

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

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Sunday Morning Meetings

10:15 AM—Ceremonial Hall

4th Floor

September 6

Ethical Action Stories: A Personal Odyssey, Part II

Abe Markman

Carol Nadell Van Deusen Presides

Sunday Morning Meetings

Earth Rise—starting September 27

10:30 AM—Ceremonial Hall

Platform Meetings

Starting September 13

11:15 AM—Auditorium

September 13

Three R's of Ethical Community: Reflection, Reunion, Renewal

Dr. Anne Klaeysen, Leader

Tom Weishaar Presides

September 20

Ethical Culture's Distinctive Voice

Dr. Joseph Chuman, Leader

Dr. Anne Klaeysen Presides

Sunday Morning Meetings

September 27

How to Avoid Becoming a

Vampire in Three Easy Steps

Curt Collier, Leader

Bonnie Bean Presides

*Bring a
Friend on
Sunday*

September Happenings

Society Activities Fair—Sunday, September 20, following the platform in Social Hall. Find out how our community operates and how you can participate. Members of committees and projects will staff tables with literature and exhibits to demonstrate what they do and encourage others to join in the exciting work of our community.

Earth Rise Benefit Concert—Friday, September 25, 8:00 pm in the Auditorium, featuring the music of *House of Waters*—with Max ZT, Luke Notary, Moto Fukushima, and special guest Brandon Terzic. (See page 8 for more.)

President's Notes

Andra Miller



At our last Board meeting, we set some new tasks for ourselves. If you'd like to help, we are looking for membership involvement. Remember, if you are complaining you don't know what the Board is doing, it's easy enough to find out—attend a Board meeting, volunteer for a committee, or get real buddy-ish with a Board member.

Here are the things we assigned ourselves: Get in touch with local clergy for joint projects: Jim Farer and our clergy. Work with the Stop Torture Campaign to stop torture in US prisons: Janice Buzby. Work on our definition, our branding (community, relationships, and self-actualization): Tom Weishaar. Reactivate membership circles: Andra Miller, member Barbara Levenson (see "Crafts Circle" page 8), and Tom Weishaar. Appeal to membership for building funds: Bob Berger. Present charts to our pledg-

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From the Leader's Desk

Dr. Anne Klaeysen



God Talk

One day Fox News called the Society.

"Hello. We're looking for an atheist for our show on 'God Talk.'"

"Can we send you a nontheist?"

"What's that?"

On Friday, August 7, thanks to our Communications Director, Julie Blutstein, I appeared on the Fox News webcam program, "The Strategy Room," with religion reporter Lauren Green, author Eric Metaxas, comedian Scott Blakeman, and Fox News radio host Todd Starnes. A webcam program, for the uninitiated (which included me), is live news programming for the web, streaming content online in the format of traditional cable news channels. "The Strategy Room" appears five days a week from 9:00 am

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President’s Notes

(Continued from page 1)

ing membership showing expenses and pledge/building income: Tom Weishaar and Heather Grady (chair of the Pledge Committee). Connect Facebook notices with website blog: Anne Klaeysen.

Form a Public Relations Committee to post blogs; build press relations; get NYSEC in faith columns (*Daily News, Post, Washington Post* online); advise staff re public relations opportunities; and help get feature stories in neighborhood newspapers, *Village Voice, Free Press*, etc.: Andra Miller and staffer Julie Blutstein—and you? Decorate our lobby with a timeline for the building centennial and include pictures of Sunday School in action: Chris Everett and Heather Grady (chair of the 100th year celebration of our building). Develop a core curriculum for ethical living, an Ethical Institute: Chris Everett, Sheila Kleinwald, Andra Miller, and Leaders. Figure out and make charts of which income and expenses are from/for our building and its rental, and which are from/for our programs: Tom Weishaar and Executive Director Bob Liebeskind. Assign trustees, staffers, and members liaison responsibilities with organizations Ethical Culture was instrumental in starting, such as the Visiting Nurse Association, the Child Study Association, the Legal Aid Society, the NAACP and the ACLU: the Board (and also with organizations like The Nation and

others that have held programs in our building cosponsored by us.) The Board will be setting goals for these relationships and making these assignments at our September 14 meeting. Call your President if you’d like to be involved or come to the meeting and take part; it’s at 6:30 pm.

Obviously, with the other work the Board already does, membership help will be needed for these tasks and this committee work. We need you to be brave and volunteer. Don’t be frightened by thoughts that the work will be long and arduous, think about the fun you’ll have working and thinking together with others. For a commitment of maybe four hours a month, you can make a big difference for your Society and we all will profit—including you—from whatever participation you can muster.

I have to pause here to thank those of you who are already silently taking part in committee work, doing the unsung-hero tasks that keep this Society alive and humming. There are too many of you to name here, but please know that the rest of the membership, the Board, and I appreciate the gift of your time, wisdom and skills.

