "Clashes of Culture" January 18 – Jonathan Swift, <i>A Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms</i></p>			

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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