

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

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Sunday Programs

(for details see page 5)

April 6

"If Men Were Angels: James Madison, the Bill of Rights, and Democracy's Dilemma"

Dr. Khoren Arisian

Senior Leader

Les Graifman Presides

April 13

"Compassion: The Heart of the Good Life"

Bart Worden

Leader, Ethical Culture Society of Westchester

Dr. Khoren Arisian Presides

April 20

"The Pull of Puritanism: America's Everlasting Religious Conundrum"

Dr. Khoren Arisian

Senior Leader

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh Presides

April 27

"The Role of Responsible Dissent in an Age of Uncertainty"

Representative Jerrold Nadler

Mary Ellen Goodman Presides

WQXR-FM (96.3)

Broadcasts

1st and 3rd Sundays of the month at 7:30 am

April 6

"Earth's the Best Place for Love: Celebrating Our Place in Nature"

Dr. Khoren Arisian

Senior Leader

April 20

"All Gods Finally Fail, Only To Be Replaced"

Dr. Khoren Arisian

Senior Leader

Happenings

Nth Hour Reminder! Saturday, March 29, 4:30 pm, Folk Music Concert featuring The Walkabout Clearwater Chorus, with Stone Soup and James Durst. Hosted by Oscar Brand. Celebration supper to follow. **Sunday, March 30, 1:00-4:00 pm, Book Sale** to benefit the Ethical Action Fund for DNA testing. For information about these events, call Ben Bean at 212-874-5210 ext 113.

Sunday, April 27, 11:30 am, Rep. Jerrold Nadler will give an address on "The Role of Responsible Dissent in an Age of Uncertainty." Rep. Nadler is a leader on civil rights and civil liberties; he has been on the ACLU's Annual Honor Roll. See page 6 for details.

Advance Alert! Sunday, May 4, 11:30 am, Annual Membership Meeting. Mark your calendar for this once-a-year opportunity to make your voice and your vote count. **Sunday, November 2, Annual Fund-raising Musical Event** to benefit the Stained Glass Windows Fund. To help, call Ruth Cohen at 212-860-4096.



From The Leader's Desk

Breakpoint—or Breakthrough? Inching Toward War

Dr. Khoren Arisian

As the United States lumbers around the world, luxuriating in its super-power status, the danger is that it may fatally fracture both NATO and the U.N. George Bush has a curious penchant for coming up with a series of different justifications for finally putting in motion whatever he had in mind all along. Thus he's had a single over-riding foreign policy goal: the utter disarming of Iraq, resulting in Hussein prostrate before the world, whether by humiliating concession or military

(cont'd on pg. 3)



President's Notes

Growing the Society

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh

It is the beginning of March as I am writing this. We are coming down the home stretch into spring, a season of rebirth and growth. It feels as though we've had an unusually cold winter, but in reality we've had a somewhat normal winter after a number of mild ones.

(cont'd on pg. 4)

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Ethical Culture: Who We Are

Statement of Principles of the Philadelphia Society for Ethical Culture,
 June 1885 (abbreviated)

Discovered by Dr. Marc A. Bernstein, Archivist

1. We believe that morality is independent of theology. We hold that the moral law is imposed upon us by our own rational nature and that its authority is absolute. We maintain that the moral life should be brought to the foreground in religion.
2. We affirm the need of a new statement of the ethical code of mankind. The formulations of duty which were given by the great religious teachers of the past are not sufficient for the changed conditions of modern society. We believe that moral problems have arisen in this industrial, democratic, scientific age which require new and larger formulations of duty. Hence, a new interest in ethical problems and a profounder study and discussions of them are demanded.
3. We regard it as our duty as a Society for Ethical Culture to engage in works of philanthropy on as large a scale as our means will allow. The ultimate purpose of such philanthropy should be the advancement of morality. When we contemplate the low moral state of society and its indifference to moral aims, we feel called upon to do what we can to raise our fellowmen to a higher plane of life and to awaken within them a deeper moral purpose.
4. We hold that the tasks of self-reform should go hand in hand with efforts to reform society. The mere fact of membership in an Ethical Society must be regarded as a tacit avowal of the desire to lead a wholly upright life and to aid in developing a higher type of manhood and womanhood than has been known in the past.
5. We believe that organization is indispensable to carrying out the aims of ethical culture and that this organization should be republican rather than monarchical. While we recognize the need of public lecturers, we believe that the work of ethical culture in its broadest sense—the study, the discussion and the application of ethical principles—should be carried on as far as possible by the members themselves.
6. We agree that the greatest stress should be laid on the moral instruction of the young, to the end that in the pure hearts of children may be sown the seeds of a higher moral order, that early in life they may be impressed with the worth and dignity of human existence and that work for social and individual perfection may be carried on with larger and nobler results from generation to generation.

From the Leader's Desk

(cont'd from pg.1)

defeat. When the President gave his rationale for going to war to the massed American soldiery at Fort Hood in Texas, he stated his prime objective to be the liberation of the Iraqi people from oppressive rule, not the control of its oil reserves. Most recently the rationale has shifted to the still irresolvable Israeli-Palestinian morass: Saddam's removal will definitively stabilize the region, a logical prelude to democratization of the Arab Middle East and the long-delayed establishment of a "truly democratic" Palestinian state. Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, doubtlessly tipped off by the White House, simultaneously echoed the same argument, and even more eagerly. He would welcome war tomorrow morning.

