

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

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## **Sunday Morning Meetings** 11:15 AM—in the Auditorium

**October 3**

**Ethics: The Next Generation**

*Kate Lovelady*

*AEU Leader-in-Training,*

*Intern, NYSEC, 2004-2005*

Dr. Khoren Arisian Presides

**October 10**

**The Emerging New Ethics**

*Curt Collier*

*Leader, Riverdale-Yonkers Society*

James Farer Presides

**October 17**

**Religion Today: Is It the Solution  
or the Problem?**

*Dr. Khoren Arisian*

*Senior Leader*

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh Presides

**October 24**

**New York at the Crossroads: The  
Erosion of Death Penalty Support**

*David Kaczynski and*

*Michael L. Radelet*

Dr. Judith D. Wallach Presides

**October 31**

TBA

## **October Happening**

**S**ixth Annual Benefit Concert—Sunday, October 24 at 2:00 pm in Ceremonial Hall. It will be an exciting program, with variety and fun for all. We'll have some new artists and some who are well known and loved by all, back by popular demand. For more information call Ruth Cohen at 212-860-4096.

## **President's Notes**

*Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh*

### **Looking to the Future**

**W**ith the refurbishment of our auditorium and reconfiguration of staff and committees, and our success at creating and presenting programming of interest to large numbers of progressive New Yorkers, we are now positioned to make headway on balancing our budget and growing our membership. As I believe our financial tasks are clear, and that much of the day-to-day responsibility for completing them will fall to staff, I want to focus on what I believe is our communal challenge for the year.

I think most of us would agree that we have been successful at raising public awareness of the New York Society and bringing large numbers of like-minded members

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## **Sunday Morning Meetings**

**11:15 AM in the Auditorium**

**October 3—Ethics: The Next Generation**

*Kate Lovelady, AEU Leader-in-Training, Intern, NYSEC, 2004-2005*

What are the cultural and psychological pressures on today's youth? Will they be more ethical than the current generation? Is America in a state of moral decline, or will the next generation truly learn from today's moral lapses? Ms. Lovelady will cover some current trends in ethics among the younger set, as well as explore research on what kind of upbringing creates moral individuals and how we can influence youth to create a more ethical culture.

Kate Lovelady, part-time Leader Intern with NYSEC from September, 2004 to August 2005, was born and bred on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. She took an undergraduate degree in poetry from Northwestern University in Illinois, graduating Phi Beta

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**Bring  
a friend  
on  
Sunday**

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**Ethical Culture: Who We Are**

*From An Invitation to Action: A Vision of Ethical Culture*  
 The National Leaders’ Council of the American Ethical Union May, 2003

Ethical Culture is an educational movement that helps people live more ethical and meaningful lives. Ethical Societies are lifelong learning laboratories in which knowledge from fields such as art, psychology, sociology, education, philosophy, and multiculturalism is explored through reflection, dialogue, and practice.

We believe ethical ideals develop in the experience of caring and worth-affirming relationships. As practical religious communities, Ethical Societies support activities and traditions that help each member to create a more fully committed and joyful ethical self, as well as to balance personal needs against the needs of others.

The development of ethical personality requires that we walk our talk. Our struggle to live as good people is ongoing, as we strive to keep a growing edge to our ethical experiences of life.

Ethical Societies educate members through

- Arts and storytelling workshops that help people find their unique moral voice and claim their identity
- Creativity activities that demonstrate an appreciation for diversity
- Experiences that expand self-esteem, teach emotional intelligence and reasoning, and increase the motivation and personal power to act

## Sunday Morning Meetings

*(Continued from page 1)*

Kappa with honors. A position with the employee-owned publishing house W. W. Norton led to a career as a freelance editor and writer. Kate first discovered Ethical Culture in North Carolina; in 2000 she attended the AEU Lay Leadership Summer School and decided to pursue professional Ethical leadership. She has just finished a year as part-time Leader Intern of the Riverdale-Yonkers Society for Ethical Culture, where her partner Bill Dechand is Music Director. She is currently finishing certificates in pastoral counseling at the Post-Graduate Center for Mental Health and in Humanist Studies and Leadership at the Humanist Institute. Kate is now part-time Leader Intern with NYSEC and the Consulting Leader-Intern for the Ethical Society of Austin (Texas). She is also on the Board of the American Ethical Union.

### October 10—The Emerging New Ethics

*Curt Collier, Leader, Riverdale-Yonkers Society*

This talk will explore the revolutionary changes in ethics over the past two decades and the implications these have on Ethical Culture.