As for the rest of you, remember all that the Society does for you and be a sport—cough up a few hours for the good old New York Society for Ethical Culture. As your commitment would be voluntary, it’s entirely up to you how short—or long-term you wish it to be. Kindly call me at 212-627-3944.

And, everyone, enjoy the final summer months.

Leader's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

to 5:00 pm. On Fridays from 10:00 am to 11:00 am, Ms. Green hosts a segment called "God Talk."

Before leaving the office on Thursday, I scanned my bookshelves for inspiration and support. Whom should I read to prepare? I chose John Lovejoy Elliott, my favorite Ethical Culture Leader. "Friendship is a gift of the gods, a give and take," he wrote, "but if you accomplish anything with your enemies, it is a tremendous piece of work in itself. If you overcome your aversion, that means a great deal." I was making an assumption—and not necessarily a fair and balanced one. With the exception of Scott Blakeman, who brought his comedy show "StandUp For Peace," blending his Jewish humor with Palestinian-American comedian Dean Obeidallah's, to the Society last January, I didn't know the other panelists. Why think of them as enemies just because of my aversion to Fox News?

Thanks to the Internet, I was able to research the backgrounds of the people I would be meeting. In addition to serving as a religion correspondent for Fox News Channel, Lauren Green is well known as a concert pianist. In 2004, she released her debut CD, "Classic Beauty." Ms. Green is also a member of Redeemer Church, the congregation that rents our Auditorium on Sunday mornings.

Eric Metaxas, who attends Calvary/St. George's Episcopal Church, has written award-winning children's books. His books for adults include *Amazing Grace: William Wilberforce and the Heroic Campaign to End Slavery* and *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About God (but were afraid to ask)*. He is currently

working on a biography of theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

Todd Starnes is an evangelical Christian and lifelong Southern Baptist who holds conservative political views. His book, *They Popped My Hood And Found Gravy On the Dipstick*, relates his experience of having open heart surgery in his 30s, losing both of his parents, losing 150 lbs, and finally running in the 2007 New York City Marathon.

I looked forward to spending an hour talking with these people. Lauren threw out some recent news items for discussion—the health care debate, the shootings in the health club in Pittsburgh, the fatal accident on the Taconic Parkway. We never explicitly addressed "god talk" in the way I thought we would. I was prepared to quote Elliott: "I have known good people who believed in God. I have known good people who didn't believe in God. But I have never known good people who didn't believe in people." I didn't need to; somehow that sentiment was already understood. We talked about the need for caring communities, and agreed that it is not healthy for people to feel lonely and isolated, and that we need to listen to one another better and engage in respectful dialogue.

What a wonderful experience! Now Lauren would like to film a humanist wedding or, as she puts it, "a ceremony that doesn't include God in it." One of my couples is interested. It could be a unique teachable moment—for all of us.

Sunday Morning Meetings

10:15 AM—Ceremonial Hall

Sept. 6—Ethical Action Stories: A Personal Odyssey, Part II

Abe Markman

A Latino young adult is shot in the back running away from a police officer after an altercation with that officer outside a bar in East Harlem. Thirty years later police are prohibited from carrying their guns when they know they will be drinking heavily. Two police precincts experience a high number of civilian complaints. Two years later the complaints are markedly reduced. Thousands of nonviolent, first-time drug offenders were imprisoned under the provisions of the Rockefeller Drug Laws. Thirty years later the laws are dramatically reformed.

Much has changed in recent years, and Abe Markman will recall his many stories of ethical actions and the role they played in bringing about changes through grassroots activism and civil disobedience.

Sunday Morning Meetings

11:15 AM—Auditorium

Sept. 13—Three R's of Ethical Community: Reflection, Reunion, Renewal

Dr. Anne Klaeysen, Leader

Our summer gatherings are smaller and more intimate in Ceremonial Hall. This Sunday we return to the Auditorium and welcome back members who were on vacation and newcomers who discovered us over the summer. Reunions are an opportunity to become reacquainted with one another personally and to bond together as a community. What brings us back? What holds us? What can we learn from reflecting upon our values and purpose as Ethical Humanists that can inspire us to renew our commitment to ethical growth and engagement? Leader Dr. Anne Klaeysen will talk about the importance of these "three R's" and encourage members' responses.

Sept. 20—Ethical Culture’s Distinctive Voice

Dr. Joseph Chuman, Leader

There has been a lot of public discussion about the rise and legitimacy of atheism and “unbelief” in America. At the other end of the spectrum, the fervently religious sector of American society remains large. Where does Ethical Culture find itself on this continuum?

