

ETHICAL OUTLOOK

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Sunday Programs

January 5

"The Times Are Always Changing, So Must We! From Self-Culture to Ethical Culture"

Dr. Khoren Arisian

Senior Leader

Les Graifman Presides

January 12

"AIDS is Preventable: Apathy is Lethal"

Nane Annan, Wife of UN

Secretary General Kofi Annan

Dr. Khoren Arisian Presides

January 19

"Benjamin Franklin: The First American & The First Ethical Humanist"

Dr. Khoren Arisian

Senior Leader

John Markunas Presides

January 26

"What's Your Story and Is It Big Enough?"

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh

Society President

Dr. Judith D. Wallach Presides

WQXR-FM (96.3)

Broadcasts

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

January 5

"On Not Looking the Other Way the Older We Get: The Next 30 Years" (A Birthday Address)

Dr. Khoren Arisian

Senior Leader

January 19

"American Morality and the Prophet Jonah"

Dr. Khoren Arisian

Senior Leader

January Happening

At last, a course many members have been asking for! Our Leader Intern, Anne Klaeyesen, will present "A Humanist Perspective on the Bible," under the aegis of the Adult Education Committee. See page 3 for details.

Sunday Morning Meetings

January 5 – "The Times Are Always Changing, So Must We! From Self-Culture to Ethical Culture"

Dr. Khoren Arisian

Senior Leader

The Western democratic tradition places ultimate responsibility for the quality and advancement of public life on *every* individual. This means that to the degree we are active as citizens, to that degree does democracy flourish—otherwise it languishes. Hence the motto of the US Pavilion at the New York World's Fair in 1964: "Our obligation to freedom is social concern." If a world's fair were held early in 2003, could a similarly optimistic mood be justified? Hardly; nonetheless theoretically, at least, it could. For Felix Adler, as it was for Winston Churchill, Benjamin Franklin and others of such ilk, one should never waste time in despair over the current state of the world; instead one should do something about it! For Ethical Humanists, the good life is principally with people and the natural world, not in solitary communion with some assumed deity. Therefore, as we face the coming New Year together, we would do well to ask ourselves, "What directives for ethical activism in our time can we receive from the history of our own Ethical Movement? And how might we express/apply the inspirational genius of Ethical Culture to both social and personal uplift in a time when we're unsure whether there shall be either war or peace?" Ethical Culture is only as alive as we ourselves are alive, laboring joyfully in its behalf. A strong suggestion will be placed before members and friends in attendance as to how most effectively the Ethical Culture message can be publicly translated in the coming days. If time permits, your responses will be elicited in the form of a short town meeting. Last but not least, Happy New Year, everyone—at least let's help make it so!

January 12 – “AIDS is Preventable: Apathy is Lethal”

Nane Annan, Wife of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan

Born in Stockholm, Sweden, Nane Annan was trained as a lawyer and from 1969 worked in the Swedish Court System. In 1983 she moved to New York. From 1985-1996 she painted full-time. With the election of her husband as Secretary General of the United Nations in December, 1996, Mrs. Annan’s life changed dramatically. She echoes her husband’s view



that “ultimately, global society will be judged on how well – or how poorly – it treats its weakest and most disadvantaged.”

When Mr. and Mrs. Annan travel together to visit UN projects, Nane focuses especially on those undertakings where women have a chance to lift themselves out of poverty, knowing that this will benefit not only the women but also their children, especially girls whose education is typically ignored but remains of critical importance for the future. No less is Mrs. Annan passionately devoted to efforts to break the

“conspiracy of silence” on the worldwide AIDS epidemic.

Every minute a child dies from AIDS and young people under 25 become infected. A campaign is presently underway to encourage us all to do what we can to mitigate this growing tragedy. Such a world problem requires a global solution – and sooner rather than later!

We are pleased and honored to have Mrs. Annan as our distinguished guest speaker at this Sunday meeting.

