



# ETHICAL CULTURE

M O N T H L Y

VOLUME 24 NUMBER 6

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FEBRUARY, 2005

## Leader's Message

Since I began serving as leader of this Society, I have (with intermittent exceptions) for the most part observed the traditional lecture format for each of my monthly addresses. However, while I find most people to be satisfied with this format, many are often not satisfied for a variety



of reasons. Some people feel there is not enough opportunity for sharing their views insofar as audience participation is limited to the Question and Answer period following the lecture. Other people find that the formal address, even when inspiring, still does not engage them at a personal or experiential level. In other words, though the address might be stimulating and

informative, it may not allow listeners to make the connection and see the relevance to their own life. Still others, many of whom find their best wisdom in the arts, feel the need for a more aesthetic experience.

Arthur Dobrin recognized a long time ago that the traditional Sunday meeting format did not meet the needs of all the people in his society. Consequently he supplemented the traditional meeting with an earlier one in which a more varied and more participatory format was offered. He called it Colloquy. This is an interactive and experiential format in which topics important for living an ethical, meaningful and fulfilling life are discussed, shared and contemplated. It involves reflections on a chosen topic by the facilitator, some silent meditation, the reading of a parable, opportunity to

share one's personal views or experiences relative to the subject, as well as music and song.

On Sunday Feb. 6, at 11am, I will not give a traditional address. Instead I will utilize the colloquy format in dealing with the subject "Friendship: Reflections on Its Nature and Nurture." You will have an opportunity to experience this alternative type of meeting and decide for yourself if it suits you. If so, then you will be able to participate in them regularly thereafter from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. on the 2nd and 4th Sundays on the month. This program will replace our Philosophy Group meetings. Those who prefer the traditional format will be able to continue to enjoy it at 11 a.m. as usual. Those who want both are welcome to each.

*Best to you all, Boe*

## Fund-raising Events Calendar

### January 14

Trivial Pursuits — Jeanine Rosh

### February 13

Stirling Duo, 2 p.m. at the society building. "The Stirling Duo offer an intimate style, highlighted by anecdotal explanations of the works they play...with the dulcet tones of Margie Berg, soprano. A fabulous concert and afterwards hors d'oeuvres, beverages, great dialogue and a chance to make a difference in our financial health."

### March 13

Lunch at 12:30 p.m. and theater at 2:30 p.m. *Psychopathia Sexualis*

### April 16

Progressive Dinner 6 p.m at the society

### May 7

White Elephant Sale: From now until May, bring clean reusable articles for the White Elephant Sale to be held in May. Everything but books or clothing can be dropped off at the Society. Bring a bag or two every Sunday!

## March and April Fund-raisers

The Society will sponsor a "Soup and Sandwich Theatre Party" on Sunday, **March 13**, featuring the Strollers' presentation of the comedy *Psychopathia Sexualis* by John Patrick Shanley (author of *Moonstruck*), "Shanley's play is a smart comedy about people and their befuddlements and a shrink who may just be the personification of evil. The play's first half is perfectly poised between daffy comedy and believable human neurosis which Shanley combines so well that although you never know what wacky thing is coming next, you believe it when it comes." The play, at 2:30 p.m., is preceded by lunch at the society after the Sunday platform. The price for lunch and the play is \$20.00. It's a bargain! Join us for a fun afternoon.

Keep your calendar free for Saturday evening, **April 16**, for our all new "Progressive Dinner". We start with a cocktail party at the society, and then we take it to greater heights. You just need to be there, and we'll take care of providing a fun-filled, palate-pleasing evening.

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

—Jeanine M. Rosh

# Ethical Culture Society of Essex County



Boe Meyerson, 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](mailto: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](http://www.essexethical.org)

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"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it's the only thing that ever has." —Margaret Mead

## Resolution Adopted

A resolution calling for a government investigation of the recent election was presented by an *ad hoc* social action committee before a Membership Meeting at the Society on December 19, 2004. It was approved by a two-thirds majority.

The resolution cites "extensive irregularities concerning the November 2, 2004 election" which "appear to call into question the validity of the results...while undermining the legitimacy of our entire democracy." It urges "our elected representatives at the state and federal level to conduct public hearings to examine the practices of recording, tabulating and reporting election results" to assure a fair outcome. Copies of the resolution were sent to state and federal elected representatives of Essex Ethical's districts and to the AEU.

