



# ETHICALLY SPEAKING

53 Prospect Park West, Brooklyn NY 11215 (718) 768-2972

Volume 93, no. 8

## Leader Notes: April Questions by Lisel Burns

### AEU National Assembly

#### April 22-25 NYSEC

"Ethical Humanism for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century"

It's not too late to register for the 86th Assembly of the American Ethical Union, to be held at the New York Society. BSEC will be sending delegates to vote on proposed changes to the AEU by-laws. Ethical Workshops, guest speakers, social gatherings, good food, music and entertainment all fit into the program. Meet or re-acquaint yourself with Ethical Leaders and Lay Leaders from across the country.

On Sunday, April 25, BSEC is cancelling platform and Sunday School so all can attend the events that morning at the assembly in Manhattan. For information on scheduling or assistance with registration, call the BSEC office, or the AEU at 212-873-6500.

With the coming of spring days, we are now nearly three quarters through the 1998-99 Season at the Brooklyn Society. In this Season, we have, I believe, waded a good ways into the waters of transition. Working alongside many of you in the many programs we do in the space of each month, I see closeup both present and potential riches in our community life.

About sources of repeating difficulties, such as filling some needed membership volunteer slots, I am curious but undecided. Since people are so busy now, perhaps we would do better raising the money we need to pay more staff than to get better at eliciting volunteer time from members already overcommitted and working too hard. On the other hand, we can take delight in the times when the community initiative needed has matched a member's capacities and desires.

A poignant example this spring is the memorial plaque that Celeste Leibowitz is fashioning in memory of Richard Price, our former Caring Committee Chair. "Richard," Celeste said, "was there for me in the most powerful way." Celeste is now there for Richard when he no longer speaks for himself. And we all benefit.

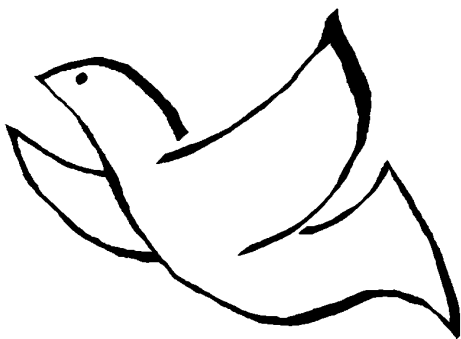
The community work areas the Board set up last spring are fragile because so few people staff them, but they are holding their own. We're planning a refurbishment of the library and kitchen. We're buying new chairs for the Meeting Room. We have plans for an outside patio and are submitting a plan to the Landmark Commission this May for an outside ramp to make the Meeting House physically accessible to people who cannot manage our steep stairways.

This month small Board and staff planning groups have formed. Now their agenda is to develop longer term wish lists for improvement in each area, and scenarios to achieve them. But we won't, I think, have the comfort of being through this period until we have become quite specific about our core identity.

One Sunday afternoon in March, Jim O'Callahan, a former Jesuit Seminarian who is leading a spring discussion group at BSEC on Roman Catholic tradition and social teachings as he has experienced them, said something that gave me an insight about BSEC and our future. We were talking about the Catholic school education, its pros and cons, and he said, "Many of my Catholic friends have now left the church, but nonetheless send their children today to Catholic Schools. When I wonder to myself, why, I think because though the answers the church offered no longer hold for them, it was the questions offered in those Catholic schools which formed their adult lives."

Suddenly I felt sure that with our tradition also, the questions will make the difference. We have no doctrine with set answers to confirm or disappoint our members expectations. The transition will not be over for me until we have found a shared understanding, about at least the core questions we are here to wrestle with, and how we intend with those questions to form our own lives, be with others and choose roles in our families and communities.

### Brooklyn Peace Site Award: Philip Metling



On Sunday, April 11, we will be honored to present Philip Metling with the 15th annual BSEC Peace Site Award. The award will be presented at the platform, where he will give a speech entitled *Peace, Racism and Justice*.

Mr. Metling has been an activist for peace and community issues for over forty years. He has worked in the Shore Front Peace Committee, for a time as chairman. He has also worked as a PTA member, a member of Community Board 43, and as a delegate and founding member of the new Labor Party. He has participated in the actions against nuclear weapons, for the Stockholm Peace Proposal, against involvement in the U.S. war with Iraq, and many struggles to defeat racism in his community.

The Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture was declared an International Peace Site in 1983. Each year since then we have presented the Peace Site Award to an exemplary individual or group whose actions and ideals are particularly devoted to the cause of peace.

#### *BSEC Peace Site Award Recipients:*

- 1983 William Sloane Coffin
- 1984 Michio Kaku
- 1985 Dave Dellinger
- 1986 Miriam Friedlander
- 1987 David McReynolds
- 1988 Rev. Jo Tolley
- 1989 Daniel Berrigan
- 1990 Children of War
- 1991 Cora Weiss
- 1992 Robert Knight
- 1993 Amy Goodman & Allan Naim
- 1994 Sonya Ostrom
- 1995 Linda Lantieri & Tom Roderick
- 1996 Capt. Lawrence Rockwood
- 1997 Karl Grossman
- 1998 Eileen Storey, S.C.
- 1999 Philip Metling

**THE BROOKLYN SOCIETY  
FOR ETHICAL CULTURE**  
53 PROSPECT PARK WEST  
BROOKLYN, NY 11215  
(718) 768-2972

**Leader:** Lisel Burns

**President:** Charles Horwitz

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President:** Constance Pigozzi

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President:** Stephanie Heacox

**Treasurer:** Glenn Newman

**Board Secretary:** Kurt Johnson

**Pledge Secretary:** Bruce Liebowitz

**Board Members:** Charlotte Alper,  
Jeannine Anas-Launay, Rita Wilson,  
Jean-Jacques Senechal. *Emeritus:*  
*Marshall F. Dubin, Isabel Ross.*

**Ethical Action:** Charlie Horwitz 230-3537

**AEU Rep:** Anne Klaeyesen 768-2972

**Platform:** Constance Pigozzi 331-1137

**Coffeehouse:** Anne Klaeyesen 965-3611

**Environment:** Kurt Johnson 768-2972

**House & Grounds:** Tony Severo 854-0710

**Greeting:** Rita Wilson 284-0241

**Membership:** Stephanie Heacox 768-2972

**Peace Site:** Bea Rubin 768-2972

**Sunday School:** Remi Gay 768-2972

**Youth Group:** Rita Wilson & Tony Severo

*Ethically Speaking* is published six to ten times a year by BSEC. This issue was produced by Bob Strock, Marshall Dubin, Lisel Burns, Charlie Horwitz, and Anne Klaeyesen.

*Ethically Speaking* is written by a number of BSEC members. Views expressed in this publication are always open to friendly discussion. Our newsletter staff, like the membership at large, may vary in their thinking on many issues, yet we are all committed to putting deed before creed, and to strive constantly toward living out, each in our own particular way, the Ethical Ideal of eliciting the best from ourselves and others.

## Building News

Kimberly Neuhouse, a local architect and friend of the Society, has been retained on a consulting basis to help us carry out our short term building projects and best utilize the Landmark Commission and Sacred Sites programs in the next stage of Building and Grounds planning. By May 10, we will have a proposal into the Commission for ramp access to the Meeting House and we will carry out activities necessary to become eligible for Sacred Sites seed funding for future restoration projects.



## VIEWPOINT:

### A Story for April

April is historically the month for humor. "April Fool's Day" comes in April. With that fact in mind, I will tell you the true story of Carl Rowan and his fabulous joke.

Carl Rowan, prominent black journalist and TV commentator told this story in his autobiography, *Breaking Barriers*. Rowan was the friend of three presidents: John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, and Jimmy Carter. President Carter appointed him ambassador to Finland. He now lives in Washington D.C. and enjoys relaxing himself on weekends by mowing his beautiful lawn in front of his estate.

One day while he was mowing the lawn, a limousine came by, driven by a black chauffeur. Seated in the back was an elegantly dressed white woman. She told the driver to stop the car near to where Carl Rowan was doing his work.

The chauffeur opened the window and the woman called out to Rowan: "Boy!" she said. Rowan hadn't heard that word directed to him in many years. He was so startled that he didn't reply.

"Boy!" She called again. Carl Rowan has a good sense of humor, so, without a smile, he answered her. "What can I do for you, Madam?"

The young woman had a southern accent. "That's a beautiful lawn. I want you to work for me. What are you paid for doing this?"

Carl Rowan replied. "I don't get money but the lady of the house lets me sleep with her."

With a gasp of horror, the woman ordered her chauffeur to speed away.