It's intriguing to note the politics of language, as Orwell taught us to do. All of a sudden all media references to our confrontation with Iraq, as if the media has been uniformly tutored, is reformulated as "a possible war" with Iraq. Bush always gives himself leeway into an indefinite future time frame. War, he now says, is not inevitable but likely—just in case Saddam Hussein should prostrate himself, allowing us to call the troops back home. What strange times! And yet not entirely. Bush, Jr.'s political predecessor is more Nixon than Reagan—and certainly not Woodrow Wilson, as academic pundits have solemnly intoned.

Let's return to yesteryear in our Society's history. On May 11 and 13, 1972, "An Open Letter to the Congress of the United States from the New York Society for Ethical Culture" appeared as a paid advertisement in *The New York Times* signed by Society President

Ivan Shapiro and all members of the Board of Leaders. The letter reads: "Dear Senators and Representatives: "Last Monday night, President Nixon, acting apparently on his sole initiative...at a time when American ground forces had been reduced by 90%, and when the nation has made clear its overwhelming desire to wind down and conclude American involvement in Vietnam, took action to mine harbors and presumably blockade North Vietnam...."

"This action has been taken without the approval of Congress, and doubtless because the Congress would not have authorized such drastic steps at this time. The President has repeatedly extended the war and taken other actions which have been absolutely fruitless as military measures, but

Bush, Jr.'s political predecessor is more Nixon than Reagan – and certainly not Woodrow Wilson, as academic pundits have solemnly intoned.

enormously destructive of the Constitutional rights of the Congress and of the ethical standards of American people. It is obvious that persuasion, reason and experience are unavailing upon the President.

"Accordingly, we urge that the Congress act with all possible speed to regain control over the military forces of the United States and the direction of our destiny. The continued unchecked actions of the President now threaten to jeopardize the very existence of this nation and its people. It is the responsibility of the Congress to take such steps as may be necessary to retain and discharge the war-making powers granted it by the Constitution. Further abdication of this responsibility

could easily result in irreversible disaster.

"Respectfully,
Ivan Shapiro, President

The Board of Leaders:
Jerome Nathanson, Chairman
Khoren Arisian
Algernon D. Black
Edward L. Ericson
Horace L. Friess"

The overall title of the Sunday morning meeting on May 14, 1972, was: "War or Peace? The National Emergency." Each of us made separate statements, many of the issues at the time almost eerily similar to those of today. The national emergency referred to above had to do with the sudden news that the U.S. had mined Haiphong and other North Vietnamese harbors,

thereby further inflaming a conflict that Mr. Nixon had promised to wind down. Excerpts from Mr. Nathanson's remarks follow:

"It is both symptomatic and causal in that

all decisive steps in these long, weary years have followed from commands from on high—sometimes open, sometimes secret. In this respect, what has happened ignores all genuine efforts at persuasion of the people of this country. Without even attempts at persuasion, democracy is dangerously undermined.

"Recall that President Johnson, early in his Administration, was fond of quoting: 'Come, let us reason together.' But as time went on in the Indochinese War, reason apparently was for Mr. Johnson, and on the side of those who agreed with him. Unreason, irrationality, if not downright stupidity were on the side of those of us who disagreed. Obviously, there is no point in trying to

persuade people who can't even reason. And one result of concluding that they cannot is either to tell them what to do or to act for them.

"The years passed...and President Nixon came into office determined to reunite the people...Indeed, he even had a secret plan to end the Indochinese War quickly. Now, after three devastating years and more of the Nixon Administration, the only thing clear about this plan, I think, is that it's still secret.

"Persuasion, I repeat, is at the root of the democratic process. To be sure, persuasion requires patience as well as appreciation of differences. But it also requires facts on which sound judgment can be based. We have too often been deprived of the facts, as the Pentagon Papers alone well show....

"Deception and the lack of facts does not lead to persuasion. It leads to an uninformed citizenry. An uninformed citizenry cannot exercise sound judgment. A citizenry which, in the long run, lacks sound judgment cannot act responsibly. A citizenry not able to act responsibly opens the way for a leadership accountable only to itself.... When citizens fail to call the Congress to account, they are not acting responsibly. When the Congress fails to call the President to account, it is not acting responsibly. If this is not reversed, the process will sooner or later lead inexorably to the destruction of democracy."

I could quote pungent parts of the statements of the other Leaders listed, but this provides a sufficient example of the flavor of what we all were thinking. That the President of the Untied States has become an intermittent

threat to the Constitution and American democracy is an appalling development. But that's where the executive power of the federal government is lodged, and wherever power is thus concentrated, the temptation to maximize it can go to one's head. Whenever a President plays God or presumes to be a messenger thereof, it is our sacred duty to call a halt to what is in essence a totalitarian temptation.

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President's Notes

(cont'd from pg.1)

At this time of year at the Society, we look at where we've been and start to plan, believe it or not, for the coming season, which starts in September. Our budgeting process is in full swing and committees are busy considering what they will be doing in addition to reviewing what they are and have been doing. In general, there is a great deal of positive energy around the Society and all of us seem to be working harder than ever and doing more than ever.

