



ETHICAL CULTURE

M O N T H L Y

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Visit our web site: www.essexethical.org

MARCH 2012

MARCH PLATFORMS

Platforms begin at 11 a.m. All are welcome. Platforms are subject to change without notice. For information, call 973-763-1905. Visit our web site: www.essexethical.org

March 4 Barry Klassel, "The Heart of Humanism." For those of us who don't believe in gods or goddesses, the supernatural or the afterlife, how should we understand our place in the universe? What is the best way to live? Where do we turn for consolation and a sense of peace? And how do we deal with morality and mortality?



Come be part of a lively discussion on these vital issues. We will start by looking at the biblical book of *Job*, so please read at least chapters 1-5 and 38-42.

(For a free online source where you can read the book of *Job*, go to: <http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Job+1&version=NIV>)

Barry Klassel has been the Humanist Chaplain at Rutgers University since the position was established in 2009. He has performed ceremonies such as weddings, funerals and baby-welcomings since 2003. He is the author of articles in *the Humanist* magazine about the wisdom of the arts in understanding the human condition and he wrote a section of the article on "Ritual and Ceremonial" in *The New Encyclopedia of Unbelief*.

For many years he has acted and directed in the theatre and still performs in arts-in-education programs. Since 2003, he has worked on a crisis/suicide hotline called Contact We Care. He has been married since 1968 and has 2 daughters and 2 small granddaughters.

Happy International Women's Day, the 8th of March! —Anja

March 11 Dr. Geri Fee, "Biofeedback as an Adjunctive Technique in Treating Medical Conditions" (carried over from



January). Biofeedback is defined as the technique of using equipment to reveal internal physiological events in the form of visual and auditory signals in order to teach patients to manipulate these otherwise involuntary or unfelt events. Teaching patients to control a wide range of physiological processes has profound effects in managing physical symptoms. For example, biofeedback has been successful in the treatment of hypertension, migraine and tension headaches. Scientific studies have provided evidence that objective neurological signs and symptoms can be altered.

Dr. Fee will demonstrate the Open Focus technique, and will show how biofeedback equipment is used.

March 18 Martha Gallahue, "Two Women Together." Martha is proud to have discovered nearly 15 years ago that ethical culture is the movement

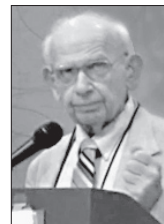


that continues to nurture her spiritual life. She came to appreciate this during her close relationship with Rose L Walker, longtime President of what was then known as The National Service Conference of The American Ethical Union, now known simply as National Ethical Service. Martha will discuss her journey through the lens of this relationship, in honor of Women's Month.

Martha Gallahue is an Ethical Culture Leader serving both National Ethical Service at the UN and the Eth-

ical Culture Society of Essex County in Maplewood, NJ. She is a member of the Brooklyn Ethical Culture Society where she served as President, and on the American Ethical Union Board. Trained as an interactive psychoanalyst, she maintains a small private practice in New York City.

March 25 Dr. Howard Radest, "Can Democracy Survive? – Of Tea Parties and Occupying Wall Street." Democracy requires parties and persons who



listen respectfully to one another and who seek mutual understanding. Democracy requires citizens that know and act upon the political and social world around them in the light of that knowledge. Democracy requires citizens that care for and commit to the public good. In short, democracy requires civility, intelligence, and passion. Separate these requirements from each other and they become destructive of person and place and society. And yet, this seems to be what is happening in what may be called a time of fragmentation, anger, and distrust. What then is to be done? Thus, my reflection on the current scene, on the 99% and the 1%.

Dr. Howard B. Radest is Dean Emeritus of The Humanist Institute and a member of the National Council of Ethical Culture Leaders. Dr. Radest received his B.A. at Columbia College, his M.A. in Philosophy and Psychology at The New School For Social Research and his Ph.D. in Philosophy at Columbia University.

In addition to his numerous articles, his books are *Toward Common Ground* (Ungar, 1968), a history (*continues*)

Ethical Culture Society of Essex County



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Editor's Note

Newsletter articles, announcements, etc., not to exceed 150 words in length, must be received by the FIRST of the month for inclusion in the following month's edition. Submit items to: Howard Gilman, newsletter editor; preferably via email at: gilman.howard@gmail.com. Items can also be dropped off at 15 So. Pierson Rd., Maplewood; or, if you put something for the newsletter in the EC office's mail slot or in the mail, please give me a call at (973) 763-3914 to be sure I know about it, especially if your item is time-sensitive. — *Editor*

Editor reserves right to edit for length, clarity and content. Opinions offered in this publication are those of the authors.