Curt Collier is the Leader of the Riverdale-Yonkers Society for Ethical Culture, and the current mentor for Class XII of the Humanist Institute. Mr. Collier is also an adjunct professor with Hofstra University and a playwright.

### October 17—Religion Today: Is It the Solution or the Problem?

*Dr. Khoren Arisian, Senior Leader*

As the Presidential election campaign of 2004 advances ever so swiftly toward November 2, the intensity of

the commonly alleged “great divide”—between a faith-based and a secular democracy—tends to stoke increasingly contentious arguments on both sides of the political divide. There’s a growing public acceptance that religion and politics should cross-fertilize at almost every turn. Is this a desired development? Will one eventually overwhelm the other? Will organized religion and politics seek accommodation, struggle, or separation? Their turbulent interaction often becomes the seedbed of the infamous “culture wars” that lurch predominantly toward politicization of the preferred religious factor in American society—namely, the desirability of the substantial triumph of Christian values in the U.S.A.

The yearning for a spiritually monochromatic nation can become quite strong and bodes ill for a secular democratic consensus. Is this what we are willing to allow to happen, tacitly sanctioning ever-widening access to federal revenues for faith-based programs? I think not! An urgent question in any event.

### October 24—New York at the Crossroads: The Erosion of Death Penalty Support

*David Kaczynski and Michael L. Radelet*

Recent public opinion polls show a rapid decline in support for the death penalty, especially when respondents are given the alternative of life imprisonment without parole. Reasons, which will be discussed by Michael Radelet, include: increasing recognition that the death penalty is not a deterrent; race and class still operate in determining who lives and who dies; the death penalty costs zillions of dollars; and as long as we have capital punishment innocent people will die.

David Kaczynski will review the history of the death penalty in New York leading up to the June 2004 Court

of Appeals decision that declared the current law unconstitutional. He will report on other death penalty issues the Court has discussed and assess the current political climate in NY as an opportunity for abolition.

Along with his wife, David Kaczynski, the brother of the Unibomber, Theodore Kaczynski, approached the FBI with their suspicions about Theodore and were promised the death penalty would not be sought. That promise was broken, although a last-minute plea bargain saved Theodore’s life. David has since then been a tireless opponent of the death penalty. He is Executive Director of New Yorkers Against the Death Penalty and a regular speaker at this Society.

Michael L. Radelet is Professor and Chair, Department of Sociology, University of Colorado, Boulder. He has testified in approximately 100 death penalty cases and is on the Board of Directors of “FOHVAMP,” a Colorado group of families of homicide victims in which the homicide was not solved by the police. In 2002, at the request of Illinois Governor George Ryan, he completed a study of racial biases in the death penalty in Illinois used by the Governor in his 2003 decision to commute 167 death sentences.

### October 31—TBA

## Sunday Morning Music

*Gerald Ranck*

This year we will see the following changes in the Sunday morning music program: music will begin at 11:15 am each Sunday, and there will be many more guest soloists than in previous years, playing music of a much wider variety.

In October, our guest soloist will be Louise Schulman, playing the viola. Louise is familiar to our Strathmere fans. There will be a Sunday (the first of three this year) devoted to the folk music of John Jacob Niles.

Many other diversified and exciting programs are in preparation. Please make an effort to come into the Auditorium fifteen minutes early and begin your Sunday with the joy of music!

## President's Notes

*(Continued from page 1)*

of the public through our doors for provocative programming. Most of us would also agree that we have not had a great deal of success in capturing many of that public as members. There are exceptions, of course, but we all feel we can do better. Our challenge as a community, then, is to take a long, hard, and honest look at ourselves and at how we present ourselves religiously, philosophically, and communally to those we would want as members of the Society. It is my opinion that we will need significant changes if we are to capture new acquaintances as friends and members.

A number of initiatives are underway. The Sunday Program Committee is working hard to reformulate the look and feel of our meetings, and we have challenged our Music Committee and Music Director to provide a greater range of music for our meetings.

Suzy Frazer has a host of ideas about how we can make younger people a more visible presence. We have hired a new Director of Family Programming, Lynda Kennedy, who will be charged with not only building up the Sunday School, but also developing programming aimed at families.

We are taking important steps to reach our goals, but much more needs to be done. I am looking forward to working with all of you on recreating ourselves from within. One of the first things that we all can do is to be warm and welcoming to everyone who walks through our doors, old friends and new faces, alike. Then, I invite all of you to join me in making this a year of reflection, action, and transformation.