The coming year will be an interesting one as we continue to follow through on improvements and new initiatives aimed at strengthening the Society. We have or will have done a number of things that should support and enhance two of our principal assets, members and the building. As regards membership, we have reorganized the membership committee into two

complementary committees, one that focuses on the support and retention of current membership, and one that focuses on recruitment of new membership. As I write this article, we are in the midst of implementing our new membership database program, which will allow us to more effectively manage our membership relations in all kinds of ways. We are also in the midst of designing a new website which we expect to have ready for public release sometime in April. And we are continually creating and cosponsoring new programs for members and the general public.

One of our most important endeavors will be the refurbishment of our auditorium, for which we expect to be closing the auditorium from the end of June to the end of October. During that time we will be repairing and painting the ceiling, making lighting improvements, recovering seat cushions, replacing curtains and addressing some code issues. When we open the auditorium, we expect it will be transformed in a way that will be a delight to everyone.

By next fall, we will have in place a stronger foundation and organization from which to grow both our membership and our endowment. We need to begin now to plan how to build on those foundations.

If you spend time in our building, you will have noticed that we have been doing some refurbishing on the 5th floor. The refurbishment of Room 514 is nearly complete, as is the reconfiguration of office and storage space

on the east side of the floor. The reconfiguration of office and storage space was largely undertaken to address code issues. Because of our complete lack of space to store tables and chairs they wound up in our hallways, creating egress issues. In the process of solving this problem, we have been repairing and improving the appearance of whatever we have to touch so that we can get the benefit of an improved appearance as well. We will be continuing this effort on the 4th floor and in the Social Hall, as we further reconfigure space and use the opportunity to improve appearances.

I expect that when we are finished with the auditorium refurbishment, we will have gone a long way towards making ourselves more presentable to our membership and the public at large, and we will have enhanced our revenue generating capabilities significantly.

Our major challenges now are membership growth and fund raising. By next fall, we will have in place a stronger foundation and organization from which to grow both our membership and our endowment. We need to begin now to plan how to build on those foundations. In fact, I would say that for the next few years, our thinking and assessment of everything we do should be based predominantly on what it does to support membership growth and funding growth. I will be talking more about these challenges in the coming months, and working with the board and relevant committees to develop plans to meet them. I invite our entire community to think about them and to share any ideas or insights you may have. I firmly believe that we are poised not only for continued growth, but for accelerated growth, and that it will be up to all of us to capitalize on that opportunity.

Sunday Morning Meetings

April 6–“If Men Were Angels”: James Madison, the Bill of Rights, and Democracy’s Dilemma”

Dr. Khoren Arisian
Senior Leader

It has often been pointed out that the character and extent of conscious and precise thinking on the nature of government and human freedom in the latter half of the 18th century are unparalleled in our history. Indeed they are, for the political zenith of this unprecedented collaborative achievement was the American Constitution. No less unparalleled in our history is the steady rise to national power and influence of the combined forces of the political and religious right at the dawn of the 21st century. This combination is fraught with danger to the Republic, for its explicit position is, to put it another way, an explosive mixture of religionized politics and politicized religion. The stand-off between two great Virginians, James Madison–Federalist, and Patrick Henry–Antifederalist, pretty much bridges the full spectrum of debate over the question of political power. Each was prophetic: Madison foresaw the likely possibility of a government behind a government, another version of which is a parallel off-the-shelf structure of governance that largely ignores the Constitution and properly alarms Senator Byrd of West Virginia; Henry foresaw the spectacular expansion of executive power in the future. Both prophecies have melded in the current Bush Administration. With awesome prescience it was Madison who insightfully conceded in a letter

to Jefferson (in 1788) that government is no more above committing evil than people generally: “There may be a certain degree of danger, that a succession of artful and ambitious rulers, may by *gradual and well-timed advances* finally erect an independent Government on the subversion of liberty.” An admonitory prophecy that today has come true and is now staring us in the face. Why did we not see this coming? What shall we do about it?

April 13–“Compassion: The Heart of the Good Life”

Bart Worden
Leader, Ethical Culture Society of Westchester

Compassion is not only an essential ingredient of human goodness, it holds the secret of happiness and health. Compassion means owning our own joys and sorrows and entering through them into the joys and sorrows of others. Rooted in self-awareness, compassion leads us out of ourselves and makes us whole and effective in the context of our deepest relationships.

Bart Worden is the Leader of the Ethical Culture Society of Westchester. He obtained his bachelor’s degree from Hope College in 1978. In 1983 he obtained a masters degree in social work from NYU and then served as a social worker and psychotherapist. For nine years he was director of the Guidance Center’s Rochelle House day treatment program, and he continues to serve as their Corporate Compliance Officer. Bart graduated from the Humanist Institute in 1997 and was Leader Intern at the New York Society from 1995-1997. His wife Ruthanne and their two children are active participants at the Westchester Society.