The founder of Ethical Culture, Felix Adler, felt unequivocally that he was doing something religious when he created Ethical Culture and he assuredly did not attempt to equate his new movement as an atheistic one. Yet, we share many of the secular values which atheists also affirm.

In this address Leader Dr. Joseph Chuman will explore what is distinctive about Ethical Culture and how it remains relevant in our time.

Sept. 27—How to Avoid Becoming a Vampire in Three Easy Steps

Curt Collier, Leader

Bram Stoker’s novel, *Dracula*, was not only a combination of folk tales and Gothic horror, but a Victorian morality tale as well. What modern readers may find chilling about the book is certainly different than what frightened readers in 1897. However, there is one common theme that has resonated across cultures and time. Employing his usual unconventional approach, Leader Curt Collier will explore the origins of Stoker’s *Dracula*, the milieu in which it was written, and the lessons it offered—lessons that are still poignant today.

Ethics for Children

Ethics for Children—Sunday School starts on Sunday, September 13, at

11:00 am in the Elliott Library (Room 507) with Religious Education Director Rita Chawla. All children between the ages of 3 and 13 years are welcome. The Religious Education Committee will meet during the social hour in the Social Hall. Look for the table with the committee sign.

Save These Dates—Friday, November 6—Sunday, November 8—for the AEU Religious Education and Family Weekend with Dale McGowan, author of *Parenting Beyond Belief*.

Early Sunday 10 AM

(Rooms subject to change)

Sept. 13—Colloquy: Grace. Dr. Anne Klaeyen presides. Room 408.

Sept. 20—Poetry Readings—Everyone is welcome to join us on the third Sunday of each month to read aloud poems they have selected. After the individual readings, we’ll share our thoughts and feelings, and we’ll also have an opportunity to read our own poems. So, mark your calendars and bring some of your writings to share. Cheryl Gross presides. Room 408.

Sept. 20—Singing Practice—All voices, big and small, are welcome. Led by Pat Debrovner and Jerry Ranck, we’ll practice the songs we sing on Sunday mornings and get some tips to improve our singing technique. It’s always a lot of fun, so join us! Room 507..

Sunday Afternoon 1:45 PM

Sept. 13—DNA Fundraiser. Join us to see *DNA: The Secret of Life*; talk with an expert on the subject; and help to

free an innocent person from prison. A contribution of \$10 or more (receipts are available) is requested for this special program presented by our Social Service Board. Proceeds from this event will be given to the Innocence Project, which arranges DNA testing for those convicted of crimes they likely did not commit.

DNA: The Secret of Life tells the story of the 1953 discovery of the structure of DNA that programs every living cell—from bacteria to humans—and explains why this code gives us the secret of life. Afterward, Dr. Charles Debrovner will discuss topics including how DNA is used by some to justify intelligent design theories, and why it doesn’t, and how evidence from DNA testing is used in the work of the Innocence Project. With DNA testing, the Innocence Project has helped exonerate 240 innocent people, 17 of whom had been sentenced to death. An exciting video, an enlightening discussion, and the chance to help achieve the exoneration of an innocent prisoner! This is something you won’t want to miss.

Dr. Debrovner is Associate Director of the Appignani Bioethics Center. He received a B.S. from Yale University and an M.D. from New York University School of Medicine. He completed a residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Bellevue Hospital and has devoted his professional career to infertility and human reproduction. He served as chairperson of the Departments of Obstetrics and Gynecology at French Hospital and Polyclinic Hospital in New York City, was a lecturer in OB/GYN at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, and is a Clinical Professor at NYU School of Medicine. Ceremonial Hall.

Sept. 20—Life with Health—Hearing and Balance Issues: Your Ears Part II

Please join us for part II of our lively discussion regarding your ear's health. Curt Collier, will discuss issues such as tinnitus (ringing in the ears), vestibular disorders (dizziness and Meniere's Disease), ear infections, cerumen buildup (excessive wax), and other hearing related issues. Bring your questions. Curt Collier is a former assistant professor of audiology at Texas Tech University and Texas A & M Kingsville. He is the founder of the Audiology Department at the Texas Tech Health Science Center. He did his internship at the House Ear Institute in Los Angeles, and his research in auditory brainstem response was published in *Ear and Hearing Journal*. For many years Mr. Collier ran a private practice in audiology in South Texas.

Barbara Litke is the facilitator of the discussion, which is sponsored by the Life with Health Committee; co-chairs are Jackie Pope and Phyllis Kreuttner. Room 514.

Lunch Discussions Thursdays, 12:00 Noon

Bring your lunch and join Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyen in the Elliott Library (Room 507) for a lively discussion on contemporary ethical issues. In September we'll explore different aspects of "Humanism and Human Nature."

Sept. 3—What Kind of Humanist Are You?—a quiz from *New Humanist*.

Sept. 10—Does Evolution Explain Human Nature?—essays from the John Templeton Foundation.

