

# ETHICAL OUTLOOK

April 2014

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## Transforming Lives Through Music



David Gracia, Music Director

On Sunday, March 2, Ethical Culture presented “Rhythms of the Heart: Transforming Lives Through Music,” a program about El Sistema (founded by Maestro José Antonio Abreu), a system of musical ensembles in

Venezuela that provides children from challenging socioeconomic backgrounds access to free instruments, intensive musical training, and orchestral experience. Ethical Culture Music Director David Gracia, who is an Abreu Fellow,

founded the Washington Heights and Inwood (WHIN) Children’s and Youth Orchestra, and is also its Artistic Director. It is an El Sistema-inspired ensemble created by the WHIN Music Project in partnership with the United Palace of Cultural



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# President's Notes

A N D R A M I L L E R

The first order of business is to reiterate the date change for our Annual Meeting from May 4 to May 18. The Board chose to change the date so that you (and they) can attend the Annual Assembly of the American Ethical Union, May 1-4. We'll not only vote for a slate of Board candidates, but we have some Bylaw updating to do – a little organization chart re-ordering, allowing for absentee voting and more. You will soon receive the short biographies of candidates and the proposed Bylaw changes.

I'd like to thank the 32 of you who came to our Membership Community Meeting March 2, and give special thanks to Abe Markman, Dr. Phyllis Harrison-Ross, Muriel Berger, and Elinore Kaplan for telling us that (1) Abe is reaching out to corporations to find help sponsoring the hidden bias program and asked for volunteers to take the bias test program he will be receiving; (2) the PHR Public Service Award event will be on April 3: and the winner is David Dinkins, with the Rising Star Public Service Award going to Mecca

Santana, Chief Diversity Officer for New York State; (3) the Ethical Enrichment Committee has a brochure of upcoming programs; and (4) the Membership Development Committee is actively pursuing their goals to recruit and keep members.

Members on the EEC besides Muriel are Carole Chamlin (co-chair), Pat Berens, Helen Mecs, and Beverly Newman. They welcome program ideas and have a form for submitting them.

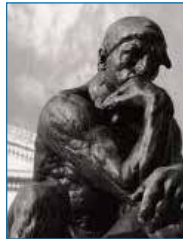
The Membership Development Committee is planning the September 19-21 retreat at Stony Point, and will be joining the May 17 Sacred Sites Open House Weekend sponsored by the New York Landmarks Conservancy. Marilyn Baker and Sharon Pope are in charge of organizing tours that will be much the same as the ones we did last October for the OHNY Weekend. And Leader Dr. Joseph Chuman is writing a short history piece for the tour guides' use. Elinore was looking for volunteers to help at information tables for upcoming events – asking for a once-a-month commitment.

*Continued on page 7*

# Ethical Enrichment and Events

## Wisdom and World Affairs

Come on the first and fourth **TUESDAYS, APRIL 1 and 22, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**, for a philosophical discussion group,



moderated by Ken Gans. We'll cover a variety of subjects: the fate of humanity, world affairs, humanism, etc., among many others. Room 508.

*There is no fee for this program.*

## Moral Philosophy: The Basics

Instructor: Dr. John Gurney

Come on **WEDNESDAYS, APRIL 2, 9, and 16**, at **6:30 PM**, to the Adler Study, Room 514, for our new philosophy course which started on March 12 and ends April 16. We discuss, analyze, and apply basic moral theories including Ethical Relativism, Ethical Egoism, Consequentialism, Kant's Categorical Imperative, and others. We also study arguments and reasons offered by John Stuart Mill, Immanuel Kant, Gilbert Harman, Brad Hooker, and others.

No previous knowledge of philosophy is necessary to register for the course. Please plan to attend all of the sessions.

*Registration is required. The fee for members is \$5, and it is \$10 for guests per session.*

*To register, email or call ygarcia@nysec.org, or 212-874-5210, ext. 118.*

## Ethics in Film

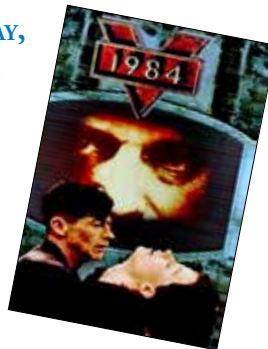
*Chris Everett*

Join us on **FRIDAY, APRIL 4**, at **7:00 PM** (doors open at **6:30 PM**), in Ceremonial Hall to see

*1984*, directed by Michael Rad-

ford. I'll be leading our usual discussion after the movie.

After the Atomic War, the world is divided into three states. London is a city in Oceania, ruled by a party that has total control over all its citizens. Winston Smith is one of the bureaucrats, rewriting history in one of the government departments. One day he commits the crime of falling in love with Julia. They try to escape Big Brother's listening and viewing devices but, of course, nobody can really escape.