## Cultured Comedy Club

*Suzy Frazer*

*Laughs from the Left*, NYSEC's First Festival of Political Humor!! Thursday, October 28th at 8:00 pm in the auditorium. Hosted by Scott Blakeman and featuring New York's top progressive political comedians.

The event will sell out! Special priority seating and discount given to members. To purchase tickets, call 212-874-5210 x113.

## Adult Education Committee

*Pat Debrovner*

### "Foundations of Ethical Culture" Course

Mark your calendars for our upcoming "Foundations of Ethical Culture" course. New members of the Society are now expected to attend this very informative and popular series. To make it easier for all to schedule attendance, this year's course will have only two sessions: Tuesday evenings, November 9 and 16, from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. On the 9th, Joseph Chuman will present the Social Roots and History of our Movement and, on the 16th, Curt Collier will discuss Ethical Culture's Philosophy, Values and Social Action.

The charge for attending the course will be \$15 for members and \$20 for non-members.

## Caring Committee

*Les Graifman*

### You Are What You Eat – Don't Supersize Me!

On Sunday, August 15, 50 people assembled to listen to a lecture by Katherine Jamieson of *Simply Living Well*.

The Caring Committee provided us with an opportunity to hear Katherine talk about how to have better health through better nutrition.

In this period of rampant obesity, it is more important than ever to understand how to prepare more wholesome and nutritious meals. The media blitz tells us that it is okay to eat, eat, eat and it is okay to consume fats and unhealthy additives. Most of us know better, but how many of us take the time to find quick, easy recipes for meals that provide the nutrients we need?

It can be done, said Ms. Jamieson, as she suggested various books to read and the types of foods we should eat. She provided two recipes for dishes prepared with quinoa, a grain, and hijiki, a sea vegetable. Les Graifman prepared both recipes for the crowd and we all tasted these intriguing foods.

## Planning Ahead

*Stephanie Rosenblatt*

The Caring Committee will sponsor a Legal Presentation, Advanced Directives, on Tuesday, October 26, from 12:00 noon – 1:00 pm, covering health-care proxies, living wills, and powers of attorney, presented by the Elder Law Project of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York. This is being done on a pro-bono basis.

Please call either Pearl Katz at 212-799-3729 or Stephanie Rosenblatt at 212-586-0017 no later than October 10 to register for this important talk.

## Membership Committee

*Valerie Leiman*

### Can Business Practices Be Ethical?

This is a question that will be addressed in a series of talks by the

one and only Richard Bruno, whose film discussion programs have stimulated Ethical Culturists for many years. Watch for the dates in the coming season of Film Forums.

**Movies that mean BUSINESS: Film Forum 2004-2005**

*Eight films about corporate life in America:*

- October 8 *Executive Suite*
- November 5 *Patterns*
- December 3 *The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit*
- January 7 *Tucker*
- February 4 *The Apartment*
- March 4 *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*
- April 8 *Glengarry Glen Ross*
- May 6 *Other People's Money*

Film begins 7:00 pm. Members \$3:00; non-members \$4.00.



**Strathmere Ensemble**

*Jon Liechty*

The Strathmere Ensemble will take the stage on Thursday, November 18, 8:00 pm, to open its 2004-2005 season with an all-Dvorak program. Antonin Dvorak is a composer many Americans know and love; his Ninth Symphony and his Humoresque are familiar to many who don't even know his name. Dvorak is especially significant to New Yorkers, as he lived here from 1892 to 1895, when he headed the National Conservatory.

This program will provide an opportunity to get acquainted with some of Dvorak's chamber music and promises to be a fine evening indeed. The program will include the Gypsy Melodies (Zigeunerlieder) and two quintets: the Piano Quintet in A Minor, Op. 81, and the String Quintet in G Major, Op. 77.

**Interview with Bob Liebeskind, NYSEC Executive Director**

*Frank M. Susa*

FMS: So Bob, how long have you been working here at the New York Society now?

BL: Not too long. I've been here since July 6th, about two and a half months.

FMS: There's a famous Liebeskind who's in the news all the time these days. Are you related? I bet many members are wondering.



BL: Not to my knowledge. I may be somewhere down the line, because

Liebeskinds don't go back too far. There are a couple of other well known Liebeskinds, but that one in particular, I'm not related to.

FMS: Are you from here in the city?

BL: I grew up outside of New Haven, CT in a town called Hamden. I spent the first 18 years of my life there. In 1983, I completed college, moved to New York, and I've been here since. Can't get myself out.

FMS: What were you studying when you were in school?

BL: I studied Social Work Administration at the bachelor level. Several years later, I went on to receive my Master's degree also in Social Work Administration from Hunter College.