Sept. 17—The Evolution of God—interview with author Robert Wright in *salon.com*.

Sept. 24—The Life After by Philip Gourevitch—reconciliation in Rwanda.

Folders with relevant articles are available from Sheleigh Grube in the Leaders' Office. Please come by, pick one up, and join the discussion.

Our Ethical Family

Moe-Swe Myint

Please welcome three new members: Terry M. Perlin, Stephanie Rosenblatt, and Matthew Reiss.

Terry is a professor who just moved back to NYC after retiring from his teaching position at the Miami University in Ohio. He has special training as a medical ethicist and is a board member of Compassion and Choice, NY, and of the Mt. Sinai Bioethics Department. Terry's interests include Spanish, music, and the arts.

Returning member **Stephanie** was a member of the Society for many years and was Chair of the Caring Committee. She is rejoining the NY Society after a long hiatus. She volunteers at the Institute of International Education, and her interests are music, art, and social work. Stephanie speaks English, German, and "a little bit of Spanish," and belongs to the Chautauqua Institute and Mannes School of Music.

Matthew, a teacher, has attended many of our events including Sunday Platforms, Thursday Leader Lunches, and the Cultured Comedy Club. He speaks Hebrew, Spanish and Italian.

* * *

On July 22, members **Hasoni Pratt, Andra Miller**, and other friends organized a reception honoring NYSEC Board member and Social Service Board Chair **Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross** for her appointment as Commissioner of the NYS Commission of Correction and Chair of the Medical Review Board. The reception was jam packed with staff, members, and the Board of NYSEC, and

many of Phyllis' friends and colleagues. Representatives of the NYS Governor's office, the Mayor's office, and former Mayor David Dinkins were among those who came to recognize Dr. Harrison-Ross for her accomplishments. (*See page 10 for more.*)

During the summer, some of our members presented interesting Sunday Platforms. On the first Sunday in July, **Phyllis Kreuttner** led a Colloquy with music, meditation, personal sharing, and discussion. Afterwards, a number of members and newcomers went to Central Park for a lovely picnic organized by **Barbara Levenson**. The last week of July, **Dr. Charles Debrovner** presented "Steve's Liver," focusing on organ donation and the ethical issues surrounding it. This was followed by a very lively discussion. In August, our brand new member **Terry Perlin** presented "Crazy Enough for You?: Ethical issues in Psychiatry and Psychotherapy," and the week afterwards, **Dr. Ruth Cohen** presented "The Art of Healing" based on her book, *Art with Heart: Assisting the Work of Wellness*. How wonderful and lucky we are to have not only three excellent Leaders but such accomplished and talented members who are willing to share their vast treasure-trove of knowledge with others.

Eric Volpe and his MCC team continued the Ethics in Film Sci-Fi series with *The President's Analyst* in July and *Gatacca* in August. The Friday Films have been drawing quite a crowd and kudos go to Eric and his gang.

Our heartfelt thanks to summer ushers **Maira Whittington, Pat Malkin, Andra Miller, Beth Zucker, and Barbara Levenson** and newcomer hosts **Jerry Chamlin, Carole Chamlin, Chris Bernhardt, Scott McNabb, and Cheryl Lynn**, whose volunteer efforts are invaluable to the Society; without them the Sunday Plat-

forms would not function so smoothly. Last but not least, thanks to member **Jon Liechty** for the lovely music he's provided every Sunday.

String Camp At NYSEC

Andra Miller

Our halls were ringing the last week of July with the happy voices of 250 children and the music they played. It was the Marc O'Connor String Camp, where 20 of the top string players (violin, bass, banjo, guitar, cello, etc.) came to give master classes to kids aged 8 to 18. The String Camp, created in the hills of Tennessee 15 years ago, has become internationally known—and has been featured in the *Los Angeles Times* and *The New York Times* and on *CBS Sunday Morning*. The Camp was held in New York City for the first time this summer and used rooms throughout our building, in the Ethical Culture School, and in the YMCA. Some of the participants were also bunked at the Y.

"This was a wonderful week of learning, studying, and fun for all who participated," noted Tamara Salzman, the camp coordinator. She sent her thanks to Bob Liebeskind, our Executive Director, for all the set-up and organizational assistance he and the staff energetically provided to her and her staff. The program was a resounding success and she looks forward to working with us in future summers.

Such rental programs provide the Society with wonderful opportunities to build strong relationships and partnerships that serve the New York community and beyond. And besides that, they help make NYSEC's building a vibrant, interesting, and exciting place.

Adult Education Committee

Barbara Levenson

For the past year, the Adult Education Committee has been a committee of one—Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyen doing a wonderful job, bringing us interesting programs. To share the burden, the Committee has recently been reactivated and is busy planning programs beginning in the fall of 2009. Members are: Muriel Berger, Chris Everett, Richard Van Deusen, and Carole Chamlin and Barbara Levenson (co-chairs), and Anne Klaeyen (leader advisor).