## SUNDAY PLATFORM MEETINGS

**11:15 am**  
**Ceremonial Hall, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor**  
**(Except as Noted)**

### APRIL 6

*Put a Poem in Your Pocket*

**Dr. Anne Klaeyen, Leader**  
**Ishmael Islam, Youth**  
**Poet Laureate**

*Dr. Terry Perlin Presides*

### APRIL 13

*How Can People Do This to Each Other?: Rwanda, Genocide and Other Mass Atrocities*

**Dr. Joseph Chuman, Leader**  
*Dan Hanson Presides*

### APRIL 20

*A Status Report on Civilization's Most Challenging Ethical Problem: Climate Change*

**Donald A. Brown, Professor, Sustainability, Ethics, and Law, Widener University School of Law**  
*Dan Hanson Presides*

### APRIL 27 - Auditorium

*The Law of the Land: Our Conflicted Tussle Over Nature*

**Curt Collier, Leader**  
*Tom Weishaar Presides*

## NOT A MEMBER?

**All the more reason to attend one of our Enrichment Activities. Contributions for nonmembers are usually only \$5.**

*Continued on page 5*



# Leader's Desk

D R . A N N E K L A E Y S E N

## Y o m H a s h o a h

"When the Nazis come knocking at our door, our children will be Jewish enough!" My husband was venting about comments he had heard from Orthodox Jews at his office. Behind his back, they were saying that he wasn't "Jewish enough" because he was married to a non-Jew and was raising his children in Ethical Culture.

Finance and taxes can be arcane subjects, attracting studious minds. Orthodox Jews who grow up engaging in Talmudic discourse are well suited for them, and working for the city means they can leave on time for Sabbath observance. Some who worked in Glenn's department judged him harshly. Usually he shrugged it off, but on this day it really stung: "Who are they to decide who's Jewish and who isn't? Have they learned nothing from the Holocaust?"

I remembered this story from years ago as I thought about Yom Hashoah – Holocaust Remembrance Day – which falls on Sunday, April 27, this year. In Israel, it is a national memorial day, inaugurated in 1953. Although there is no institu-

tionalized ritual, most Jewish communities hold a solemn ceremony, lighting candles and reciting the Kaddish or mourner's prayer.

There are different lessons for different people. Glenn and I learned that it is our responsibility to make the world safe for everyone, a world where human rights are not only words in a United Nations document (<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>), but a living reality for all. We raised our children to embrace diversity and reach across boundaries, to listen with open hearts and minds, to act with compassion.

Some of the people in Glenn's office learned that the world will always be dangerous for them and their children. Clear lines must be drawn to identify who belongs and who doesn't, whom to trust and whom to fear. Theirs is an insular world where harsh lessons protect them.

I understand.

As a woman, I experience discrimination and continue to fight for equal rights and reproductive justice, but my life has never been threatened because of my identity. I live

a privileged life: U.S. citizen, white, educated, middle-class, married with two children. Humanists may not be understood or accepted in many circles, but our government does not seek to imprison or exterminate us. Still, we can empathize with those who have suffered and continue to suffer because powerful people and strong cultural forces deem them less than human.

The term "genocide" didn't exist before 1944. It was formed by Raphael Lemkin, a Jewish jurist born in Poland, exposed to anti-Semitic pogroms and aware of the Ottoman attacks against Armenians, who combined *geno-*, from the Greek word for race or tribe, and *-cide*, from the Latin word for killing. On December 9, 1948, due to Lemkin's tireless efforts, the United Nations approved the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and defined this new international crime as: "any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) killing members of the group; (b) causing serious bodily or mental harm

*Continued on page 15*

*The suggested donation is \$5, which includes snacks and beverages.*

## Ethical Death Café

Come on **SUNDAY, APRIL 6**, from **1:30 PM to 3:30 PM**, to the Adler Study, Room 514, and/or **WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16**, from **2:30 PM to 4:30 PM**, to Ceremonial Hall. Our moderator is Dr. Barbara Simpson. She holds a doctorate in pastoral counseling and is the Bereavement Program Community Outreach Coordinator at Car-ing Hospice Services.

We'll gather in a relaxed and safe setting to discuss death, drink tea, and eat delicious cake. The objective is to increase awareness of death and help people make the most of their (finite) lives. Topics include health care proxies, ethical wills, and green burial.

*The suggested donation for the meeting is \$5.*

## Ethics in Literature: A Reading Group

Join us on **MONDAY, APRIL 7, 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM**, in the

Elliott Library, Room 507. Leader Dr. Anne Klaey-sen will host a discussion

on *The Everything Store: Jeff Bezos and the Age of Amazon* by Brad Stone.

This is the definitive story of Amazon.com, one of the most successful companies in the world, and of its driven, visionary founder, Jeff Bezos, who wasn't content with being just a bookseller. Offering a limitless selection and seductive convenience at disruptively low prices, he developed a corporate culture of relentless ambition and secrecy.

*The discussion is free for members, and \$5 for guests.*

## Building a Culture of Peace

Join us on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month for six sessions: beginning **APRIL 10** and continuing on **APRIL, 24, MAY 8, MAY 22, JUNE 12, and JUNE 26**, from **6:30 PM to 8:00 PM**,



in the Adler Study, Room 514. Dr. Anne Klaey-sen, Leader, will moderate. We'll start on April 10 with an introduction, and our guest speaker on April 24 will be Martha Gallahue, and the Director of the National Ethical Service.

An annual international Day of Peace was established by a United Nations resolution in 1981 and designated for celebration on September 21 the following year. But "Peace Day is Every Day" is the motto of myriad organizations throughout the world dedicated to "peacebuilding." This is different from "peacemaking" and "peacekeeping" in that it focuses on creating a long-term culture of peace, rather than solving existing conflicts or preventing old ones from reoccurring. This workshop will use materials from the National Peace Academy to explore four interdependent, synthesizing, and catalytic cornerstones of peace learning and action: Peace Education, Peace Research, Peace Practice, and Peace Policy.