January 19 – “Benjamin Franklin: The First American & The First Ethical Humanist”

*Dr. Khoren Arisian
Senior Leader*

Born in 1706, Ben Franklin came into the world only 10 or more short years after the notorious Salem witch trials in Massachusetts. He early understood that the essential bond among human beings was one of ethics and that politics should serve rather than trump life’s moral domain. Wise and philosophically astute, Franklin would go on to become one of the greatest scientists of his time and one of the aspiring American nation’s leading public citizens. One who believed in doing practical good works by leaving behind great social institutions based thereon, Franklin would rise above politics – while admitting its necessity – becoming one of the greatest statesmen who helped found the American Republic. Without his diplomatic temperament operating at full tilt at the French Court, the money and

materiel needed to defeat the British Army in the colonies that had declared their independence on July 4th, 1776 would not have been available.

By common consent among historians as perhaps the most original and broadly gifted of the nation’s founders, Franklin’s was a life of almost continuous triumph where it counted most, especially during the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787. In short, his life spanned nearly the entirety of the 18th century when for the first time in history the idea of an open future versus a calcified past gripped history’s newest democracy in the making. This Sunday’s presentation and that of the opening Sunday in January are thus all of a piece, for we shall also inquire into Franklin’s ethical humanist religious inclinations – a person always ahead of his time!

January 26 – “What’s Your Story and Is It Big Enough?”

*Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh
Society President*

Though it can be argued that nature has an intelligence all its own, there appears to be a critical difference between humanity and the rest of nature. Humanity appears to have some choice in the story it chooses to enact. The stories we choose to enact, whether conscious or not, inform all of our actions. Our actions inherit the expansiveness or the limitations of these stories and the results we obtain proceed directly from our actions.

Michael’s talk will further explore this idea, as expressed in his article in the December issue of this newsletter.

Film Forum

Barbara Levenson

Is there a constitutional right to privacy? What are the ethical and moral implications of indiscriminate eavesdropping? These issues are explored in Francis Ford Coppola's compelling film *The Conversation*, to be shown at the Ethical Culture Film Forum on Friday, January 17. Starring Gene Hackman in an Academy Award nominated performance, the film follows an expert surveillance man who undertakes a routine wire-tapping job that turns into a modern nightmare. Join us for an evening of rewarding film viewing and stimulating discussion that is sure to follow. Doors open at 6:30 pm, and the movie begins at 7:00 pm. Admission: \$3.00 for members and \$4.00 for non-members. Popcorn and beverages are included in the price of admission.

Salon: Consequences of Ethical Choices

Mary Domowicz

When you're out with friends at a party, after all the small talk topics are exhausted, the group starts to consider deeper issues. Skip the five hours of drinking and pleasantries and jump right to the end, when there's a core group discussing personal theories of existence.

Join us first Tuesdays for a brand new forum organized by enthusiastic new members on how ethics impact your everyday thoughts and actions in

relationships, at the workplace, and as a citizen.

This month's topic is Consequences of Ethical Choices: What if "doing the right thing" jeopardizes important aspects of your life (job, relationship, etc.)? How can you respond when you witness deliberately committed unethical (yet legal) acts? What are some ethical dilemmas you have faced, and are you satisfied with your actions? Tuesday, January 7, 7:00–8:30 pm. Room 514. Register with Ben Bean at (212) 874-5210, ext 113. Please bring friends who are not members, as lively debate is our goal! February's topic: Ethical Capitalism.

A Humanist Perspective on the Bible

A Special—and New—Course Organized and Presented by Anne Klaeyen, Leader Intern

Tuesdays, 6:30–8:30 pm
Members \$20, Non-members \$25

January 14: The Torah—Genesis
January 21: The "Literary" Prophets
January 28: The Gospels—Parables

Caring Committee

Stephanie Rosenblatt

We thank Bloomingdale's, which once again provided the bags we filled with Thanksgiving goodies for distribution to several neighborhood organizations.

NYSEC Ethical Youth Group

Larry Yates

The Society is exploring the possibility of organizing an Ethical Youth Group for teenagers, ages 13-18. Our biggest challenge will be to recruit kids. To meet that challenge and to develop a worthwhile program, we will need a Youth Group committee, consisting of kids and adults. Besides committee members, we will need adult supporters who will help us to recruit teen members and raise money. If you would like to help plan this program, please contact Larry Yates at (212) 864-4572 or lryates@panix.com.