We are currently preparing a brochure that will list all educational programs planned for the next season that we know of at the time it goes to print. It will be available on September 13, when we resume our Sunday programs in the Auditorium. This will enable you to make your plans in advance. We are still working on all the details, but you can expect a combination of our well established programs and new ones, as well.

Returning will be Elaine Berman's Writing Workshops, Barbara Litke's Drawing Class, Ethics in Film, the Great Books offerings, the Socrates Café, and the Leader's Lunch Discussions. The Foundations of Ethical Culture program is scheduled for five Wednesdays in October, and Ethics in the Theater will also be back on the third Wednesdays of every month. New programs will include another film series (*Shrinks Film*); a course on Nonviolent Communication; a ten-week yoga class to begin on October 6 from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm; and a seven-week series on Living Ethically, to begin in late January. Other programs under discussion are Humanism in the Bible,

Readings in Ethical Culture, and Comparative Religion.

We welcome any ideas you might have for a program. If you have an idea, talk to one of the Committee members about it. You will be given a form to fill out describing the program and the Committee will discuss it at their next meeting and get back to you. This formal process was created to avoid scheduling conflicts and duplication of programs.

Public Issues Committee

Abe Markman

Would Felix Adler Be Proud? The PIC Experience: A Brief Summary

The Public Issues Committee, or PIC, was formed in February 2006 and disbanded in June 2009. PIC members were: Joshua Adams, Nancy Ambruster, Virginia Arnold, Pat Berens, Pat Cohen, Maria Fridman, Ken Gans, Alan Gardner, Barry Meister, Phyllis Harrison-Ross, Jim Hyland, Pearl Katz, Pauline Kravath, Lee Loshak, JoAnn Mason, Carol Rost, Barry Snider, Eric Volpe, and Beth Zucker.

PIC grew out of a monthly discussion group on politics and ethics that Mary Ellen Goodman led for nine years. Our aim was to see if we could develop positions that might have an effect on the upcoming national and local elections of 2006 and 2008. One of the reasons we disbanded PIC was because all of our positions had been advanced during the campaigns and then by the new national and local administrations. Whether this happened through serendipity or in some minor or major way through our efforts is hard to say. You may be better able to decide for yourself by reading PIC's full final report: <http://www.nysec.org/pic>. For those without computers we will leave a few copies

in Membership Associate Moe-Swe Myint's office. The other reason for ending PIC was that some of us got tired after three and a half years of intensive work.

What follows is a brief summary of our efforts. Our mission fit well within the Ethical Culture tradition of fellowship and vision. It was our aim to find common ground among those on both sides of the cultural/political divide. We wanted to bring out the best in each other and the best in society. So, our Public Issues Committee went ahead with the approval and support of the Board of Trustees.

In all of our efforts, we were guided by the overriding social and political condition of our times. That condition was based on the fact that the social transformations of the 1960s resulted in a powerful backlash, a backlash that propelled many in the working and middle-classes to leave the Roosevelt Coalition. In protest, they became Reagan Democrats. They had become so antagonistic to a liberal point of view that they tended to vote against their own economic interests rather than support a liberal candidate for elective office.

We researched and wrote seven position papers that were, in most instances, widely popular with these "swing voters." The positions were based on ethical, humane, and progressive values, and dealt with Iraq, Iran, Global Warming, Stem Cell Research, Child Health Coverage, Paid Family Leave, and Paid Sick Days. All seven positions were adopted overwhelmingly by the Board and are now the positions of our Society.

In order to deepen our understanding about and advocate for these positions, we invited speakers to our Sunday Platforms and held Sunday afternoon informative discussions with

Society members and guests. We set up a webpage to disseminate information and to link up with other groups. We sent out weekly action alerts via email. We compiled updated data on elected officials for hard copy mailings. We showed several well-attended documentaries and held a breakfast forum with local leaders on paid sick days. Members attended rallies, trips to the state legislature in Albany, press conferences at City Hall, and forums held by other groups on issues that were on our agenda.

Our knowledge of and commitment to our positions grew to the extent that we were able to advocate for them not only as members of the Ethical Culture Movement but also as private citizens. As such, some of us had the opportunity to interview in depth or interact in other ways with candidates for national and local elective office. We began to see our positions posted on their websites. Of course, the extent of our influence on the campaigns of 2006 and 2008 may be hard to quantify. Nevertheless, all of our positions have been implemented or placed on the short- and long-term agendas of the newly elected national and state administrations. This was our hope when we began three and a half years ago, and now it has happened. We are proud of what we have accomplished and we think Felix Adler would have been proud of us as well.

