



ETHICAL CULTURE

M O N T H L Y

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FEBRUARY 2004

Leader's Message

Dear Members and Friends,

Times of war and national crisis bring out the best and the worst in people. War brings out our courage, fortitude, endurance, capacity for sacrifice, and commitment to a common cause. It also brings out our intolerance, inhumanity, and brutality. This is true regarding both the political right and the left and the ever "virtuous" center. Furthermore, these negative emotions are directed not only toward the enemy, but also toward each other. Those who do not either support or oppose a war are vilified and excoriated as lacking humanity or courage or loyalty. Instead of respectful dialogue, people engage in name calling and vituperative interchange.



It is not surprising that this occurs at such times. Some people are losing their sons and daughters in wartime. Others are fighting with words and protests to end the carnage. The stakes are high. But the vilification of our fellows is not the best way to achieve one's ends. In our political struggles, there is much to be learned from Gandhi's model: absolute and unwavering commitment to one's goal even to the point of self-sacrifice, continued resistance even in the face of overwhelming power, and at the same time a refusal to harm or degrade one's enemy. I believe such an approach offers us an enduring guide in most (although not all) conflict. Although I am not a pacifist, I believe that in general, such a model helps us to keep in mind what is most important — respect for others and the preservation of a humane civilization. In times of crisis, this is a difficult model to preserve. However, I believe it is worth the effort. In these difficult times ahead, unfortunately, we will have ample opportunity to practice such restraint and good will.

In my February address, I will explore how in some ways Ben Franklin presented such a model.

Best, Boe

Fundraiser Events

Members offering these events contribute their time, talents and treasure. You can show your appreciation and support for the Society by attending these events. For information regarding fundraising events, contact the committee: Nancy Bohn, Jill Fox, Louisa Lubiak, Jeanine Rosh, or call the Society office.

February 7 Sterling Duo – Concert. Save Feb. 7 for a memorable evening when the Sterling Duo presents another wonderful Concert at the Society. (*see page 2*)

March 13 Theater Party: "Proof" – The Strollers (tentative date)

April 17 Russian Dinner – Mira Stillman

May 8 White Elephant Sale. We are accepting items for the sale from now until about a week before the sale. At this time, we CANNOT take clothing, books, furniture or large items. If you leave items at the Society building, please put a note on the items designating that they are for the White Elephant Sale.

May 15 Mountain Azalea Display with Cocktails – Betty Levin

July Gourmet Lunch – Boe Meyerson ■

"The fullest realization of true religious liberty requires that government ... effect no favoritism among sects or between religion and nonreligion."

Abington School District v. Schempp,
374 U.S. 203, 305 (1963) [Supreme Court]
(Goldberg, J., concurring).

Religious Display

In this season of Peace, Love and Hope, I am again disgusted with reports of wrangling and law suits over religious displays on public property. Please, people of good will, if religious displays are desired, let us have them on the lawns of our homes and places of worship. This will show the world our wonderful variety. That is what is great about America.

I urge all municipalities in the U.S.A. to pass ordinances confining displays on public property to seasonal items such as snow flakes or pine boughs. I entreat all citizens to think about intercultural harmony instead of one-upmanship. If we can't do it, what other country can? I hope I won't feel compelled to write this letter again next year.

—Barbara K. Cotler

Ethical Culture Society of Essex County



Boe Meyerson, *Leader*

Ted Seagull, *Assistant Leader*

Jim White, *Leader Emeritus*

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EDITOR'S NOTE

THE NEWSLETTER INVITES YOU to submit articles, announcements, commentary, etc. for publication. **Items must be received by the first of the month for inclusion in the following month's edition.** Items should be no more than 150 words, preferably submitted via e-mail to the editor (howardgilman@netscape.net). Items can also be delivered to: Editor, Ethical Society Newsletter, 516 Prospect St., Maplewood, NJ 07040. Please call the office, 973-763-1905, and leave word especially if your item is time-sensitive.

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

For those interested in receiving their copy of Ethical Culture Monthly by First Class Mail for a charge of \$10/year or \$5/half year (beginning in January), call the office, 973-763-1905, and request our First Class Mail Special.

Ethical Culture Society
of Essex County,
516 Prospect St.,
Maplewood, NJ 07040.