April 20 – “The Pull of Puritanism: America’s Everlasting Religious Conundrum”

*Dr. Khoren Arisian
Senior Leader*

The number of Christian missionaries throughout the world is literally exploding these days; their proselytizing endeavors in Muslim countries in particular have drawn the ire of Islamic groups. The presence of evangelical emissaries increasingly serves as a lightning rod for anti-American sentiment. Some missionaries have been killed of late (this occurred in Yemen), causing their Christian pastor to pontificate: “This is not a conflict between religions but a conflict between God and Satan, between good and evil.” Ah, once more, we have the monotonous reiteration of the Bush theology. The clergyperson concluded: “...as far as the Southern Baptists are concerned, we will continue to express our love for God.” More than 35 million (!) copies of the “Left Behind” series of novels on the so-called End Times, based on biblical prophecy in the New Testament’s Book of Revelation have been sold since 1995. The aroused and strident mentality of such literature is directed at “secular humanism” as the culprit; according to author Tim La Haye, that’s “why we are losing our culture of morality and decency.” No wonder the astounding evidence is that the U.S. is today more religiously similar to Third World developing countries than to Western industrial nations! Evangelical Christianity, born of Puritan fundamentalism, has wrought an unwelcome miracle.

We can thank our domestic religious right, egged on by its twin, the theologically oriented political right, for this conflicted state of affairs. If this is spiritual renewal, then secular

democracy will have its hands full to overflowing. Now that God has been prayerfully importuned to guide the American Presidency, we have our work cut out for us!

April 27 – “The Role of Responsible Dissent in an Age of Uncertainty”

Representative Jerrold Nadler

Currently in his fifth term in the House of Representatives, Congressman Nadler represents New York’s Eighth Congressional District, which includes most of Manhattan’s West Side and parts of Brooklyn. After serving in the New York State Assembly for 16 years, he was elected to Congress in 1992. He is a national leader on civil rights, civil liberties, transportation, and support for the arts. He has authored legislation to rein in HMOs, to ensure women’s access to preventive health services, and to protect the availability of health care for seniors. He has received awards from numerous organizations, including the National Organization for Women, and been on the ACLU’s Annual Honor Roll. He has won 100% ratings from Planned Parenthood, NAACP, Human Rights Campaign, Children’s Defense Fund, American Federation of Teachers, and the League of Conservation Voters. He is a staunch supporter of women’s right to choose and of gay and lesbian rights.

Representative Nadler is a graduate of Stuyvesant High School, Columbia University, and Fordham Law School and lives on Manhattan’s West Side.

From The Board

Christine Swann

February 3, 2003. The meeting began with a reading of the minutes, which were approved after a few questions.

Fieldston School. Dr. Joe Healey, Head of the School, gave a rich report. Key topics were –

- the launch of a huge Capital Campaign to provide premises for a Middle School;
- fulfilling the charge to teach Ethics both in the classroom and as lived;
- dedication to diversity – the School struggles (1) to diversify faculty and is strengthening recruitment; and (2) to include middle-class students who fall between the those eligible for financial support and those who don’t need it;
- now including the Middle School, reviewing the whole school curriculum, including modern technologies and attention to cultural clusters;
- the Fieldston Enrichment Program, originally funded by the City but now by foundations and the School, which also provides management; this program prepares disadvantaged students of promise to succeed academically in high school and beyond;
- concern about general security of the buildings; the School has beefed up its security staff substantially and, while recognizing the high cost, asks the Society to do the same;
- willingness of the School to publicize our programs.

Senior Leader’s Report. The annual New Members Recognition Ceremony will take place on March 2nd. Our membership roll remains stable. We are adding new members well but are losing some to death and relocation. The recent Installation Ceremony for Anne Klaeyens as Leader the Ethical Culture Society of Long Island was a wonderful event, a credit to the Community and to Anne herself. A sizeable group of members of the New York Society attended and enjoyed it tremendously. The Spring

Adult Education course has been set; it will deal with “Of Morals and Non-Theistic Religions: A Primer.” The contribution of a member to the building fund, in memory of a loved one, was gratefully accepted. This raised the issue of recognizing such gifts with plaques. As this issue needs thought and consideration of official policy, it was deferred to a later date.

Administrator’s Report. The proposed employee handbook was distributed. It is based on commonly used templates, with help and tailoring by our lawyer. The Board was asked to submit questions quickly so the handbook can be amended and approved at the next meeting.

The rental brochure will also be ready for the next meeting. It is excellent. Many have noticed that the stage is in bad condition, having been damaged by one of our regular renters. It will be repaired in February. The cost will be covered by the renter’s insurance.

We are continuing to interview candidates for the new position of Events Coordinator.

Our insurers have lowered the replacement value of the building, which is of concern. We are considering a real estate appraisal to dispute the change.

The Society is considering a change in the church that rents our space for their Sunday services. The proposed change will mean no immediate loss in revenue and a good increase in space and convenience for us. It will return the use of the 5th floor space to us (good news for the Sunday School). The Board voted to pursue this change.

A proposal to hire security guards for the building on weekdays during office hours was also accepted. As a public and much-used building, com-

plete security is impossible, but having regular security staff is strongly recommended for reasonable protection.

The heat in the auditorium continues to be an issue; the problem is keeping the cold air out, particularly on Sunday mornings.

Membership Coordinator’s Report. There are seven new members, many seen as very participative additions to our community.

The new program, “The Salon,” had a good first meeting, and we plan to continue the meetings on the second Monday evening of every month.