Though we are ending our work as a committee, members are following up on PIC-sponsored issues by joining other committees or working as individuals or in smaller groups. Abe Markman and Alan Gardner are on the Advocacy Forum Committee; Maria Fridman and Alan are working on a single-payer resolution to be presented to the Board; and Abe has been appointed by the Board to represent NYSEC with the New York State Paid Family Leave

Coalition. We hope that other Society members will consider all seven positions worthy of their support and advocacy. You can access the seven positions either in brief or in full at <http://www.nysec.org/pic>.

Ethics in Film

Andra Miller

On Friday, September 4, 7:00 pm, in Ceremonial Hall come and see a classic sci-fi movie, *The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai Across the 8th Dimension*.

This 1984 flick brings us the wacky adventures of adventurer/surgeon/rock musician Buckaroo Banzai (Peter Weller) and his group, the Hong Kong Cavaliers, as they battle the evil creatures from the 8th dimension to keep them from conquering our dimension. Full of deeply embedded jokes and all sorts of tomfoolery, this is a not-to-be-missed adventure.

Suggested donation \$5 (popcorn and drinks are included). For more information, contact Moe-Swe Myint at 212-874-5210, ext. 113.

Ethics and the Theater

Patricia Bruder Debrovner

On Wednesday evening, September 16, 7:00-9:00 pm in Room 507, Ethics and the Theater will present *The Browning Version*, by Terence Rattigan.

A classics teacher at a British public school has over the years constructed a carapace of indifference to the slights of his headmaster, the dislike of his students, and the infidelity of his wife. Now, forced into early retirement by ill health, he finds his defenses penetrated by one boy's small act of kindness: the gift of Browning's translation of the Agamemnon by Aeschylus. The result

is an emotional upheaval that, while painful, is also liberating. Sir Michael Redgrave won the Best Actor award at Cannes for his portrayal of the embittered teacher in the first film version of this story of heartbreak and redemption.

There will be a wine and cheese reception at 6:30 pm. Come and join in the lively discussion of the ethical issues of the play, led by Muriel Berger, that will follow the film. Susan Horowitz directs our cast, which includes John Gurney, Jerry Chamlin, Pat Debrovner, Dan Hanson, Pat Berens, Craig Jorczak, Alex Bone, and Clare Patterson. Suggested donation: \$5.

Crafts Circle Meeting

Andra Miller

We're starting a monthly meeting for members who would like to knit, crochet, tat, cross-stitch, embroider, quilt, or whatever while getting together to chat and enjoy refreshments. The first Circle meeting will be at 6:30 pm, Thursday, September 24, and will be at the apartment of Barbara Levenson. If you are interested in joining us and bringing your project to work on, or would like to come and learn how to do some form of needlecraft, please sign up with Barbara or me. You can join our Crafts Circle without making a commitment to hold a meeting at your apartment, so don't let that stop you! And we welcome one and all—this is not exclusively for ladies. You can call 212-627-3944 or 212-799-2920 if you have questions.

Earth Rise Returns!

Leader Curt Collier has organized a trio of events for the return of Earth Rise, our Sunday morning gathering with a focus on environmental action. Friday,

September 25 is the Earth Rise Benefit Concert featuring *House of Waters* in an evening of music, poetry and drama. The concert begins at 8:00 pm in the Auditorium and tickets are \$10 for members and \$15 for nonmembers. Saturday, September 26, help inventory flora and fauna at the "Saw Mill River Bio-Blitz" with Groundwork Hudson Valley. On Sunday morning, September 27, at 10:30 am, the weekly Earth Rise gathering returns. Come learn more about this unique gathering and the events planned for the fall. For benefit tickets or more info, contact Sheleigah Grube in the Leaders' Office)at 212-874-5210, ext. 118. To volunteer at the Saw Mill event, call Curt at 914-375-2151.

Writing Workshop Fall Semester

Elaine Berman

Ethical Culture's Monday and Thursday ten-week writing workshops called "The Joy of Personal Writing" will begin meeting in early October. The Monday class will meet from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm, beginning on October 5, and the Thursday class will meet from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm, beginning on October 8. Both new and experienced writers are welcome. These workshops help people focus on writing and develop their writing skills.

The cost of the course is \$190 for members; \$290 for nonmembers. For information, call Gloria Chandler at 212-874-5210, ext. 117. You can read essays by workshop writers at www.nysec.org. Click on the Table of Contents and scroll down.

Drawing to Discover

Barbara Litke

Starting on Monday, October 19, through Monday, November 23, for six weeks, from 6:15 pm to 7:45 pm in Room 507, under the direction of instructor Barbara E. Litke, MFA, students will interpret a still life set-up using their personal, independent style. Our emphasis is on accepting a challenge, through drawing, taking a risk by trying new techniques with pencil or charcoal, and developing an understanding of how mind, eye, and hand coordination work together to translate the known into possibilities that are unique.