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the best
in others
and in
ourselves

Attention members! Please submit your email addresses to essex@essexethical.org to receive newsletter and other special event notices.

of the Ethical Culture Movement in the U.S., *Can We Teach Ethics?* (Praeger, 1989), *The Devil and Secular Humanism* (Praeger, 1990), *Community Service, Encounter With Strangers* (Praeger, 1993), *Humanism With A Human Face* (Praeger, 1996), *Felix Adler: An Ethical Culture*, (Peter Lang, Publishers, 1998), *From Clinic To Classroom — Medical Ethics and Moral Education*, (Praeger, 2000), *Bio-medical Ethics*, editor, (Prometheus, 2007), *Ethics and Public Health in a Time of Terror* [The Center for Preparedness [CDC] at the School of Public Health, University of South Carolina, 2006], *Bioethics: Catastrophes in a Time of Terror* [Lexington, 2009].

LEADER'S COLUMN

by Martha Gallahue

Ironically, or maybe not, when I reflect upon the importance of celebrating Women's History Month, my attention turns to our crucial need for institutional change throughout the world. For me, this is not about politics. Rather, it is about shifting our focus from the foundations of competition to that of cooperation. Not that women always succeed at inspiring cooperation, but when they are fully realized, they are still more inclined to develop in relationship than in individual achievement. It seems to me important to celebrate that and feed the consciousness of cooperation rather than to identify this as somehow self-limiting.

Dan Siegel, a neuro-psychologist, translates this in his work called *The Neurobiology of We*. He draws the connection between brain, mind and interrelationship with others. Women seem to be gifted with greater synapses between right and left brain, so it seems that women are capable of factoring greater complexity into their reasoning processes. Perhaps, their tendency to factor in the needs of others comes from this as well. When this complex state of experiencing is in balance with itself, or simply put, has matured, women can be models for cooperative engagement with others.

Cooperation consciousness may be the most evolved premise for successful and highly complex relationships in every sphere —

personal, cultural, institutional and cosmic. Most of us will acknowledge a deep yearning for this in our lives. Indeed, it is the ever-replenishing source of inspired leadership built upon a shared leadership model.

I see this attitude of cooperation in both men and women here at ECSEC. It is one of our greatest strengths. There is a generosity of spirit and a reservoir of talent willingly shared among our members and friends. Now, as we go into the process of selecting our next year's Board, I appeal to those who can to nominate themselves for service. We will have lots of change this year and hopefully with a smaller Board. The job should be easier because this year's Board will have kept a written record of their work. This year's President has nurtured a spirit of appreciation and cooperation. Women do more volunteer service generally (is this the key to a longer life?), but hopefully it will not always be this way. Think about continuing our shared leadership service by nominating yourself for service on the 2012 Board. Let us men and women join together.

FROM THE UN

Combating Drug Resistance: No Action Today Means No Cure Tomorrow

Can the benefits of miracle drugs be sustained? Antibiotics and other antimicrobial miracle drugs have been extremely beneficial for many of the dramatic advances in human health. Before the introduction of these drugs in the 1940s, infectious diseases took the lives of many millions yearly. One hundred years ago, infectious diseases were the leading causes of death in the United States (as well as abroad). Advances in public health together with the development of antibiotics brought many of these otherwise fatal diseases under control. For example, in 1900 in the US, pneumonia and tuberculosis caused almost one-quarter of all deaths; by 1990, both these illnesses caused less than four percent of all deaths.

Initial gains were primarily in higher income countries and among wealthier populations in poor countries. Over the past two

decades poor countries have gained access to drugs that combat major killers, including malaria, pneumonia and diarrheal diseases. Yet, these gains are in jeopardy. Drug resistance is becoming more severe and many infections no longer respond, leading to prolonged and expensive treatment and greater risk of death. For example, drug resistant superbugs like Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) are unaffected by traditional antibiotics. As a result, penicillin and its derivatives are increasingly obsolete. Childhood pneumonia, dysentery, and tuberculosis no longer respond to first-line antibiotics in some parts of the world.

The World Health Organization (WHO) is sounding the alarm and chose combating antimicrobial resistance as a theme for World Health Day. Its message is “no action today, no cure tomorrow”. Global health and untold millions are at risk.

As microbes adapt, antimicrobial resistance is a natural phenomenon. Resistance is exacerbated by the widespread use, overuse, underuse and misuse of these drugs. In an article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, the authors estimated that as much as 50% of antibiotic use is not necessary or inappropriate. Even when the drug has been correctly prescribed, patients who fail to finish the course of treatment are promoting resistance. In some parts of the world prescriptions are not even required and can be purchased over the counter.

Alexander Fleming, co-discoverer of Penicillin in 1929, warned about the possible future misuse of antibiotics in his Nobel Prize lecture in Stockholm in 1945. His warning has not been heeded.