*Registration is required. There is no fee for members; for guests the fee is a \$5 donation per session.*

## Adler Reading Seminar

Join us on **TUESDAY, APRIL 15**, from **7:00 PM to 8:30 PM**, in Room 502, for a lively discussion led by moderator Leader Dr. Joseph Chuman.



We'll discuss works of Felix Adler and others whose writings are seminal to Ethical Culture and humanist philosophy.

*There is no fee for this, but registration is required.*

## Ethics and the Theater

Patricia Bruder Debrouner

Come on **FRI-DAY, APRIL 18**, at **7:00 PM**. Ethics and the Theater will present *The*



*Millionairess*, by George Bernard Shaw. Although written in 1935, the play is quite timely in this modern era of the one-percenters and the "tale of two cities." Wealthy Epifania Ognisanti Di Parerga Fitzfassenden is bankrupt in the market of romance; her husband, Alastair, is seeing another woman. Epifania's

penniless companion, Adrian Blenderbland, is using her as an entree to expensive restaurants. When she and Alastair decide to file for divorce, they inadvertently hire the same lawyer, a man of questionable ethics. Epifania is eventually forced to rethink wealth, status, and her personal relationships. Farcical situations and quick-witted dialogue abound.

Richard Van Deusen directs the cast, which includes Ed Gross, Dan Hanson, Jillian Jacobs, Andra Miller, Carol Rost, and Tom Weishaar.

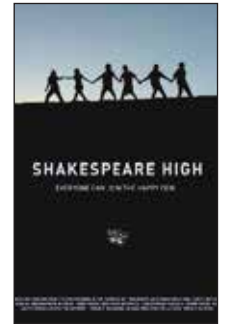
Come at **6:30 PM** for a reception and after the reading participate in a discussion of the ethical issues of the play, led by Betsy Ungar. This reading will take place in our Social Hall.

*The suggested donation is \$5 for members, and it is \$10 for guests.*

## Ethics in Film: Contemporary Documentaries

On **MONDAY, APRIL 21, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM**, join Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyen in the Adler

Study, Room 514. We will be showing *Shakespeare High* (2011), directed by Alex Rotaru.



This documentary follows a diverse group of California youths, including underprivileged kids, as they escape the violence of their neighborhoods by participating in a renowned Shakespeare competition.

*The film showing is free to members and \$5 for guests.*

## Spring Writing Classes

Elaine Berman Gurney

A special issue of the newsletter "Ethical Voices," with wonderful pieces by past and present participants in Ethical Culture personal writing classes, has recently been published. It is a great expression of participants' devoted work and enjoyment over ten years of our writing classes.

The classes are open to all. For the ten-week spring semester the **TUESDAY** class will begin on **APRIL 22, 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM**, in the Elliott Library, Room 507, and the **THURSDAY** class will begin on **APRIL 24, 6:30**

**PM - 8:30 PM**, in Room 508.

Course fees are \$160 for members and \$260 for non-members. Registration in advance is required.

For information and registration, call Yalitza Garcia-Krawczyk at 212-874-5210, ext. 118. If you'd like to read work by current and past writers, please look at [www.nysec.org/workshop-writers-space](http://www.nysec.org/workshop-writers-space).

## Deepening Ethical Circles

On **WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23**, from **6:30 PM to 8:00 PM**, Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyen will introduce a small group experience, used at other Ethical Societies, that provides an opportunity for members to explore their deepest understanding of life in community.

Meaningful personal and spiritual growth can develop when people share in the lives of others, especially through empathic listening and talking about matters of ultimate importance. We will participate in a typical circle and discuss the possibility of forming intentional groups that will meet on a regular basis.

*This program is free.*

## President's Notes

*(continued from page 2)*

Suggestions from Community Meeting attendees included the recommendation that we have a large video screen in our lobby that would show pictures of NYSEC members *doing things*. Another suggestion was that we use the glass-paned "box" on the 64th Street side of our building to hold a poster announcing that this is the New York Society for Ethical Culture. Another was that we have signs on our front doors indicating which doors are open, so that people don't climb the stairs to find the doors locked, and also, regarding the Sunday meeting, that members get prior notice of whether the meeting is in Ceremonial Hall or the Auditorium, or that the location is clearly marked. Finally, it was suggested that we look into getting a stair-climber for the disabled installed

in one of our entryways to the Auditorium.

I wrote about the AEU Assembly in my last notes, and I hope you'll be joining us there. If you have any questions, ask me (646-363-0025) or L Miller, the AEU Director of Administration ([lmiller.aeu@gmail.com](mailto:lmiller.aeu@gmail.com)). You're also welcome to contact us about the AEU Lay Leadership Summer School in July.

See you at a meeting, an afternoon or evening event, and most definitely at the April 3 Awards event, the April 18 Ethics and the Theater (I'll be *The Millionaires*), and the April 25 Spring Celebration – I am bringing three guests from my Tao Tai Chi class!

What a month this will be!

## Readings in Deep Ecology

Come on **MONDAY, APRIL 28**, **7:15 PM – 8:15 PM**, to the Elliott Library, Room 507. Curt Collier, Leader, will moderate.

Each month we will explore selections from famous environmental authors. Chapters and selections from the works of Aldo Leopold, John Muir,

Wangari Maathai, Michael Pollan, Rachel Carson, Richard Louv, and Edward Abbey, among others, will be offered. We will read the selections together and then discuss the important points the writers were striving to uphold.