Visit our web site:
www.essexethical.org

Stirling Duo to Perform for Special Fundraiser February 7th

Once again, seasoned performers Mary Babiarz and Joe Gluck, our own society members, better known as the Stirling Duo, will perform for a special Ethical Culture Society Fundraiser to be held on Saturday, Feb. 7, at 4 p.m. at the society building. Joe, who is a violinist with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, and Mary, violinist with the Paper Mill Playhouse Regional Theatre in Millburn, NJ, are renowned in the metropolitan area, performing for many functions and organizations. Mary adds her piano skills to Joe's violin, as they become the Stirling Duo.

They offer an intimate style, highlighted by anecdotal explanations of the works they play. Always there is the unique connection of piece to composer, and performers to audience. As they did last year, Joe and Mary will bring to the stage, Marjorie Berg, soprano. Her art songs enthralled us and her warm style will again be a welcomed addition to the Babiarz/Gluck Duo.

The Board of Directors of the Society

has designed that the proceeds from this concert will go to a fund specifically for making the society building accessible to the physically challenged. This is a goal we hope to meet in the near future, with much help from this event.

After the performance, hors d'oeuvres, beverages and conversation will top the afternoon. Donation is \$25 per person, and if you missed last year's performance, ask anyone what a treat we have in store. Invitations will be sent to all members and other interested society friends. This event is

open to the public, and we encourage all members to commit to the cause, as well as to bring a friend to this marvelous afternoon of music. If your participation can help us

offer a more comfortable, easier access to events such as these, what a joy it should be to contribute by your offering and your presence. Please keep the date open, and plan to attend.

For more information or reservations call the society office at 973-763-1905 or Jeanine Rosh at 973-258-9395. ■



Quotation

JOHN LOVEJOY ELLIOTT

The great personalities are those who have most truly sensed the interpenetration of life as its central factor. The greatest personalities that ever existed have been those who united human beings and put them on the road toward cooperation and effectiveness and peace. Those whom the world has held highest have helped to unite and not sever interconnectedness. They have not been the destroyers of differences but the harmonizer of differences.

I believe that the power of seeing the worth and dignity inherent in human beings is the only power that can establish unity on the earth.

The truly good person is one who gives to those who live and work with her or him a justified faith in themselves; who increases the self respect in other people by respecting them. The only person who can really help human beings is one who helps them to see themselves in a fine way.

[from Stan Wayne / "Around the AEU"]

PLATFORMS (continued from page 4) 1983, **Anne Klaeyen** has held a variety of lay leadership positions and is now Leader of the Long Island Ethical Humanist Society. Anne holds Masters degrees in German from the State University of New York at Albany and in Business Administration from New York University. She is a graduate of the Humanist Institute and the Pastoral Counseling Program at the Postgraduate Center for Mental Health. This spring she will complete her study in the Doctor of Ministry program at Hebrew Union College.



February 22 Kenneth R. Bain: Issues in Education: Racism Without Prejudice? How can we create a just educational environment based on the principles of equality of opportunity? This talk will touch on issues of standardized testing, achievement gaps, institutional injustices, and whether one can be a racist without being prejudiced.

Professor Bain is founding director of the Center for Teaching Excellence at New York University. Prior to moving to NYU in the fall of 2001, he was founding director of the Searle Center for Teaching Excellence and a professor of history at Northwestern University. He went to Northwestern from the history faculty at Vanderbilt University in 1992, where he was also founding director of the Center for Teaching in the College of Arts and Science. In the 1970's and early 80's he was professor of history at the University of Texas in Edinburg, where he also served as director

of that school's University Honors College. From 1984 to 1986, he served as director of the National History Teaching Center.

His scholarship centers on the history of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East (principal works include *The March to Zion: United States Policy and the Founding of Israel, 1980, 2000*), but he has long taken an interest in teaching and learning issues. Internationally recognized for his insights into university teaching and learning and for a fifteen-year study of what the best educators do, he has presented invited workshops at more than seventy-five universities in recent years—in the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia, and Australia. His learning research has concentrated on undergraduate (all fields), graduate management, and medical education.