FMS: Have you ever had any previous relationship with the Society? Had you ever been here before?

BL: I've been here a few times for different programs that have been offered over the years. But I've never had a for-

mal relationship with the Society. Having been a New Yorker for a number of years, I've certainly been familiar with it, with the mission, and the wonderful and important work that they've done. A few times I did hear the Sunday morning addresses that were broadcast on WQXR.

FMS: Was there anything in particular that drew you to work here?

BL: I did know a bit about the mission of the Society, as I said, and have always been extremely impressed with the various kinds of work that goes on here. That was one of the big draws: being a part of an organization that I fully supported, having a very strong belief in the work that they do. So I feel very comfortable in that respect working for the Society.

FMS: You've been here long enough now to get your feet wet, and probably have a sense of who's who. By now, you probably also have a good idea of where the problem areas are in the Administration. I'm wondering if you have any thoughts about what you see yourself accomplishing now that you're here.

BL: There are a number of concerns that the Society is facing right now. None of them is going to be taken care of overnight. Some are of fairly large magnitude. Financially, the Society has put itself in a very precarious, very difficult position. One of my most important challenges, therefore, is to assist the Board of Trustees and the organization as a whole in digging out of that hole. I've already begun that process in my short time here. I've begun to turn the budget around. Not nearly enough, because there's a really large hole in the budget. But it has begun.

One of the major goals of the Society is to sustain itself on the basis of renting this most impressive building. So part of what I've already begun to do is to strengthen our relationships with the outside world. As I've studied the

Society in my short time here, I've discovered just how much we've operated in a vacuum over the years. We're sort of a little secret, and the outside world hardly knows that we exist. I'm starting to fix that.

FMS: Are you talking about building relationships with any outside organizations in particular?

BL: As a start, I've reached out to the West Side YMCA, our next door neighbor. I've developed a relationship with them and they've already assisted us since I've been here. They arranged to have a rather large organization make use of our facilities and theirs over a five day period, and we were able to charge them a very reasonable, yet advantageous, rental fee for that time. I believe that relationship will become more important to us over the next several months.

FMS: What other needs of the Society's are you working on?

BL: Our other major area of concern, apart from finances, is membership. We have an aging membership, which we're fortunate to have. But at the same time, we need to be aware that in five to ten years from now they're not going to be here. We have a very, very small number of young members. This organization has a responsibility to aggressively get out into the community and attract a new, younger membership base. This is not an easy thing to do in New York City.

Young people, especially those with families like my own, are very busy with lots on their agendas. It's especially hard to bring them into something new if you don't have something to offer. So, we need to take a good look at what kinds of programs we offer, what kinds we can offer, and what the folks we need to target would want. One of our more promising ones is the new political comedy program that happens once a month. That has brought a much

younger population through our doors. The next question is: how can we bring them back for different kinds of events? What other programs can we offer to do this? Clearly, we want them to come to our Sunday morning programs, but that in itself is not a big enough draw to really renew our membership.

FMS: Speaking of groups of younger people to reach out to, you mentioned the YMCA as our neighbor on one side. How about the Ethical Culture Fieldston School, which is our neighbor on the other side and even shares some space with us on the fourth floor? Any relationship building happening there?

BL: I'm working on that. As I walked into this job, I was told about the limited relationship between the Society and the school. I'm not quite sure why that is. But it is certainly important that we work on improving and building on that relationship. I've begun that process with their senior staff and some of their administrative staff. But that's going to take a while. There seem to be a number of issues between the two organizations that make it somewhat difficult to build a strong relationship. But I think it's doable. I'm a people person, and I have faith that folks here and folks there can become better acquainted with one another.

FMS: You're optimistic, then.

BL: Absolutely. We have to be.

FMS: You mentioned your family. Are you married?

BL: I have a lovely wife, Jean Weille, who's a clinical therapist; she goes by her maiden name. And I have two young children: Max, a nine-year-old going into fourth grade, and Maya, a six-year-old going into first grade. They're great, great kids.

FMS: Do you live here in the City?

BL: I live in northern Manhattan, and have for a long, long time.

FMS: What other professional work did you do before you came here?

BL: For the majority of my professional life I was Associate Executive Director at the YM-YWHA of Washington Heights and Inwood, which is a Jewish community center serving northern Manhattan. In that position, as an executive staff member, I was responsible for things such as budget development, fiscal management, program development, staff supervision, board relations.

In my time there, I took an organization that was healthy but very small and turned it upside down into what is today an absolutely booming organization. I led the process of growing its budget to \$9 million from \$1.5 million. It is now the healthiest organization in Northern Manhattan. And I am very proud of my work there.