*This program is free.*



# Sunday Morning Platform Meetings 11:15 am

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APRIL 6



## PUT A POEM IN YOUR POCKET

***Dr. Anne Klaeyesen, Leader, and Ishmael Islam, Youth Poet Laureate***

April is National Poetry Month, established in 1996 by the Academy of American Poets as a month-long celebration of written, spoken, and performed poetry. Its goal is to increase the visibility and accessibility of poetry in our culture. Our goal is awaken people to the power of poetry in their lives by exploring its ethical aspects and writing their own poems. Join us for a morning of words, music, reflection, and creativity.

*The shared charity is My Own Books.*

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APRIL 13



## HOW CAN PEOPLE DO THIS TO EACH OTHER?: RWANDA, GENOCIDE AND OTHER MASS ATROCITIES

***Dr. Joseph Chuman, Leader***

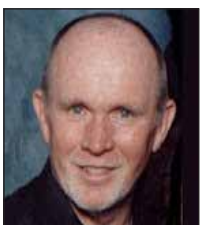
*Dan Hanson Presides*

April marks the 20th anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda in which 800,000 people were slaughtered within a hundred days. The 20th century has sometimes been referred to as the century of genocide, in which tens of millions of have lost their lives. Such episodes of extraordinary violence raise the question of what type of being we are. How can people who have lived together amicably for decades turn on each other and kill one another without reservation or conscience? What are the psychological mechanisms and political circumstances that allow this to happen? It is a question both agonizing and perplexing. But if we care about the human condition and are willing to look at it with open eyes, it is a question that cannot be avoided.

*The shared charity is International Rescue Committee.*

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APRIL 20



## A STATUS REPORT ON CIVILIZATION'S MOST CHALLENGING ETHICAL PROBLEM: CLIMATE CHANGE

***Donald A. Brown, Professor***

*Monica Weiss Presides*

This talk will explain why climate change must be understood essentially as a civilization-challenging ethical problem, the practical significance for policy of seeing climate change as an ethical issue, the utter failure in the United States and many other parts of the world to discuss climate change as an ethical problem, why eth-



ics and justice have become the central issues in dispute in international climate negotiations, the practical need of nations to take ethics and justice seriously to have any hope of limiting warming to non-catastrophic levels, ethics and justice issues in a new climate treaty to be negotiated in 2015, and a few ideas for turning up the volume on the ethics and justice questions raised by climate change.

*The shared charity is Doctors Without Borders.*

APRIL 27



## THE LAW OF THE LAND: OUR CONFLICTED TUSSELE OVER NATURE

***Curt Collier, Leader***

*Tom Weishaar Presides*

Every great advancement in environmental protection in the United States has not been without a struggle. Often the struggle is less about the need for preservation than about how best to move forward. The struggle is complicated by the emergence of competing narratives, each tied to a set of closely held values and beliefs. To enter into the fray without understanding the roots of these beliefs is to proceed at one's peril. But what are these underlying values, and how can we enter into discussions with one another and seek common ground without sacrificing our highest ideals? These issues will be explored with our panel, including Clare Donohue, Founding Member of the Sane Energy Project, and Lisa DiCaprio, Energy Committee of the Sierra Club, Atlantic Chapter.

*The shared charity is Sane Energy Project.*

### THIS MONTH'S SHARED CHARITIES

**MY OWN BOOK** is a non-profit organization that gives away brand-new books to underprivileged K-3rd graders. It is dedicated to sharing the love of reading.

**THE INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE (IRC)** offers lifesaving care and assistance to help people survive and rebuild their lives. Founded in 1933 at the request of Albert Einstein, the IRC delivers lifesaving care to refugees fleeing conflict and natural disaster.

**DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS** was created on the belief that all people have the right to medical care regardless of gender, race, religion, creed or political affiliation, and that the needs of these people outweigh respect for national boundaries.

**SANE ENERGY PROJECT'S** goal is two-fold: to fight fossil fuel and nuclear infrastructure, and encourage renewable infrastructure.

### HOT OFF THE PRESS

**A Book by Leader Dr. Joseph Chuman! *Speaking of Ethics*** has just been published. It is an anthology of 26 addresses given over the past 35 years, divided into four thematic sections: Ethics in Private life; Public Issues; Humanist Heroes; and Interpretations, of Ethical Culture. The unifying theme of the diverse essays is the application of our commitment to human dignity to various social and personal issues. It can be ordered from the following website: [www.createpace.com/4423627](http://www.createpace.com/4423627), and we will soon have copies available at our Sunday book table. Kudos to Joe for writing a text that can be used for study and discussion circles in Ethical Societies!

## Early Sunday Mornings 10:00 am (Rooms are subject to change)

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**APRIL 6**

### **CHORUS PRACTICE**

Led by Pat Debrovner and David Gracia. Ceremonial Hall.

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**APRIL 13**

### **COLLOQUY: ACCEPTANCE**

Abe Markman presides. Room 408.

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**APRIL 20**

### **CHORUS PRACTICE**

Led by Pat Debrovner and David Gracia. Ceremonial Hall.

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**APRIL 20**

### **POETRY READING**

Celebrate National Poetry Month! Bring a poem to share.

Cheryl Gross presides. Room 508.

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**APRIL 27**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE**

Room 508.

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## Sunday Afternoons 1:30 pm (Except as noted)

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**APRIL 6**

### **ETHICAL DEATH CAFÉ**

Moderator: Dr. Barbara Simpson. Adler Study, Room 514.

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**APRIL 6**

### **SUNDAY ASSEMBLY**

2:00 pm. Ceremonial Hall.