Two developments have made the problem even more difficult:

One is the massive use of antibiotics in agriculture and secondly, the increased reluctance of drug companies to develop replacements. Approxi-

Quotes:

Seeing The Spiritual Nature

From Felix Adler, “Essential Fruits” in *Our Part in this World: Interpretations by Felix Adler*. Selections by Horace L. Friess, Anniversary Edition. Morningside Heights, NY: King’s Crown Press, 1946, pp. 82-83. The following were not consecutive sentences in the original.

•

“The crux of ethical discernment is the power to see, through all appearances, the spiritual nature in one’s fellows and in oneself.”

•

“The spiritual nature, the divinity in every person, is not just that assemblage of good traits or excellences with which nature and fortunate circumstances may have endowed him. It is a

superlative excellence beyond that, a freedom for spiritual response and interrelatedness, uniquely qualified in each person.”

•

“The force which incites me to penetrate beyond the empirical traits of others, to surmount the walls which surround the shrine in them, is the consciousness that unless I do so I am myself spiritually lost, I remain spiritually dead.”

•

“For it is only face to face with the god enthroned in the innermost shrine of the other that the god hidden in me will consent to appear.”

mately half of the current antibiotic production is used in agriculture to promote growth and to prevent crop disease as well as to treat sick livestock. With such massive use, drug-resistant bacteria generated in animals can be then later transferred to humans in food. Antibiotics are frequently given to healthy animals to encourage faster growth. This is of course convenient to the farmer because of faster growth; it also provides cheaper meat. However, it also provides more opportunities for bacteria to evolve into drug resistant strains.

Attempts to ban the specific agricultural uses of antibiotics have been unsuccessful. Faced with vigorous opposition in Congress by the agribusiness and farm-state legislators/lobbyists, the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has never implemented its proposed limits on antibiotic use in agriculture.

Secondly, in the past drug companies have coped with antibiotic resistance by developing new drugs. In recent years however drug companies have not developed replacements. They

claim that “investing in antibiotics is ‘not attractive’.” Drug companies are shifting their research dollars to developing drugs that treat chronic conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure. These drugs are less challenging to bring to market than antibiotics from a regulatory standpoint and are much more lucrative because they are used for years rather than days or weeks as is the case with antibiotics. Furthermore, much of the drug resistance currently is in poor countries that cannot afford flashy new drugs. Between 1983 and 1987, 16 new antibiotic drugs were approved by the FDA. Since 2003 only seven and since 2008 only two have been approved.

The Infectious Disease Society of America (IDSA) has put forward a plan 10x20 which calls for developing 10 new antibiotics by 2020. Since the initiative was launched in April 2010, one new drug has been approved by the FDA. The IDSA proposes financial incentives such as tax credits, guaranteed markets to encourage investment in research and development. This raises a moral issue: Should the develop-

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(continued from page 3)

ment of vital drugs be left exclusively to the market system?

The message on World Health Day is loud and clear. The world is on a risky path of losing the miracle drugs which have been so important to mankind. WHO has many proposals, some similar to IDSA, e.g., promoting rational use of drugs, education on drug use, infection prevention and control, drug regulation and incentives for research and development. We cannot allow the loss and misuse of drugs, essential for curing many millions, to become the next global crisis. ■

Dr. Sylvain Ehrenfeld International Humanist and Ethical Union and the National Ethical Service of the American Ethical Union representative to the UN; and with Dr. Reba Goodman, member of Ethical Culture Society and Department of Pathology at Columbia University, NYC, NY.



Folk Friday, March 9

Bring instruments and come to sing. Or — as in “and/or” — come and work with us on our community quilt. Or bring your knitting. Or your crocheting. Or your wood carving. It’s a song and craft night at Ethical Culture. Second Friday of the month, March 9, 7:30–9:30 p.m., coordinated by Anja Moen and Lisa Novemsky.

3rd Saturday Arts, 7:30pm Saturday, March 17

At 3rd Saturday Arts, 7:30pm Saturday, March 17, Heidi Sussman, photographer, will join us for another intimate salon here at Ethical Culture Society featuring an artist and her work. Quoting from Heidi’s website, www.heidisussman.com/index.asp:

“For nearly forty years, I have been

creating photographic images, minoring in photography at Emerson College in



Boston years before there were enough photo courses available to pursue a major. I continued postgraduate studies at the Instituto Allende in San Miguel, Mexico and since I believe that the study of photography has been a life-long process, I continue to take classes and workshops near and far from my home in Essex County, NJ.

“... I have returned to my photography full time and have recently begun to show my work again. Always in love with a photographic image whether it is a person, place or object, my subject matter has always been varied.”

Visit her website to prepare for an evening of conversation about art, the artist and her work. Photo © Heidi Sussman