Nominating Committee Report. The committee to nominate new Board members is complete and in full swing. Proposed candidates will be voted on at the Annual Membership Meeting in May.

Finance Committee Report. The committee presented a worrisome report on the Society’s finances. We have covered some substantial capital expenditures, e.g. the roof and upcoming work on the auditorium, but our expenses continue to run ahead of income, thus producing a deficit, which means we have to draw on our endowment. A very strong request was repeated – that the Society put in place an active fund raising plan and do it very quickly.

New Business. The Board passed three resolutions making formal their support for

- a moratorium on the Death Penalty;
- a petition to rescind the second installment of the Administration’s tax cuts;
- a stand against the war in Iraq without a UN resolution.

This means that the Ethical Action Committee and others can move on

these issues with the public approval of the Board.

A request to share with the AEU the cost of preserving early recordings of speeches by transferring them from tapes to CD was approved. An appeal was made to Board members to volunteer on Sundays – to preside, to serve as ushers and hosts and to take on cafeteria duties – and in general to be visible and available, particularly to new members and visitors.

A proposal to name the terrace the “Jean Somerville Kotkin Terrace” was approved. A plan is required for furnishing the terrace and adding plants. See the following article.



Jean Somerville Kotkin Terrace

Les Graifman

To date, Les Graifman, Treasurer, has raised \$4,200 for this project. The horticultural committee will start putting together a plan for the board. Preliminary research done last year outlined a projected cost of about \$15,000 to create a lovely outdoor space suitable for rentals and our own use for meetings and events.

Jean’s son, Jon Kerner, was very excited to hear that the Terrace will be named after his mother and looks forward to a dedication ceremony once the space is finished. Contributions to this project would be greatly appreciated. Please make sure to write “Restricted to the Terrace” on your check.

From the Archives

House Proud

Dr. Marc A. Bernstein

Madison House, the New York Society's smaller settlement house on the Lower East Side, has never received the attention it deserves. Social historians have shown greater interest in Lillian Wald's Henry Street Settlement and in the Society's University Settlement, the first settlement in the United States, one that could claim that Eleanor Roosevelt taught dance to its youngsters. Even the Hudson Guild is better known than Madison House. Of course, the Guild was unusual: it was located uptown and served an Irish, not a Jewish, population.

Madison House, however, had a profound effect on the shape of New York City and on the politics of New York State. One of the founders of Madison House, Dr. Henry Moskowitz, himself an urban reformer, married a woman whose contributions to New York State politics cannot be overestimated. Belle Moskowitz became a key adviser to Governor Al Smith; she was a shrewd woman who helped Smith effect distinguished governmental reforms. She also served on the Madison House Board of Trustees.

Among the other standouts on Madison House's Board were Emanuel and Bella Moses, wealthy German Jews who were also members of the New York Society. Bella Moses, in particular, writes Robert Caro, began to be noticed on the Madison House Board.

"It was not long before the trustees came to realize that for a gray-haired housewife and mother, Bella Moses had a most unusual interest in physical construction. Behind her spectacles were the eyes of the builder." Her son, Robert Moses, became New York's master builder. When, in his early professional years, Robert Moses needed a break, it came from Belle Moskowitz.

In November of 1918, Moskowitz called Moses and told him that Governor-elect Smith was establishing a commission that would devise "a plan for the complete reorganization of the state's administrative machinery and for the implementation sweeping social welfare reforms." Moskowitz was to be its executive head. Did Moses want to be her chief of staff? The rest—as they never say—is politics.

Madison House also had a powerful effect on Algernon Black. Black served as Headworker at Madison House from 1926 to 1930 and was struck by how democratically the House was run. A Board of Delegates, composed of representatives of the many house clubs to which neighborhood kids belonged, administered house business. It is not too much to say that Black's experience with this self-governing body

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made him aware of the virtues of learning democracy first hand;

this must have figured in the swirl of ideas that produced the Encampment for Citizenship. Thus, Encampment graduates—Eleanor Holmes Norton, Allard Lowenstein, and Taylor Branch, to mention just a few—came out of a program whose roots went all the way back to a small settlement house a few blocks from the East River.

ACTIVITIES

Membership Services Committee

Barbara Levenson

Film Forum

On Friday, April 18, the Film Forum will present *Cider House Rules*, starring Michael Caine in an Academy Award winning performance. Written by John Irving, who also wrote the book on which it is based, the film follows the life of a young boy who grows up in an orphanage run by a caring and unorthodox physician. The issues raised run the gamut from abortion rights to addiction to murder and test easy assumptions of right and wrong. So join us for the provocative discussion that is sure to follow. Doors open at 6:30 pm and the film begins at 7:00 pm. Admission: \$3.00 for members and \$4.00 for non-members, popcorn and beverages included.

Calling all new members!

We recently met you at our March 2 New Members Recognition Sunday. Now we would love to hear your ideas for the Society. The Membership Services Committee plans and implements a variety of activities ranging from films to hikes to pot luck suppers to our annual Fall Retreat. We meet on the third Wednesday of every month at 6:00 pm in Room 508. Our next meeting is on April 16. Why not join us?