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**APRIL 13**

### **ETHICS IN THE NEWS**

Abe Markman presides. 12:45 pm. Sixth floor school cafeteria.

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**APRIL 20**

### **STRESS THE GOOD AND THE BAD, HOW MANAGING IT CAN LEAD TO A HAPPIER HEALTHIER YOU**

Mary Porter Presides

Today there is loads of information out there about stress and how it can affect your physical, mental, emotional, and social wellbeing. The medical world has acknowledged that stress can be a leading cause of many life threatening illnesses. Come and learn about stress and ways to manage it in your life. Ceremonial Hall.

Mary Porter has been a licensed Registered Nurse in the State of New York

## more Ethical Enrichment and Events.....

for over 28 years. She has a Bachelor of Science in nursing from Georgetown University and has studied under many renowned leaders in wellness and alternative health. She has developed an integrated healthcare and lifestyle philosophy that has helped many of her clients and friends to achieve a more balanced and healthy lifestyle.

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**APRIL 27**

### SUSTAINABLE LIVING SUPPORT CIRCLE

Leader Curt Collier presides. Ceremonial Hall.

We'll discuss lifestyle choices, our impact on the planet, and ways we can make a meaningful difference. Participants will be asked to keep a log of their choices and to share openly with others in a supportive atmosphere. This course is open for those wanting to make a real commitment to eco-living.

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**APRIL 27**

### PHOTOGRAPHY ARTS CLUB

Adler Study, Room 514.

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## Thursday Lunch Discussions Noon *Elliott Library, Rm 507*

Bring your lunch and join Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyen and Society members from 12:00 noon to 1:30 pm. This month's topic: **THE WORLD IN TURMOIL**. Folders with relevant articles will be available from Yalitza Garcia-Krawczyk in the Leaders' office. Join the discussion.

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**APRIL 3**

**"A WORLD ON THE EDGE"** by Amy Chua, *The Wilson Quarterly*, Winter 2014.

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**APRIL 10**

**"UKRAINE: THE HAZE OF PROPAGANDA"** (3/1/14) and **"FASCISM, RUSSIA AND UKRAINE"** (3/20/14) by Timothy Snyder, *NY Review of Books*.

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**APRIL 17**

**"THE THREE LEAKERS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT THEM"** by David Cole, *The NY Review of Books*, 2/6/14.

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**APRIL 24**

**"ARE TODAY'S GERMANS MORALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HOLOCAUST?"** by Emma Green, *The Atlantic*, January 2014; **"WHAT IS GENOCIDE?"** and **"SIXTY-FIVE YEARS LATER"** blog entries from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, December 2013; and **"A COUNTRYSIDE OF CONCENTRATION CAMPS"** by Graeme Wood, *New Republic*, 1/21/14.

# Our Ethical Family

## MOE-SWE MYINT, MEMBERSHIP ASSOCIATE



The following members are celebrating birthdays in April:

VALERIE LEIMAN.....	4/1
MARY HOUTS.....	4/2
LAW'NENCE MILLER.....	4/2
PEARL KATZ.....	4/4
CHRISTOPHER BERNHARDT.....	4/6
DIANE DEBROVNER.....	4/6
MARILYN BAKER.....	4/11
DWAIN DEPAUL.....	4/13
PATRICIA BRUDER DEBROVNER.....	4/14
PATRICIA MALKIN.....	4/14
NANCY McGEORGE LOVELADY.....	4/17
EMILY NEWMAN.....	4/18
ABE MARKMAN.....	4/24
RICHARD SANDER.....	4/24
MEG CHAPMAN.....	4/25
PHYLLIS ROSENFELD...	4/27
SY AMKRAUT.....	4/29
RANDA HAMADEH.....	4/30

Please welcome new members **MARILYN BRAVEMAN** and **MARCELLA ANN STAPOR**.

**MARILYN** is retired, with experience in policy development and advocacy and a special interest in oral history and workshop leadership. She was a member of School Board 28 in Queens and Community Board 7 in Manhattan. Marilyn has attended our Sunday Platforms, documentary films, and Leader-led discussions, and is joining NYSEC because of our social justice agenda and ethics. She is also a member of Jews for Racial and Economic Equality and Advocates for Children.

**MARCELLA** is a lawyer and has been a member of the New York City Bar Association for over 30 years. She also has a degree in film and is interested in film making and editing. She used to listen to our Platform addresses on the radio and has been a member of Elaine Berman-Gurney's writing class for six years.

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*(continued from page 1)*

Arts and in collaboration with the Celia Cruz Bronx High School for Performing Arts, in Washington Heights. Now in its second year, the program has

expanded to host a Children's Orchestra and a Youth Orchestra, as well as a Camerata. During Sunday's program, the WHIN Camerata played "Adiós Nonino" by A. Piazzola, with David Gracia conducting and the WHIN Youth Orchestra played "A Little Elegance" by Paul Kirby and "Concerto for Strings in D major," RV 121, and "Allegro" by A. Vivaldi with Paul Kirby and David Gracia, respectively, conducting. The WHIN Children's and Youth Orchestra played "Rhythm N' Blues" by Soon Hee Newbold and "Palladio" by Karl Jenkins, with Andrea Profili conducting. The musical sections were interspersed with a video-documentary of El Sistema in Venezuela and testimonials from musicians, parents, and friends from the community who came in force to support the musicians.