He has received awards from the Harry S Truman Library, Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, the Ford Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the International Studies Association, among others. He is currently completing his third book on U.S. relations with the Middle East (*The Last Journey Home: Franklin Roosevelt and the Middle East*) and a book on the teaching of history with Peter Filene. He recently finished a book on the evaluation and improvement of college and university teaching (*What the Best College Teachers Do: A Fifteen-Year Study of the Thinking and Practices of Highly Successful University Educators*. Harvard University Press, 2004). He has won four major teach-

ing awards, including a teacher-of-the-year award in 1968, faculty nomination for the Minnie Piper Foundation Award for outstanding college teacher in Texas in 1980 and 1981, and Honors Professor of the Year Awards in 1985 and 1986. A 1990 national publication named him one of the best teachers in the United States.

February 29 Joe Chuman: Leader of the Bergen Ethical Culture Society.

Dr. Joseph Chuman teaches Human Rights courses at Columbia University's Masters of Liberal Studies Program at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, The United Nations University for Peace at San Jose, Costa Rica, Hunter College, and Fairleigh Dickinson University. He is also a free lance columnist for The Bergen Record and the pastoral Leader of the Ethical Culture Society of Bergen County. He is past president of the National Leaders Council. ■



**Notice to Members:
Volunteers Are Needed**

There are vacancies on many committees and the Society needs the help of every member.

If you feel there is anything you can do for our society, please call me at (973) 377-7172.

— Susan Kennedy

ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY OF ESSEX COUNTY

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ETHICAL CULTURE

M O N T H L Y

FEBRUARY SUNDAY MORNING PLATFORMS

*Platforms begin 11 a.m. All are welcome. Platforms are subject to change without notice.
Sunday School 11 a.m.–12:15 p.m.*

February 1 Boe Meyerson: Ben Franklin and Radical Democracy.

**February 8 Gloria Torrice and Sherman Drexler:
Degenerate Art— Video and Talk.**

**February 15 Anne Klaeyesen: Leader of the Ethical Humanist Society
of Long Island**

February 22 Kenneth R. Bain: Issues in Education: Racism Without Prejudice?

February 29 Joe Chuman: Leader of the Bergen Ethical Culture Society

February 1 Essex Ethical Society Leader **Boe Meyerson** presents a platform on **Ben Franklin and Radical Democracy.**



of Fine and Industrial Art. She has conducted painting workshops for adults and children, some at the Ethical Culture Society. Her career included designing and

February 8 Gloria Torrice and Sherman Drexler: Degenerate Art— Video and Talk. This program will include a showing of a video about the show of modern art proscribed by Hitler. It will discuss artists that Hitler denounced as degenerate and the art that Hitler considered as beauty.

Gloria Torrice has been involved in the art world for the past 30 years. She studied at Columbia University, Hans Hoffman School of Painting, and the New School in New York City. She was head of the textile Department at the Newark College

of Fine and Industrial Art. She has conducted painting workshops for adults and children, some at the Ethical Culture Society. Her career included designing and styling at many NYC textile companies. She also has exhibited in NYC and Newark galleries. Currently she has her own business in art fashion wear.

Sherman Drexler is a prominent New York City artist who has exhibited at many New York City galleries and is currently at Studio 18 in New York City.

February 15 Anne Klaeyesen, Leader of the Ethical Humanist Society of Long Island. Since becoming a member of the Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture in *(continued on page 3)*

At Essex Ethical:

Family Night Feb. 6

7:30 pm every 1st Friday

Folk Music Feb. 13

7:30pm every 2nd Friday

Philosophy Group Feb. 8, 22

9:30–10:30 a.m. every 2nd and 4th Sunday

Poetry Series Feb. 16

7:30 p.m. every 3rd Monday.

Contact: Tom Obrzut,
(973) 275-0929.

Public Affairs Forum Feb. 20

7:30 pm every 3rd Friday

Fundraiser Events:

Feb. 7 Sterling Duo – Concert

Mar 13. Theater Party: “Proof”

– The Strollers (tentative date)

Apr. Russian Dinner

– Mira Stillman

May 8 White Elephant Sale

May 15 Mountain Azalea Display
with Cocktails – Betty Levin

Jul. Gourmet Lunch – Boe Meyerson

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