Salon: Ethics in Relationships

Mary Domowicz

Join my co-chair Robin Burnosky and me on second Monday of each month for personally resonant discussions on how ethics impact everyday thoughts and actions. You'll have a chance to consider your perceptions, share your experiences, and examine your current behavior.

This month's topic is "Ethics in Relationships." If personal ethics are rules we impose on ourselves, and social ethics are rules we impose on each other, what have you done when you encountered a conflict? How have you and your partner reconciled opposing viewpoints? How have relationships with family or friends weathered the storms of unethical actions done to you, or between you?

Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 14th, 7:00-8:30 pm, at the Society, Room 514. To register, call Ben Bean at 212-874-5210 ext 113. Please bring friends who are not members, as lively debate is our goal! May's topic will be "Ethics in the Media."

Ethical Culture Community Service Award

Mary Ellen Goodman

The first awardee of the Ethical Culture Community Service Award was Burt Freeman, creator of the My Own Book Foundation.

I was enormously taken with his belief that by enabling third graders in inner city schools to select \$50 worth of books for their very own, they would grow up as readers who might choose

to fill their spare time with books rather than mischief or worse. Only time will tell whether he is right, but I knew I wanted to be part of his hopeful project.

I have done many volunteer tasks in my life but none has been more fun than watching 20 eight-year-olds grasp eagerly for story books, science books, biographies—whatever interested them. As they realize they can really own these books—take them home and read them over and over, or read them to a younger sibling—their excitement and pleasure is all the gratification a volunteer could hope for.

I urge anyone who has three hours to spare once a week or even twice a month to join Carole and Jerry Chamlin 212-628-6462 just once. I predict you will be hooked as I have been.

OUR HUMAN TASK is to find the few principles,
that will calm the infinite anguish of free souls,
make justice imaginable again
in a world so obviously unjust;
give happiness a meaning once more,
to peoples poisoned by the misery
of the century

Albert Camus

Caring Committee Appeal

Stephanie Rosenblatt

Our spring project is Toiletries for the Needy. On Sundays April 6 and April 13 please bring your contributions (individual small items) and deposit them in the box in the lobby. Your help is very much appreciated.

Ethical Action Committee

Christine Swann

War in Iraq. We had a good turnout for the February 15th rally. Due to the tremendous crush our group did not stay together, but there was no lack of community in the huge and united crowd. For seasoned activists, the outstanding difference that day was the wide diversity of participants, which included people of all ages, classes, cultures, and political allegiances.

The EAC continues to support many actions. Please keep checking on the organizing groups – moveon.org, united for peace and justice, et al. The EAC will continue to send out our own e-mail action alerts.

As part of our support for **New Yorkers Against the Death Penalty**, we are organizing a group to go to a fun fundraising event they are sponsoring – tickets for the Yankees baseball game on Sunday, May 18, 2003. The Yankees are playing the Texas Rangers. It's bat day and any child under 14 will get a free baseball bat. Please let Carol Rost know ASAP if you are interested; tickets are \$33.

Please save this date, April 8, 2003, which is the 30th anniversary of the Rockefeller Drug Laws. There will be a demonstration in New York City at 12 noon. Details to follow. It is really important to get as many people there as we can.

We are planning an educational public meeting on **Civil Liberties in a Time of War**. We plan to have a law professor give the context and history of civil liberties, followed by a dynamic panel of speakers who hold opposing views. Steve Schultz and Frank Prescod are leading this effort and have done a lot of really great work on it. Khoren Arisian will serve as moderator. The event is scheduled for April – please watch for details.

Our Ethical Family

Ben Bean and Members

New Member

Elizabeth Jacobs, a retired teacher, is rejoining us as a member after years of being a Friend of the Society. She has attended our lectures on weekday evenings.

News of Members

Charlotte Brawer is home recovering from a hip replacement. We hope to see her getting around soon.

We regret to announce the death of **John Borsos**, who joined the Society three years ago.

Resignations

Beth Callender
Sandy Miller

ACTIVITIES

April Calendar

Support Group

Fridays, 6:30 pm

Supervised Visitation

Saturdays, 9:30 am & 1:30 pm (except April 19)

Ethics for Children

Sundays, 11:00 am

Morning Meetings

Sundays, 11:30 am

Shelter

Sunday-Thursday, 7:30 pm

WQXR-FM (96.3)

Sunday, April 6 & 20, 7:30 pm

Newsletter Deadline

Tuesday, April 1

Nontheistic Religion: A Primer

Tuesday, April 1,8,15,22 & 29, 6:30 pm

Men's Group

Wednesday, April 2, 6:00 pm

Board of Trustees

Monday, April 7, 6:00 pm

Women's Group

Tuesday, April 8, 6:00 pm

Caring Committee

Monday, April 14, 5:00 pm

Salon: Ethics in Relationships

Monday, April 14, 7:00 pm

Membership Committee

Wednesday, April 16, 6:00 pm

Film Forum

Friday, April 18, 7:00 pm

Social Service Board

Wednesday, April 21, 6:30 pm

Ethical Action Committee

Thursday, April 24, 6:00 pm

Reading Programs

Great Books Discussion Series

Wednesday, April 2, 7:30 pm

Montaigne, *Of Experience*

Hamilton, Jay, Madison, *The Federalist*

Ethical Culture Retirement Activities

Wednesday, April 9, 3:00 pm

Vladimir Nabokov, *Pale Fire*

Great Books Discussion Series –

Fiftieth Anniversary Series

The Evil and The Guilty

Wednesday, April 16, 7:30 pm

John Edgar Wideman, *Philadelphia Fire*

Sundays at the Society

Mornings:

Apr. 6 Leaders' Writings 10:15 am

Apr. 13 Colloquy 10:30 am

Apr. 20 Poetry Reading 10:30 am

Apr. 27 Yoga Meditation 10:30 am

Afternoon Programs:

Apr. 6 Ethics in the News 1:30 pm

Apr. 13 Ethics Study 1:30 pm

Apr. 20 Orientation 1:00 pm

Apr. 27 Film: "Unintended
Consequences" 1:30 pm

Wouldn't your committee like to contribute the flowers one Sunday? What a nice way to honor an individual, or a group, or an event. Call the Administration office at 212-874-5210 for details.

Memo from the American Ethical Union

The American Ethical Union (AEU) is soliciting and recruiting candidates for the AEU Board of Directors. We seek the strongest possible candidates for the Board to take office immediately following the Assembly in Philadelphia during May 23-26, 2003.

The Recruiting Committee of the Board is accountable for soliciting and recruiting candidates from throughout the entire Ethical Movement. Since nominations **are not made** by the Committee or the Board, but by a **petition of 10 members**, it is important that individuals who have demonstrated a commitment to the growth and well being of the ethical culture movement be encouraged to consider this vital position.

The Board is composed of 13 members. The delegates at the Assembly will elect 11 members. The remaining two Directors are chosen by the National Leaders Council. Each Director serves a two-year term until the election at the next Assembly. The AEU Board meets approximately five times per year. While these meetings are normally held on Saturdays in New York City, it is hoped that during the coming year we will rotate the meetings to various Society locations around the country. Directors may request financial help from the AEU for costs related to travel and room and board.

It is important for candidates to have a national (big picture) perspective, to represent and work on behalf of the wide diversity of AEU's membership, including: members-at-large, small and large Societies, and the growth of emerging Circles and Fellowships. The AEU Board is seeking to reflect this diversity.

Any member of AEU (members of Societies, Fellowships, and members-at-large) may submit a nomination petition with 10 signatures of other members to qualify for candidacy to the Board of Directors. The petition must be accompanied by a brief personal statement of not more than 200 words. All those submitting valid petitions will be nominated and voted on by the delegates to the AEU Assembly in May in Philadelphia. Nominations must be received at the AEU office (2 West 64th Street, New York, NY 10023) **by April 1, 2003**.

Qualifications for candidacy should include such things as past or present active involvement in multiple aspects of a local Society or similar organization, evidence of skills/expertise in fund raising, finance (accounting), leadership, ethical philosophy, organization, communication, education, social/ethical action and membership development/growth.

A commitment to participate fully in implementing AEU's mission is expected. A copy of the Mission Statement follows, as well as the Board of Director Position Description.

Should you have any questions regarding the recruiting and/or election process, please feel free to contact the Board Committee members: Ellen McBride at erbride@tiac.net, Tom Hoepfner at thomas_j_hoepfner@rsh.edu, or John F. Hartman, Executive Director, at aeuoffice@earthlink.net.

American Ethical Union Mission Statement

The American Ethical Union serves the Ethical Societies, Fellowships, and affiliations such as Circles, State and Sub-regional organizations, and its Members-at-Large in manifesting the “Statement of Purpose” of the Ethical Movement, and strives to extend the message of Ethical Culture to others who share our ideals.

The American Ethical Union serves:

- the growth of the Movement by starting new Societies, strengthening existing Societies and affiliations as described above, increasing membership;
- to interconnect Societies and Fellowships and affiliations as described above – sharing resources, expertise, proven strategies, and training programs;
- to support meaningful and effective ethical action and service in our Societies;
- to build a sense of identity and pride in the larger movement;
- to cultivate life-span religious education programs.

The American Ethical Union provides leadership by:

- training and certifying Leaders for a growing Ethical Movement;
- developing and maintaining literature, brochures, historical and philosophical information on the Ethical Movement;
- representing the Ethical Movement nationally and internationally, and on ethical action issues.

Progress will be measured by growth in membership and the number and health of our congregations, by the extent to which we conduct our organizational activities in accordance with our ethical aims and ideals, and by the recognition and understanding of the Ethical Movement in the larger community.

Board of Directors Position Description

Position Title: Director, The American Ethical Union (AEU)

Reports to: President of the Board and the AEU membership

Tenure: Each Director is elected to serve a two-year term. No Director shall serve for more than seven consecutive full terms.

Function: The Board of Directors makes planning and policy decisions; becomes responsible for financing those decisions; monitors implementation; and promotes both internal (membership) and external (public) understanding of and support for AEU.

Principal Activities:

1. Attends all Board meetings and actively participates in its decision-making.
2. Serves on at least one Board Committee and attends all of its meetings.
3. Supports and participates in fund raising activities, and makes a personal financial contribution to the Board Leadership Campaign.
4. Is a good will ambassador for AEU.
5. Is willing to assume leadership positions and be a team player.