Bravo to David Gracia, Leader Dr. Anne Klaeyesen, and the Sunday Program Committee for bringing this very special program to Ethical Culture! And a special "thank you" to members Bob Berger, Chris Bernhardt, Carole Chamlin, Chris Everett, Ken Gans, Cheryl Gross, Jon Liechty, and



Monica Weiss for helping to create a smoothly flowing program, and to Amy Schwarz for her expert coordination of the greeters and ushers. (Photos by Beth Zucker)

\* \* \* \*

NYSEC participated in the NY Cares Coat Drive this winter and we were very successful in that endeavor, with the help of our

new tenant, Christ Fellowship Church, which donated nine boxes of coats. Thanks also go to our Facilities Manager, Leo Gibson, who was instrumental in arranging for two very worthy charities, Safe Horizon and The Salvation Army, to pick up the donated boxes from NYSEC.

## LET'S KEEP IN TOUCH

We are updating our Membership Directory. If your contact information has changed, please let Moe-Swe Myint, Membership Associate, know at 212-874-5210, ext. 113, or email her at [mmyint@nysec.org](mailto:mmyint@nysec.org).

## NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE

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# Environmental Ethics: Front and Center



M O N I C A W E I S S

“Deed Above Creed” is what we place the highest value on in Ethical Culture. We are a community of people who seek to make the world a better place through ethical behavior, choices, and actions. Many Ethical Culture members consider themselves activists and revisiting what that means is worth a few sentences. Wikipedia defines activism as consisting of any efforts to promote, impede, or direct social, political, economic, or environmental change or stasis. The term connotes a peaceful form of conflict.

Types of activism include agitation, civil disobedience, community building (including conflict transformation/cooperative movement/voluntary simplicity), dissent, economic activism (including boycotts), consumer activism, divestment, simple living, tax resistance, franchise activism, lobbying, media activism, non-violence, peaceful activism, political campaigning, propaganda,

protests, strike action, youth activism, and atheist activism.

Our active NYSEC members are doing everything to run the Society, from being on the Board, to serving on several committees, and running events. They may or may not be “activists” but they are active and entitled to participate in a way that is meaningful and fulfilling. There are so many important issues and causes that deserve our attention, but we each have to choose how and where we spend our time and energy. Most of our members volunteer privately in addition to participating in NYSEC-related projects. The Environmental Stewardship Committee formed spontaneously with a group of members who share a concern for this issue and choose to spend their time doing something about it.

During the past two years we have welcomed speakers, presented a Sunday Platform, promoted letter-writing campaigns, sponsored films (*Frackonomics*; *Dear Governor Cuomo*); and educational programs (Climate Reality Project and The Myth of Shale Gas in

NYS both presentations), and funded and participated in a post-Sandy habitat cleanup on Fire Island with Leader Curt Collier and the teens from his youth program at Groundwork in Yonkers.

Environmental ethics is environmental action for our committee. We have recently seized the opportunity to invite 350NYC to meet monthly in our building. Doing so is community outreach and supports our mission and our values. The unintended result of this has been a newly formed NYC Green Alliance – a group of 29 local environmental groups that now meet monthly in our building. I actively represent EC at every meeting and involve myself as a member of 350NYC. The results have been wonderful. We are becoming known as a center for environmental ethics and activism in NYC. We are increasingly being approached and contacted for programs, film screenings, and events. These groups are extremely appreciative of our generosity and support and are able to grow and focus on their efforts instead of scrambling for

less suitable meeting space. They have a home with us. It was my intention to use these resources to help engage our small environmental committee (and ultimately our membership) in the larger movement. A group of us attended the fracking demonstration in Albany last month.

350NYC has two working groups at this time that meet once a month in addition to their regular open meetings. One is the Divestment Group, and the other is the Sustainability Group, of which I am a member. This is a group that also formed spontaneously at a general meeting several months ago. In a very short period of time this group has created what I think is an incredible project that we are launching this month. It is a project that will encourage New Yorkers to switch their electric supply company (ESCO) to a 100% wind supply. The idea is to get thousands of people to make the switch in 2014 and 350NYC will log the activity online. What this does is provide investment in wind energy development based on the number of kilowatt hours each household uses monthly. This is something in which our committee, our Society, and other Societies can participate in very easily – even those who are homebound or have no computers. They can mail brochures to their friends and family, make phone calls, or have house parties. We are hoping that the numbers of participating New Yorkers will grow exponentially as

more people make the switch.

Aside from the fact that NYSEC's partnering with and supporting these groups is helping to make the world a better place, we are getting a lot of publicity that we otherwise would not have been getting. We are listed on dozens of websites and meet-ups, and every time we have an event and people walk through our doors, we talk about Ethical Culture. The Divestment program (Feb. 26) was announced on several email and meet-up lists, including a regional e-blast by Duncan Meisel, a digital campaigner for the national organization. It was a well-attended and very infor-

mative forum featuring six panelists and included student leaders from NYU Divest, clergy from Greenfaith, the national organizer for the Responsible Endowments Coalition, a professor of social sciences at NYU, and a doctoral candidate from Columbia University.

If we seize opportunities and follow our passions, doors open. If we notice and walk through those doors, the possibilities are endless. No one could have organized this, predicted it, or planned it. And sometimes good things just happen if we create the space to welcome them.

## Leader's Desk *(continued from page 4)*

to members of the group; (c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”

The Holocaust forced the world to recognize the crime that had been committed against humanity: Jews, Romanies, homosexuals, the physically and mentally disabled, communists and socialists, among other groups. Lemkin gave it a name, and the United Nations outlawed it. Yom Hashoah commemorates this history. It calls us to also

add to this history the killing of Bosnian men and boys by Serbian forces, of Tutsis by Hutus in Rwanda, and of Darfuris by Arab militias in western Sudan.