Many people asked Rowan, "Is that story true?" His wife, Vivian said "No!" Carl Rowan, however, called the story "apocryphal" which means that it may or may not be true.

*Marshall F. Dubin*

## Membership News

*New Members:* This month we welcome Anthony and Cathy Sepulveda to our community. They have a baby son Dylan, and live across the way from the Brooklyn Museum, in the same building on Eastern Parkway and Washington Avenue where also dwell members Manuel Javier, Marguerite Lukes, and Marshall Dubin! Anthony is a musician staying home with Dylan and Cathy is an alternative high school teacher.

Joe Radosta is home recovering from a small stroke. He is as alert and energetic as ever, but is in need of daily housekeeping and basic care. Antoinette Wagnerman and Abe Leiberman are helping with an appeal regarding improper managed care refusal of convalescent care. Help for Josie with her errands and in a search for future assisted living options would be greatly appreciated. Joe and Josie have lived in Red Hook, Brooklyn for so many years and want to stay close to home if possible, but they need easier access to transportation and amenities.

Kudos to Lay Leaders Anne Klaeyesen, Sheila Kosoff, Rita Wilson, Martha Hoffman and Donna Roberts. The BSEC board has approved the candidacy of these members for Assistant Leader status to conduct selected ceremonies in the Society's name. As they are ready, they will conduct some of future memorial, wedding, commitment and naming ceremonies.

Stephanie Heacox, Membership Chair, has now organized the collection of member interviews for a Directory we hope to have ready by the May Membership Meeting. If you do not want your interview information to be made available to other members, let Stephanie or the office know and the Directory version will be edited to your specifications.

*Affordable Apartments Needed:* Vanda and Boren Beric with two little sons and Rita Wilson, whose toddler grandson may visit from time to time, are two member families looking for apartments this spring, hopefully in Park Slope or adjacent areas. Let's help each other all we can.



## Enrichment through Discussion: Ongoing Dialogues

Dorothy Klein is leading a series of discussions on the taped lectures of Michael Parenti, a leading voice among political progressives. Issues discussed will include the problems of U.S. Democracy, imperialism, corporate economic power, and the invented reality of the news and entertainment media. The first meeting was held on March 14. Future meetings will be on Sundays, dates to be announced. Call the office at for more information.

Jim O'Callahan, a former Jesuit seminarian and later active in the world of liberation theology in Central America, has been leading a biweekly Sunday discussion group on Roman Catholic tradition and social teachings. Contact Lisel if you are interested in visiting services, or further reading and discussion.

And don't forget the Richard Price Book Discussion Group. This month: *Unto the Sons*.

# APRIL 1999 BSEC CALENDAR

**4/1 - 4/10**

**THURSDAY 4/1**

**7 - 9PM:** *T'ai Chi Chuan*, with J.P. Harpignes. \$12 per class, \$40 for 4. Free for BSEC members.

**FRIDAY 4/2**

**6:30 - 9PM:** YES Youth Group Meeting.

**SATURDAY 4/3**

**10 - 11AM:** *The Art of Belly Dancing* taught by Salome. 399-1732 for info.

**SUNDAY 4/4**

**10 AM - 12:30PM:** Children's Assembly.

**10 - 11AM:** Parents' Discussion Group.

**11AM:** Sunday Platform: *Easter and Pass-over Reflections* with Lisel Burns.

**12:15PM:** Lunch with the Bunch.

**TUESDAY 4/6**

**7:30 - 9PM:** *Brooklyn Women's Chorus* directed by Bev Grant. Call 768-2972 for more information.

**WEDNESDAY 4/7**

**6:30 - 10:30PM:** Folk Open Sing with potluck supper & snacks. Co-sponsored by the *Pinewoods Music Society*. Bring your voice, instruments, friends, neighbors, children, and/or a snack to share.

**THURSDAY 4/8**

**6 - 7PM:** *Meditations* with Remi Gay. Guided meditation based on Native American practices to create peaceful mind. Newcomers and drop-ins welcome. Suggested donation \$2-10.

**7 - 9PM:** *T'ai Chi Chuan*.

**7PM:** Journaling Support Session.

**FRIDAY 4/9**

**6:30 - 9PM:** YES Youth Group Meeting.

**8PM:** The Good Coffeehouse series presents singer-songwriter-pianist *Caroline Horn* and contemporary folk music trio *Indian Summer*. Admission \$8 at the door.