"We really should take a stand on this issue," said member Jim Quigley, author of the resolution. "Particularly in Ohio, the obvious disenfranchisement of countless African-American voters is an ethical and moral disgrace. Until this situation is investigated and reformed, the United States should never again hold itself up as some paradigm of democratic virtue for all the world."  
—Jim Quigley

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**Congratulations** to Carol and Dick Varkner on the marriage of their daughter Kathie.  
—Betty Levin

## AEU Board Election May 2005

The American Ethical Union is soliciting and recruiting candidates for the AEU Board of Directors. We seek the strongest possible candidates who are interested in running for the AEU Board in the election to be held at the AEU Assembly in Northern Virginia during May 27-29, 2005, and to take office immediately following the Assembly. Materials are now available for AEU members — letter and application are in the office and are also available for download at <http://www.aeu.org/news.htm>. March 31 is the due date for applications.

### Helping Ethical Societies Grow

In order to plan workshops for the Assembly and to develop future assistance programs,

the AEU Membership Committee would appreciate feedback on the issues that you consider most important for improving your society's growth and development. Preferably, we would appreciate that you have a discussion of this at your society's next board meeting, but individual opinions are also welcome.

### Background

The AEU Membership Committee is responsible for assisting existing societies in their growth and development efforts and for helping to start new groups. A variety of programs have been used to assist societies.

■ Subventions have been granted to assist leaderless societies to hire leaders, on a strictly supervised basis, phased out over a period not to exceed five years, subject to review of proposed plans to become self-sufficient at the end of the program with annual reviews of progress in meeting specified goals.

■ Making available on the internet "*Great Expectations*", containing ideas and materials from around the movement and elsewhere on making your society more effective [see AEU website <http://aeu.org/> — to access, click on *Library*, scroll down to and click on *Great Expectations*, password protected for members only — password *gehome*].

■ Annual society growth and development conferences featuring workshops to share ideas from around the movement. Topics include membership growth, running a more effective pledge campaign, long range planning, improving your society's publicity, innovative programs, and similar subjects.

■ *Ad hoc* efforts to promote networking between one society facing a problem and one with experience in dealing with a similar issue.

We also maintain a lending library on society growth and development issues. Materials are available by request from the AEU Office.

These programs are intended to help societies in their efforts to become more effective ethical communities. Your assistance in identifying your society's needs and how we can best help is essential to our being able to design and improve our programs. Identification of areas of strength where your society could help other societies,

either through networking or giving workshops, would be very much appreciated.

For the past fourteen years the AEU has run annual "Society Growth and Development Conferences" [as described above] in the fall. Some people, particularly from the more distant societies, have suggested that it would save them transport costs and time if this conference were merged with the Assembly. So we are going to try it this year to see how it works. This year's Assembly will include several workshops designed to help your society run better. Look for detailed announcements later in the year. Your suggestions will help us both to design this year's program and to prepare programs for future years.

Please send responses as to the issues of society growth and development of greatest concern to your society and also areas of your society's strengths to me at kargas@earthlink.net. Thank you very much for your help.

—Hank Gassner, Chair of the AEU Membership Committee, and Donna L. Roberts, AEU

## Win's Celebrated Pumpkin Soup

Responding to overwhelming demand by those who enjoyed this soup after the December 19 Solstice Celebration, Win Thies agreed to give us his recipe, as follows: "Candidly, I've been doing this so long I simply judge quantities by experience. But I think the amounts set down will produce a nice soup. Butternut squash may be used in place of pumpkin. (Indeed, some even prefer it.)"

### INGREDIENTS

Chunks of raw pumpkin to half-fill a 6-quart pot  
5 or 6 medium onions  
Vegetable oil sufficient to saute onions lightly  
3 tsp. grated fresh ginger  
Water to fill pot 2/3 full

### DIRECTIONS

Clean up the pumpkin, cutting off orange outside. Onions need not be in

## Platforms

(continued from page 4)

conducted screening clinics and public education for textile workers afflicted with breathing problems from inhaled cotton dust. He was a leader in the North Carolina Anti-Klan Campaign and an organizer of the fateful march and conference of Nov. 3, 1979, where he was shot and critically wounded. After his injury he returned to the prac-

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small bits. Saute them. Add all above ingredients to the pot. For a richer soup, use chicken broth or half such broth and half water. A bit of salt brings out some flavor, if wished. Curry powder is a nice plus to some people. Some hot sauce (to taste) appeals to those liking hotter food. Cook for fifteen minutes until pumpkin is soft, then puree all in blender. Serve hot. A festive touch is to serve in a pumpkin half as a tureen. If so, clean out base and cook in 250 degree oven for one hour before serving. Then add finished soup and to table.

—Win Thies

## Mark Your Calendars...

### February 11 Folk Singing

with Lisa Novemsky at 7:30 p.m. on second Friday of the month. Please call the office or email lnovemsky@comcast.net to check in advance.