Today we can confront genocide and bear witness to atrocities still being committed against Dalits who are fighting “untouchability” in India, the Muslim Rohingya who are gathered into concentration camps in Burma, and displaced persons in the Central African Republic. Visit the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum at <http://www.ushmm.org/confront-genocide> to learn more. We must learn from the past not only to understand and empathize, but to take action.

# Meet Our Members



VALERIE AND DAVID LEIMAN  
MEMBERS SINCE 1988

*(Based on an interview by Paula Claycomb)*

[DAVID] We've been members for about 25 years. Actually, Valerie joined and was active on the Social Service Board before either of us joined the Society.

We had met when Valerie became Director of a church Head Start program where I was working as a consultant while studying for my Doctorate in Psychology. Val, as it turns out, wasn't at all impressed when I introduced myself as the program's consultant. After all, she had her Master's degree in social work and was completing one in special education.

[VALERIE] I got over that, when I consulted with David about the behavior of Buzzy, a three-year-old boy in my classroom

— and David explained that it was normal curiosity for young children to become interested in the differences between girls and boys when the two were using the bathroom at the same time.

Anyway, our relationship developed from there! When we were married and living in Queens, we liked listening to the Society's Sunday Platform meetings on WQXR radio. We especially enjoyed the talks by Dr. Matthew Ies Spetter, the Leader at the time, who was a Holocaust survivor like David. Then, when we moved to Manhattan, we joined.

[DAVID] We also enjoyed the talks by Dr. Marc Bernstein, the Society's Archivist, and still have a copy of a wonderful talk he gave in March of 2007, "Can Ethical Culture Help You in a Time of Personal Crisis?"

We were also impressed by Jean Kotkin who, in 2002, gave a talk entitled "Unsung

Heroines: The Women of Ethical Culture."

[VALERIE] Oh yes, and you can add to that the memorable talk by Dr. Khoren Arisian, "Reality, Prophecy, and Mental Health."

## CORRECTION

The March 2014 issue of *ETHICAL OUTLOOK* contains an error on page 13, in the story "Ethical Culture Movement Songbook." The composer Joanne Jackson is listed as being a member of the Long Island Ethical Society. Instead she is an active member of the Ethical Society of Northern Westchester.

Also, please note that Roy Byrd is the music editor of the book.



# Our Annual Retreat 2014 is Just Around the Corner...



E L I N O R E K A P L A N  
M E M B E R S H I P D E V E L O P M E N T C O M M I T T E E

Retreat? Did someone say “Retreat”? Well, yeah, I guess that’s what it’s called, in the sense of “Let’s take a break and get away from it all – to some place where we can rest, relax, give ourselves some peace and calm, and, by the way, spend a little time thinking and talking about our organization and where we’re going.” September 2013 was my first experience at a retreat. So mine isn’t exactly the voice of experience here.

Some of us remember that first evening, gathered out on the porch of our little home, the Gilmor Sloane House, sipping wine and snacking on chips, crudité’s, and dips, and just visiting in the twilight of an early autumn eve. (See retreat photos on our website at <http://www.nysec.org/photo-galleries/17>.)

Some remember Andra, plucking away at her ukelele as she courageously accompanied us (Andra says she only knew four chords, but she managed beautifully) in our sing-along, which ended all too soon because we had to skedad-

dle over to the campfire (yes, friends, we did roast marshmallows), over which Curt presided with educational and entertaining (a tough combo, but he does it every time) tales as night fell upon us under a starry sky. (Remember, it’s “the country,” even though it’s a mere 45-minute drive from the city, so we do see the stars on a clear night.)

Cheryl Gross, Sheila Kleinwald, and Rob Hoffman and a couple of others of us recall patiently toiling over the two challenging puzzles. (We’re highly ethical, so there was no competition, only joyful collaboration.) I pitched in on both for a while, but then succumbed to the lure of a very unique card game with Andra, Tod, and Henryka. Andra guided us through what seemed to be the ever-more-complicated rules of each round of Russian Rummy. She swears she didn’t make it up, but we nearly forfeited the last round due to collapsing from laughter as we tried to follow along.

What else, you ask? Well... I could tell you or, better still, you could find out for yourself

by coming along this year. Keep in mind that the earlier you reserve, the better, especially if you have an accommodation preference. We take all eleven rooms, double-occupancy, at the Gilmor Sloane House (private bath), and four double-occupancy rooms in Walnut Lodge (shared bath down the hall). (Yes, a couple of people paid a little more to have single occupancy.) That provides for 30. If we exceed that, there’s plenty more room at additional lodges and the Allison House, so don’t worry. However, Gilmor Sloane is usually the first choice, since that becomes our home base for most activities.

Oh, and by the way, if you ask me, it shouldn’t be called a Retreat at all. Considering what we accomplished (yes, we did actually get “work” done) and how much we enjoyed it all, I’d say it’s actually an Advance!

# ETHICAL RETREAT 2014

SEPTEMBER 19-20-21

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Gilmor Sloane — \$320 per person for the weekend (double occupancy)

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Reserve now and get in on the planning – activities, refreshments, car-pools, etc.

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Snail-mail or in person and provide your \$100 deposit.