Students will discover and/or expand on art as expression and will develop a process of expression with confidence. Every drawing class is created to emphasize self-confidence that can be carried into many aspects of business and personal relationships. For fifteen minutes before the end of each session, each artist will display his/her work and as a group the participants will talk about the experience of making art.

The cost for this class is \$175 for members and \$250 for nonmembers based on a class size of eight students. To register, or for more information please contact Barbara Litke at 212-586-2593, or by email at b.ev.litke@earthlink.net.

Annual Stained-Glass Window Benefit Concert

Mark your calendars for Sunday, October 25, 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm, in Ceremonial Hall, to join us for fun, festivities, and refreshments as we hear new music and meet our artists!

For reservations and information, please call 212-860-4096 or 212-874-5210, ext. 113. Tickets: \$15 in advance; \$20 at the door.

Social Service Board Honors Michael Pratts

The Social Service Board (SSB) honored Michael Pratts, MD, an adult and child psychiatrist, and a NYSEC member and former member of the Social Service Board, upon achieving his license to practice medicine in the State of New York.



Michael Pratts, MD



Getting ready to enjoy a piece of the delicious double chocolate cake, which read, “Congrats—Dr. Pratts” (Seated, L-R, front row): Dr. Maria Fridman and Dr. Pratts; (Standing L-R): Howard Parker, executive assistant to the SSB; Dr. Ivan Quervalu, David Leiman, Commissioner Phyllis Harrison-Ross, Helen Mecs, Eric Norlander, Paul Berman, and Valerie Leiman

* * *

SSB Book Sale

Helen Mecs

The SSB is holding a book sale on Saturday, October 17, to raise money for The Innocence Project, which helps convicted prisoners prove their innocence through DNA testing. The Innocence Project has a proven record of success: 240 post-conviction exonerations, including 17 individuals on death row. But DNA testing does not come cheap: \$2,500 is required for each DNA test.

Please donate any used books (excluding text and reference books) CDs, DVDs, and audio books in good condition and place them in the bin in our lobby (its location changes, so ask at the desk if you don't see it). Ask your families and friends for their donations. Then, come with them to the sale to find bargains, stock up on winter reading, viewing, and listening, and refill those empty shelves—and help free wrongly convicted individuals.

Lively Arts Group

Valerie Leiman

Four members of our Society exhibited their art work at the 12th Annual Community Art Jam, held from June 16 through August 6, in the Hudson Guild Art Gallery, located at the John Lovejoy Elliott Center, 441 West 26th Street. Dr. Elliott founded Hudson Guild Neighborhood House in 1895; he was a Senior Leader of the NY Society from 1933-1942.

The Guild's Director of Arts, Jim Furlong, describes the popular yearly event as “exemplifying the Guild's community-building mission by bringing together people of diverse backgrounds to explore their mutual interest in the arts.”



Watercolor of flowers and grapes by member Elizabeth Jacobs



A multi-media collage titled “Inscribing Meaning” by member Valerie Leiman



Pencil drawings show scenes in Italy and Switzerland by member John Hwang



An oil painting titled "Virgin Sun" by member Barbara Litke

Making a Statement

Standing up for their beliefs two committed NYSEC members who attended the AEU's 94th Annual Assembly got "Ethical" tattoos while there.



Members Eva Yachnes and L'nence "L" Miller, Director of Administration for the American Ethical Union

Celebration in Honor of Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross

On July 22, Ceremonial Hall was filled to overflowing with guests in celebration of SSB Chair and NYSEC Trustee Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross' appointment by Governor Paterson to the position of New York State Commissioner of Correction and Chair of its Medical Review Board. The event paid tribute to her groundbreaking career and lifelong dedication to public service in psychiatry, and, in particular, her work with the incarcerated and their families.



Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross

NYSEC President Andra Miller welcomed everyone to the Society; invocations were given by NYSEC Leader, Dr. Anne Klaeyen, and Rev. Willard Ashley; and Dr. Harrison-Ross' medical practice partner, Dr. Billy Jones, served as the evening's MC.

Speakers included former Mayor David Dinkins; State Senators Ruth Hassell-Thompson and Eric Adams; Daniel Paterson, brother of the Governor, representing their father, Basil; fellow Commissioners Daniel Stewart and Chair, Thomas Beilein; Elinor Tatum, publisher of the *Amsterdam News* (and Dr. Harrison-Ross's goddaughter); Dr. Thelma Dye of Northside Center for Child Development, and Dr. Zeb Tainter, NYU professor of psychiatry.