A Wellness Course in T'ai Chi Qigong

Don't forget this opportunity to achieve greater health, relaxation, balance, and inner calm. Mondays 6:00-7:00 pm and Saturdays 11:00-12:00 noon. See your December *Outlook* for details and call Ben Bean at (212) 874-5210 ext. 113 to register.

Author Anika Nailah to Present Forum January 26

Anika Nailah is the director of Books of Hope, a program that encourages young people to write and self-publish their own books. A freelance writer and literacy consultant, her stories have

appeared in African American newspapers including *Reunion* and *Flare*.

Anika Nailah made her literary debut with *Free: And Other Stories*, a poignant collection of short stories that depicts the inner lives of ordinary African-Americans by depicting the struggles and injustices they confront and highlighting the skills they develop in order to survive.

At 1:30 pm on January 26, Ms. Nailah will present a forum in which the issues she raises in her book will be explored.

Our Ethical Family

Ben Bean and Members

New Members

Chester Lane is an editor for *Symphony Magazine* and has been quite active in the Society by volunteering in the women's shelter and taking part in the auction and other Society activities. His home and family are located just outside of Washington DC, which is why we don't always see him on Sundays.

Paul Levesque is an editor for Amsco School Publications and has known about us for years. He appreciates the friendliness, the moral values expressed by the Society, and the intellectual atmosphere, and he hopes to be participate in Society activities.

News of Members

Donna Fetonte and **George**

LaMothe are both at home recovering from recent accidents.

Jean Somerville Kotkin thanks all those who shared her birthday

ACTIVITIES

January Calendar

Ethics for Children
Sundays, 11:00 am

Morning Meetings
Sundays, 11:30 am

YES Group
Sundays, 11:30 am

Society offices closed
Wednesday, January 1

Newsletter Deadline
Thursday, January 2

Support Group
Fridays, 6:30 pm

WQXR-FM (96.3)
Sunday, January 5 & 19, 7:30 am

T'ai Chi Qigong
Mondays, 6:00 pm
Saturday, January 11, 18 & 25, 11:00 am

Board of Trustees
Monday, January 6, 6:00 pm

Salon: Consequences of Ethical Choices
Tuesday, January 7, 7:00 pm

Men's Group
Wednesday, January 8, 6:00 pm

Caring Committee
Monday, January 13, 5:00 pm

Social Service Board
Monday, January 13, 6:30 pm

Women's Group
Tuesday, January 14, 6:00 pm

A Humanist Perspective on the Bible
Tuesdays, January 14, 21, 28, 6:30 pm

Membership Committee
Wednesday, January 15, 6:00 pm

Film Forum
Friday, January 17, 7:00 pm

Society offices closed
Monday, January 20

Ethical Action Committee
Thursday, January 23, 6:00 pm

Reading Programs

Great Books Discussion Series
Wednesday, January 8, 7:30 pm
Bible, Job
St. Augustine, *The City of God*

Ethical Culture Retirement Activities
Wednesday, January 15, 3:00 pm
Allegra Goodman, *Kaaterskill Falls*

Great Books Discussion Series – Fiftieth Anniversary Series
The Evil and The Guilty
Wednesday, January 15, 7:30 pm
Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Stavrogin's Confession*

Sundays at the Society

Mornings

Jan. 5	Leaders' Writings	10:15 am
Jan. 12	Colloquy	10:30 am
Jan. 19	Classical Poetry	10:30 am
Jan. 26	Yoga Meditation	10:30 am

Afternoons

Jan. 5	Ethics Study	1:30 pm
Jan. 12	Ethics in the News	1:30 pm
Jan. 19	Orientation	1:00 pm
Jan. 26	Anika Nailah Forum	1:30 pm

celebration, those who generously contributed to the Society in her honor, all the staff members who worked so hard to make the dinner a success, and most of all Pat and Chuck Debrovner who had the idea of the birthday dinner and who contributed generously in so many ways.

We are happy to hear that long time (former) member of the Society and the SSB **Hilda Zannis** continues to do well in icy Westmount, Quebec, where she lives close to her family, including three teenage grandchildren. Hilda is planning to visit New York in the spring. Watch for details.