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PRESIDENT, NEW YORK YANKEES

**APRIL 3, 2014**  
6:00-7:30 PM  
THE CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE PROGRAM  
7:30-9:00 PM  
CELEBRATION BUFFET RECEPTION AND ENTERTAINMENT

**PROGRAM AND RECEPTION CONTRIBUTION TICKETS**  
PATRON: \$2,500 INCLUDES (4) VIP SEATS  
SUPPORTER: \$350 INCLUDES (1) SEAT  
NYSEC MEMBERS: \$275 INCLUDES (1) SEAT

**PROGRAM ONLY TICKETS**  
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PURCHASE TICKETS AT [www.phraward.eventbrite.com](http://www.phraward.eventbrite.com)

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NEW YORK, NY 10023

Funds raised will benefit our many programs, including Supportive Traveling Services for hospitalized and incarcerated family members, Empowering Ethical Elders, Homeless Women's Shelter, At-Riskers Mental Health Alliance and the Creative Arts Success Academy.

*Spring Cabaret Concert*

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*"If music be the food of love, play on..." William Shakespeare*

*Friday, April 25, 2014 at 7:30 pm*  
Doors open at 7:00PM Program ends by 11:00PM

**FEATURING:**  
Soprano, **Katherine Howell**  
Members of **Ensemble du Monde** performing  
Mozart aria *Per pietà*...from COSI FAN TUTTE  
Mozart aria *Dove sono*...from MARRIAGE OF FIGARO  
Mozart's *Sonata for Violin and Piano K. 296*;  
[2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> movements]  
Schubert's **TROUT QUINTET**



With short readings from the language of love.

Followed by **DANCING!**

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Advanced purchase encouraged  
Seating is limited!  
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**Finger Food**  
wine, fruit, dessert, coffee/tea

**Purchase tickets by mail:**  
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New York, NY 10023  
(Please provide an email address and make check payable to *New York Society for Ethical Culture*.)

**ETHICAL**

NYSEC is a member of the American Ethical Union and the International Humanistic & Ethical Union. Entry to our 100-year-old building and meeting rooms is available for those wheelchair users with a few arrangements. Please call ahead (212-874-5210 x113) for setup of our portable system and plan to arrive one hour before start time.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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**Ethics in Film:** *1984* directed by Michael Radford — April 4  
**Ethics in Literature: A Reading Group:** *The Everything Store: Jeff Bezos and the Age of Amazon* by Brad Stone — April 7  
**Ethics and the Theater:** *The Millionairess* by George Bernard Shaw — April 18  
**Ethics in Film: Contemporary Documentaries:** *Shakespeare High (2011)* by Alex Rotaru — April 21

		1 May2014 Newsletter Deadline 6:00 Wisdom and World Affairs	2 1:00 Strength Exercise Class 6:30 Moral Philosophy: The Basics	3 12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:00 Champions of Change 6:00 Empowering Ethical Elders	4 7:00 Ethics in Film	5
6 10:00 Chorus Practice 11:00 Ethics for Children 11:15 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour 1:00 Ethics for Teens 1:30 Ethical Death Café 2:00 Sunday Assembly	7 1:00 Ethics in Literature: A Reading Group 6:30 Board of Trustees	8 7:00 Life's Struggles: Personal and Professional Ethical Dilemmas	9 1:00 Strength Exercise Class 6:30 Moral Philosophy: The Basics	10 12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:30 Building a Culture Of Peace	11	12
13 10:00 Colloquy 11:00 Ethics for Children 11:15 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour 12:45 Ethics in the News 1:00 Ethics for Teens	14	15 7:00 Felix Adler Seminar	16 1:00 Strength Exercise Class 2:30 Ethical Death Café 6:30 Moral Philosophy: The Basics	17 12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:00 Empowering Ethical Elders	18 7:00 Ethics and the Theater	19
20 10:00 Chorus Practice 10:00 Poetry Reading 11:15 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour 1:00 Ethics for Teens 1:30 Life with Health	21 1:00 Ethics in Film: Contemporary Documentaries 7:00 Prospective Members' Reception	22 12:30 Writing Class 6:00 Wisdom and World Affairs	23 1:00 Strength Exercise Class 6:00 Deepening Ethical Circles	24 12:00 Leader Lunch Discussion 6:30 Writing Class 6:30 Building a Culture Of Peace	25 7:30 Spring Cabaret Concert	26
27 10:00 Environmental Stewardship Committee 11:00 Ethics for Children 11:15 Morning Meeting 12:45 Brunch/Social Hour 1:00 Ethics for Teens 1:30 Photography Arts Club 1:30 Sustainable Living Support Circle	28 7:15 Readings in Deep Ecology	29 12:30 Writing Class	30 1:00 Strength Exercise Class			

## DID YOU KNOW?

The NYSEC website has a "MEMBERS ONLY" section that you can access with a password. If you have not already done so, email Beth Zucker at [bzucker@nysec.org](mailto:bzucker@nysec.org) to learn how.

Here's what you will find there:

Constitution and By-laws

Membership Directory

Policy Manual

Leader monthly reports and more. . .

Sign up now!

NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE

# ETHICAL

WE ARE ETHICAL CULTURE,

a community that believes all individuals have inherent worth and  
dignity, and a responsibility to strive for ethical growth.

Ours is a nontheistic religion in which deeds and their results matter more than ideology.

We believe that leaving the world better than we found it is the highest good.

Learn more about us at our website — or, better still, visit with us.

You're always welcome.

NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR ETHICAL CULTURE

# ETHICAL OUTLOOK

April 2013

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