Jeff Eaton, deputy chief of staff for Rep. Charles Rangel, presented Dr. Harrison-Ross with a Congressional Resolution declaring July 22 "Commissioner Phyllis Harrison-Ross Day"; New York State Deputy Secretary for Criminal Justice Services and Homeland Security Denise O'Donnell, presented a Resolution from Governor Paterson; and Dr. Harrison-Ross' sorority sister, Mary Redd read a letter from the national president of the Delta Sigma Theta sorority.

The program culminated with the inspiring sounds of African drumming and song, followed by a heartfelt speech from the guest of honor, who strongly encouraged those present to take a message back to their communities that they were all needed to help maintain a safe, humane environment for the incarcerated and to provide community programs and support for those diverted from prison or returning from incarceration.

The event was organized by a Hostess Committee, chaired by Link sister Dr. Marcella Maxwell, and including Link sisters Hasoni Pratts, Jane Jackson, Dr. Ketley Michel, and Elinor Tatum, as well as Susan Berg, Andra Miller, and Gail Gregg. Also in attendance were Dr. Harrison Ross's sorority sisters from the Delta Sigma Theta sorority and fellow members of the Greater New York Chapter of The Links, Inc; her longtime friend, Portia Paterson, mother of the Governor; and many friends from NYSEC and the SSB.

(See photos of the evening on the following page.)

Celebration in Honor of Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross



*Daniel Paterson,
brother of New
York's Governor*



*Dr. Harrison-Ross
with Mayor Dinkins*



*Jeff Eaton, deputy chief of staff for
Rep. Charles Rangel presenting
Dr. Harrison-Ross with a Congressional
Resolution*

*(L-R) Link Sister Dr. Marcella Maxwell
and Andra Miller, NYSEC President*



*(L-R) Susane Berg, Dr. Thelma Dye, Andra
Miller, Frank Prescod, and Dr. Gloria Ellis*



*(L-R) Dr. Harrison-Ross' goddaughter,
Hasoni Pratts, and Commissioner O'Donnell*



*(L-R) Dr. Harrison-Ross
and Commissioner
Denise O'Donnell*

*Tom Beilein,
NYS Commission
of Correction
Chairman*



September 2009

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

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| <p>Great Books: Sept. 2–Anton Chekhov, <i>Rothschild's Fiddle*</i> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, <i>The Social Contract</i> (Complete work)</p> | | <p>1 6:00 pm–Socrates Café</p> | <p>2 6:00 pm–Men's Group 7:30 pm–Great Books</p> | <p>3 12:00 pm–Leader Lunch Discussion 7:00 pm–Thursday Writing Workshop</p> | <p>4 7:00 pm–Ethics in Film</p> | <p>5 Supervised Visitation will resume on September 19</p> |
| <p>6 10:15 am–Morning Meeting in Ceremonial Hall</p> | <p>7 Labor Day Society Offices Closed</p> | <p>8 October 2009 Newsletter Deadline</p> | <p>9 3:00 pm–ECRDG</p> | <p>10 12:00 pm–Leader Lunch Discussion</p> | <p>11</p> | <p>12 Supervised Visitation will resume on September 19</p> |
| <p>13 10:00 am–Colloquy 11:00 am–Ethics for Children 11:15 am–Morning Meeting 12:45 pm–Social Hour 1:45 pm–DNA: The Secret of Life</p> | <p>14 6:30 pm–Board of Trustees</p> | <p>15 6:00 pm–Socrates Café</p> | <p>16 7:00 pm–WBAI Radio (99.5 FM) 7:00 pm–Ethics and the Theater 7:30 pm–Great Conversations II</p> | <p>17 12:00 pm–Leader Lunch Discussion</p> | <p>18</p> | <p>19 9:30 am and 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation</p> |
| <p>20 10:00 am–Poetry Reading 10:00 am–Singing Practice 11:00 am–Ethics for Children 11:15 am–Morning Meeting 12:45 pm–Activities Fair 1:45 pm–Life with Health</p> | <p>21 7:00 pm–Prospective Members' Reception</p> | <p>22</p> | <p>23</p> | <p>24 12:00 pm–Leader Lunch Discussion 7:00 pm–Crafts Circle Meeting (off-site)</p> | <p>25 11:00 am–Ethics on the Air 8:00 pm–Earth Rise Benefit Concert</p> | <p>26 9:30 am and 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation</p> |
| <p>27 10:30 am–Earth Rise 11:00 am–Ethics for Children 11:15 am–Morning Meeting 12:45 pm–Social Hour</p> | <p>28</p> | <p>29</p> | <p>30</p> | <p>ECRDG: (Ethical Culture Reading Discussion Group) Sept. 9–Carlos Fuentes, <i>The Years with Laura Diaz</i> Great Books: Great Conversation II Sept. 16–John M. Synge, <i>The Playboy of the Western World</i></p> | | |