**SATURDAY 4/10**

**10 - 11AM:** *The Art of Belly Dancing*.

**6 - 9PM:** Newcomer and member Potluck Dinner. Call Lisel Burns at 783-2298 for details.

The deepest words  
of the wise man teach us  
the same as the whistle of the wind  
when it blows  
or the sound of the water  
when it is flowing.

*Antonio Machado*

**4/11 - 4/17**

**SUNDAY 4/11**

**10AM - 12:30PM:**

Children's Sunday Assembly.

**10 - 11AM:** Parents' Discussion Group.

**11AM:** Sunday Platform: *Peace, Racism, and Justice* with Philip Metling, winner of this year's *Peace Site Award*.

**12:15PM:** Lunch with the Bunch.

**MONDAY 4/12**

**7 - 8:30PM:** Newcomers' workshop, including open questions and *The Eight Commitments of Ethical Culture*.

**TUESDAY 4/13**

**7:30 - 9PM:** *Brooklyn Women's Chorus*.

**THURSDAY 4/15**

**7PM:** BSEC Board of Trustees Meeting.

**7 - 9PM:** *T'ai Chi Chuan*.

**FRIDAY 4/16**

**8PM:** The Good Coffeehouse concert series together with the Park Slope Food Coop presents *Zen Music Zen Words IV* with John Schaefer and James Nyoraku Schlefer. Music and words from the tradition of Zen practice.

**SATURDAY 4/17**

**10 - 11AM:** *The Art of Belly Dancing*.

**6 - 9PM:** *Sheila's Boogie-by-the-Park*.

Dancing, food and fun for all ages.



**4/18 - 4/24**

**SUNDAY 4/18**

**10 AM - 12:30PM:** Children's Assembly.

**10 - 11AM:** Parents' Discussion Group.

**11AM:** Sunday Platform: *What Women Can Learn From Men* with Lois Kellerman.

**12:15PM:** Lunch with the Bunch.

**TUESDAY 4/20**

**7:30 - 9PM:** *Brooklyn Women's Chorus*.

**THURSDAY 4/22**

**6 - 7PM:** *Meditations* with Remi Gay.

**7 - 9PM:** *T'ai Chi Chuan*.

**FRIDAY 4/23**

**8PM:** The Good Coffeehouse presents *The Best of the Rising Cafe* with the *Acoustic Girl Circle* featuring Marilyn D'Amato, Trina Hamlin and Nini Camps in an evening of bluesie folk rock. Admission \$8 at the door

**SATURDAY 4/24**

**10 - 11AM:** *The Art of Belly Dancing*.

**4/25 - 4/31**

**SUNDAY 4/25**

**11 AM - 1 PM:** **Platform Service and Sunday School will be held at the NY Ethical Society for the 86th Assembly of the American Ethical Union.** Featuring the Certification Ceremony for New Ethical Leaders: Curt Collier, Susan Rose Teshu and Bart Worden. Call the office at 768-2972 to arrange transportation.

**TUESDAY 4/27**

**7:30 - 9PM:** *Brooklyn Women's Chorus*.

**WEDNESDAY 4/28**

**7:30 - 9PM:** *The Richard Price Book Discussion Group* will discuss *Unto the Sons* by Gay Talese. Call Constance Pigozzi at 331-1137 for more information.

**THURSDAY 4/29**

**7 - 9PM:** *T'ai Chi Chuan*.

**FRIDAY 4/30**

**8PM:** The Good Coffeehouse concert series presents an evening with Spoke the Hub's 6th season of *Local Produce '99*. Admission \$8.

## Adult Education News

This spring we hope to have several new adult education series running:

First, a Membership Orientation Dinner Series run by Lisel Burns and open to newer members and people planning to join or renew their membership by the end of this Season. We will be taking up the basic ideas and practices of the Ethical Culture movement, and orient people to current activities at BSEC. The first dinner is planned for April 10. Contact Lisel Burns at 783-2298 for more info.

A Philosophy Series will be led by new member Vanda Beric who is a philosophy professor from the former Yugoslavia, starting in mid-May. Vanda has agreed to help the emerging adult education group at BSEC start an Institute for Ethics and Ethical Living in the years ahead. If you have ideas in this direction, let Chris Jacques know.