FMS: You should be. That's quite an achievement.

BL: I hope to be able to say the same thing about my work here five years from now.

FMS: Great. You expect to see that kind of growth in five years, then?

BL: I'd say we should begin to see it in two to three years, but probably not any sooner than that. It's got to happen in three years, really. It's not going to happen in less than two, I promise you that.

FMS: Well, that's especially optimistic. I hope the rest of the Society's members and staff can catch that same spark.

BL: I think I've developed a very positive relationship with the staff here. They're all exceptional. With their participation, I really believe we can turn this place around. But I shouldn't really speak for them; you should ask them yourself.

FMS: Well, we can save the popularity poll for another newsletter edition down the road. In the meantime, we're lucky to have you with us.

# Black Sister

*Black sista, I can't resist ya  
Nor will I disrespect you  
When harm comes your way  
I will be there to protect you  
I'll be there to caress you  
And massage your mental*

*We could travel to places you've never been to  
Knowledge is essential but, ignorance is detrimental  
So seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave  
Because ignorance was a tool that was  
Used to make you a slave*

*We should be on the same team  
Cause it's a war against you and I  
We'll be victorious when we stand strong and unify  
Times are hard, but its' a virtue to be patient  
You're the mother of civilization  
From your womb, you produced nations  
You're responsible for your child's first education  
To know thy self is the foundation towards elevation  
You cannot see the light  
Without first recognizing darkness  
You are not a novice  
You are an original precious goddess  
Black Sister!*

This poem was written by Daniel Johnson, resident of Pamela House. Read by Mrs. Cynthia Parker on June 11, 2004, during a performance of Unforgotten Voices workshop, sponsored by the Social Service Board and Judith Ginsburg.

## October 2004

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Great Books</b> Oct. 6–Chekhov, <i>Rothschild's Fiddle</i> <b>ECRDG: (Ethical Culture Reading Discussion Group)</b> Oct. 13–Charlotte Bronte, <i>Villette</i>					1 November 2004 Newsletter Deadline	2 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
3 10:30 am – Ethics for Everyday Living 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Cafeteria 1:45 pm – Ballet Movie: <i>The Company</i>	4 6:00 pm – Board of Trustees 7:30 pm – Shelter	5 7:30 pm – Shelter	6 6:00 pm – Men's Group 7:30 pm – Great Books 7:30 pm – Shelter	7 5:45 pm – The Joy of Personal Writing 7:30 pm – Shelter	8 7:00 pm – Film Forum	9 No Supervised Visitation
10 10:30 am – Colloquy 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Cafeteria 1:45 pm – The Joys of Shakespeare	11 Society offices closed 7:30 pm – Shelter	12 6:00 pm – Women's Group 7:30 pm – Shelter	13 3:00 pm – ECRDG 7:30 pm – Shelter	14 5:45 pm – The Joy of Personal Writing 7:30 pm – Shelter	15	16 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
17 10:30 am – Poetry Reading 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Cafeteria 1:45 pm – Stephen Sewell, "The Arts and Ethical Activism"	18 6:30 pm – Social Service Board 7:30 pm – Shelter	19 7:30 pm – Shelter	20 7:30 pm – Shelter 7:30 pm – Great Books: "Happiness & Discontent"	21 5:45 pm – The Joy of Personal Writing 7:30 pm – Shelter	22	23 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
24 10:30 am – Yoga Meditation 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Cafeteria 2:00 pm – Stained Glass Window Benefit Concert	25 7:30 pm – Shelter	26 12:00 pm – Caring Committee Advanced Directives 7:30 pm – Shelter	27 7:30 pm – Shelter	28 5:45 pm – The Joy of Personal Writing 7:30 pm – Shelter 8:00 pm – Comedy Club	29	30 9:30 am & 1:30 pm Supervised Visitation
31 Daylight Saving Time Ends 10:30 am – Coffee Hour 11:00 am – Ethics for Children 11:15 am – Morning Meeting 12:45 pm – Cafeteria 1:45 pm – Community Meeting	<b>Great Books: "Happiness and Discontent"</b> Oct. 20–Gita Mehta, <i>A River Sutra</i>					

**Ethical Culture** is a humanistic religious and philosophical movement in which people share a core of common values: the worth of each individual, ethics as central to our lives, eliciting the best from each other and doing good in the world.

We seek truth as a growing, changing body of knowledge based on experience, reason and scientific observation, and seek to use it in support of human well-being.

NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR  
**ETHICAL  
CULTURE** 

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