### February 13 & 27 Colloquy

(new) 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. on second and fourth Sundays of the month. Facilitated by Boe Meyerson, Leader. This is an interactive and experiential format in which topics important for living an ethical, meaningful and fulfilling life will be discussed, shared and contemplated. There will be reflections on the topic by the facilitator, some silent meditation, the reading of a parable, opportunity to share one's personal views or experiences relative to the subject, as well as music and song.

tice of psychiatry and for 20 years has been a clinician and an award-winning researcher studying schizophrenia. Dr. Bermanzohn remains a political activist, working against genetically engineered foods and the Ashcroft attack on civil liberties. He is a member of the Board of the Greensboro Justice Fund. ■

## Quote

(from the St. Louis Society, courtesy Stan Wayne, AEU)

## It Is I Who Must Begin

It is I who must begin.  
Once I begin, once I try —  
here and now,  
right where I am,  
not excusing myself  
by saying things  
would be easier elsewhere,  
without grand speeches and  
ostentatious gestures,  
but all the more persistently  
— to live in harmony  
with the "voice of Being," as I  
understand it within myself  
— as soon as I begin that,  
I suddenly discover,  
to my surprise, that  
I am neither the only one,  
nor the first,  
nor the most important one  
to have set out  
upon that road.

Whether all is really lost  
or not depends entirely on  
whether or not I am lost.

— Vaclav Havel

(Teaching With Fire, ed. by  
S.M. Intrator and M. Scribner)

# ETHICAL CULTURE SOCIETY OF ESSEX COUNTY

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## ETHICAL CULTURE

SUNDAY MORNING PLATFORMS

**February, 2005**

Platforms begin at 11 am. All are welcome. Platforms are subject to change without notice. Sunday School 11 am–12:15 pm. Youth of Ethical Societies (YES): contact Society office.

**February 6 Boe Meyerson** *“Friendship: Reflections on Its Nature and Nurture”*. This presentation will be a departure from our customary lecture format. Please see the Leader’s article for a full description of the program. Boe Meyerson is the Leader of the Ethical Culture Society of Essex and also serves as the Humanist Chaplain at Columbia University.

**February 13 Paul Surovell** *“How to Be About Peace”*. Paul Surovell, co-chair of South Mountain Peace Action, will discuss his ideas and experiences as an organizer for peace as an alternative to the militaristic policies of the US government.

Mr. Surovell will make references to the experience in the Maplewood-South Orange area since the late 1970s and his earlier experiences as a student and then an anti-war soldier during the Vietnam War. Paul will speak of the need to use strategies and tactics that resonate with public attitudes and he will address in a critical fashion examples of how the leadership of the peace movement does not always follow this course. Finally, Paul will present the program of South Mountain Peace Action for the present and beyond.

Paul Surovell has been a member and leader in South Mountain Peace Action since 1977. He teaches math in the NYC school system. He was the

first treasurer of the elected WBAI local station board and continues to serve as a board member.

Mr. Surovell’s background includes service in VISTA in rural Missouri, an MA in Economics from the Graduate Faculty of the New School, two years as a US Army medic and membership in the Vietnam Veterans Against the War. He was on the editorial staff of the New York Times Information Bank and then editor and publisher of *Interflo: A Soviet Trade News Monitor*. Paul has been a resident of Maplewood, NJ since 1977.

**February 20 Joseph Chuman** *Rogue Nation: US and the International Legal Order*. Dr. Joseph Chuman has been the leader of the Ethical Culture Society of Bergen County, New Jersey, for the past 27 years, and before that he was leader of the Essex Ethical Culture Society. He is past president of the National Leaders Council of the American Ethical Union.

He is a Visiting Professor of Religion and Human Rights at Columbia University where he teaches in the Masters of Liberal Studies Program at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. He is the founding member of the International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism, and has taught contemporary civilization at Columbia College, religion at Barnard College

and Hunter College, as well as at Fairleigh Dickinson University. Dr. Chuman also teaches at the United Nations University for Peace at San Jose, Costa Rica, which has been praised by UN General Secretary Kofi Anan himself.

**February 27 Sally and Paul Bermanzohn** *The Greensboro Massacre: 25 Years Later—The First Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the United States*. Sally Bermanzohn was a labor organizer in the Duke Hospital cafeteria when her husband Paul was critically wounded in the Greensboro Massacre. Pregnant at the time with their second child, she fought poverty and physical danger to raise her family. When able to continue her education, she focused on her experiences as an organizer and victim of KKK violence in her research. She is now associate professor of politics at Brooklyn College, CUNY, where she teaches courses on politics, race, gender, and class.

Dr. Paul Bermanzohn was born in Germany, the son of two Holocaust survivors, after World War II. At City College of New York he was active in the movement against the Vietnam War. He graduated Duke University School of Medicine and went into psychiatry. He left his psychiatry residency to become a co-founder of the Carolina Brown Lung Association, where he

*(continued on page 3)*