Qualifications: Demonstrated commitment to helping sustain and grow the Ethical Culture Movement. A combination of skills in the area of management, public and personal professional awareness, image building, and resource development is essential.

Sample Personal Statement

Kim Doe, New York, New York
Senior Vice President, XYZ Corporation

Experience in Ethical Society: Currently Membership Chair of the New York Society. Member for 15 years, Member-at-Large for three years (prior to moving to New York.) Former Pledge Coordinator of New York Society.

Experience in Other Outside Activities: Chair PTA Auction

Statement: Our ethical ideals and sense of community have been a powerful influence on my family and me and have inspired my decision to run for the Board of the American Ethical Union. My past experience in fund raising and organizational development on a professional level should prove useful in trying to fund new programs for growth and for ethical action. A desire to use my philosophical and historical knowledge of Ethical Culture/Ethical Humanism towards developing a statement of clear identity comes from working with our young people who struggle with expressing to their larger community what "Ethical Culture" is. I would be most pleased to serve on the Board.

OF MORALS AND NONTHEISTIC RELIGION: A PRIMER

"Vital religion has always suffered when orthodoxy was more regarded than virtue." –Ben Franklin

Five Tuesdays in April, 2003, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Ceremonial Hall, New York Society for Ethical Culture

Facilitator: Khoren Arisian, Senior Leader, New York Society for Ethical Culture

**Society Members \$35; Non-members \$50; Single Admission \$10.00 Members
\$15.00 Non-members
\$5.00 Students**

- April 1 *"An Oft Untold Story: Agnosticism, Atheism, and Non-Creedal Religion"*
Khoren Arisian, Senior Leader
- April 8 *"The Neglected History of America's Real Religion"*
Robert B. Tapp, PhD.
Emeritus Professor of Humanities, Religious Studies, and South Asian Studies,
University of Minnesota; presently Dean, Humanist Institute, New York City
- April 15 *"The Deistic Revolution: Between Secularism and Supernaturalism"*
Joseph Chuman, PhD.
Leader, Ethical Culture Society of Bergen County, New Jersey; Adjunct
Professor of Religion, Columbia University
- April 22 *"The Fate of Secularity in A Fundamentalist World"*
Khoren Arisian, Senior Leader
- April 29 *"The Defining Factor: From Skepticism to Philosophic and Pragmatic Naturalism"*
Paul Kurtz, PhD.
Chair, Center for Free Inquiry – International, Buffalo, New York; Emeritus
Professor of Philosophy, SUNY at Buffalo; President, Prometheus Books

To register call Nicola Dempsey at (212) 874-5210.

Child care available if requested in advance with registration.

April 2003

(Office hours for the month: 9:00 am – 6:00 pm)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 May 2003 Newsletter Deadline 6:30 pm – Nontheistic Religion: A Primer 7:30 pm – Shelter	2 6:00 pm – Men's Group 7:30 pm – Shelter 7:30 pm – Great Books	3 7:30 pm – Shelter	4 6:30 pm – Support Group	5 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
6 Doylght saving Time begins 7:30 am – WQXR-FM (96.3) 10:15 am – Leaders' Writings 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:30 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Cafeteria 1:30 pm – Ethics in the News 7:30 pm – Shelter	7 6:00 pm – Board of Trustees 7:30 pm – Shelter	8 6:00 pm – Women's Group 6:30 pm – Nontheistic Religion: A Primer 7:30 pm – Shelter	9 3:00 pm – ECRA 7:30 pm – Shelter	10 7:30 pm – Shelter	11 6:30 pm – Support Group	12 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
13 10:30 am – Colloquy 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:30 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Cafeteria 1:30 pm – Ethics Study 7:30 pm – Shelter	14 5:00 pm – Caring Committee 7:00 pm – Salon: Ethics in Relationships 7:30 pm – Shelter	15 6:30 pm – Nontheistic Religion: A Primer 7:30 pm – Shelter	16 6:00 pm – Membership Committee 7:30 pm – Shelter 7:30 pm – The Evil & The Guilty	17 7:30 pm – Shelter	18 6:30 pm – Support Group 7:00 pm – Film Forum	19 No Supervised Visitation program today
20 7:30 am – WQXR-FM (96.3) 10:30 am – Poetry Reading 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:30 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Cafeteria 1:00 pm – Orientation 7:30 pm – Shelter	21 6:30 pm – Social Service Board 7:30 pm – Shelter	22 6:30 pm – Nontheistic Religion: A Primer 7:30 pm – Shelter	23 7:30 pm – Shelter	24 6:00 pm – Ethical Action Committee 7:30 pm – Shelter	25 6:30 pm – Support Group	26 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
27 10:30 am – Yoga Meditation 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:30 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Cafeteria 1:30 pm – Film 7:30 pm – Shelter	28 7:30 pm – Shelter	29 6:30 pm – Nontheistic Religion: A Primer 7:30 pm – Shelter	30 7:30 pm – Shelter	Great Books April 2 – Montaigne, <i>Of Experience</i> Hamilton, Jay, Madison, <i>The Federalist</i> ECRA: (Ethical Culture Retirement Activities) April 9 – Vladimir Nabokov, <i>Pale Fire</i> The Evil And The Guilty April 16 – John Edgar Wideman, <i>Philadelphia Fire</i>		

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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