Language instruction, travel and Second Language Conversation Dinners are also in the planning stages. Contact Lisel if you are interested in helping such events get started in a language of your choice. We have restaurants interested in cooperating, good causes to receive part of the proceeds, and we need only two volunteers to organize a "pilot" series for the spring!

## Ethical Action News

### Haiti Projects in Partnership/Fonkoze

The Haiti Solidarity Fonkoze trip will take place in Haiti from April 5-12, 1999. BSEC President Charlie Horwitz will host local community leaders in community banking and development as well as donors from around the country in the trip. Haiti Projects in Partnership is undergoing a process of self-evaluation pending planning for next Season and has closed down the pilot buffet evenings, while maintaining its monthly Second Friday meetings and committee activities. Thank you to Edith Calabro, the Coffeehouse Committee, other volunteers and staff who helped out with the buffet this winter. Volunteers for this summer's free day camp in Leogane include Riverdale Ethical Society's Leader Curt Collier who will conduct hearing tests for day camp children, market women and other self-help groups who can be accommodated.

### Protesting Police Brutality in New York City

Regarding the killing of Amadou Diallo by NYC police officers in the Bronx: The Board is in the process of adopting a strong statement registering our main concerns, copies of which are available from the office at this time. We encourage you to register your own concerns, in the most inviting language you can muster. The City government knows that the communities of color are enraged by this situation, but they seem unaware that communities of all races and backgrounds share in universal condemnation of police policies and practices that lead to tragic and avoidable events like the Diallo shooting. BSEC Leader Lisel Burns and Society President Charlie Horwitz, along with other members, have been taking part in the ongoing demonstrations at One Police Plaza.

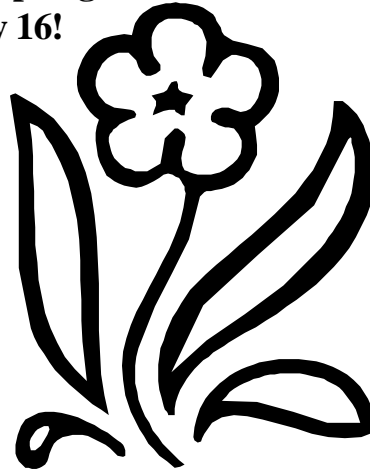
## Help Wanted: CSA

The Children's Sunday Assembly will be looking for a new Director and additional teaching staff for next Season, as the CSA team changes priorities and availability. Please think about the importance of this program and refer possible candidates to Remi Gay for more information on what we are seeking.

## Local Community Collaboration

As part of our emerging collaboration with the non-profit Fifth Avenue Committee, we are now referring unemployed or underemployed people we know to their brand new *First Source Staffing*, a temporary employment and office/computer training program. We can report several successes already. Let co-directors Kedon Kilgore or Bridget Chin know both your workplace staffing needs or personal referrals by calling 857-2990.

•••••  
• Don't forget  
• the Spring Fair  
• May 16!



## April Platforms

### April 4: *Nature's Ethics*

BSEC Leader Lisel Burns will lead April's First Sunday platform in a Quaker-style colloquy on the topic of spring and holiday meanings, natural and otherwise. Personal reflections of participants will alternate with taped selections chosen from the Jewish, Islamic, and Christian traditions.

### April 11: *Peace, Racism, and Justice*

With BSEC Peace Site award recipient Philip Metling. See article on page one.

### April 18: *What Women Can Learn From Men*

With Lois Kellerman. A womanist reflects on the gifts that the male voice brings to the human conversation.

### April 25: *AEU National Assembly, NYSEC*

All Ethical Societies in the New York Metropolitan Area will be meeting at the New York Society, joining other members of the Ethical Movement from across the country for a special Platform Service. 2 West 64th Street (at Central Park West) 11AM - 1PM.

### May 2: *Time, Death, and Core Questions*

Founders Month in Ethical Culture begins with a platform talk from Lisel Burns on Time, Death, and the relation of a historical perspective to meaning-making. We will also honor the life of BSEC's early and long-time Leader, Dr. Henry Newman. Let us know if you have quotations or stories about him to contribute.

Except for April 25, platforms are every Sunday morning from 11AM to 12:15PM in the main hall of the Meeting House.

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture  
53 Prospect Park West  
Brooklyn, New York 11215

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Brooklyn, NY  
Permit #6318