



ETHICALLY SPEAKING

Volume 100 Issue 1

SEPTEMBER 2005

Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture • 53 Prospect Park West
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PLATFORM THEME FOR 2005-2006

BSEC: BEGINNING OUR SECOND CENTURY PUTTING ETHICS FIRST

SEPTEMBER ELEVEN COLLOQUY - 2PM



Platforms begin at 11am on Sundays
September 18 and 25
Leader, Lisel Burns Presiding

Free & Open to the Public

his body has reached adult size, but because he is attaining a deeper and richer comprehension of his place in the scheme of things and a growing desire to put that place to the best among its many uses.

Such growth often requires, among other needs, courage to break with beliefs or customs accepted by those around us. "Who so would be a man," said Emerson, "must be a non-conformist." If his own life cannot find good and true the beliefs which suffice for other people, let him have the courage to walk by the light which he does find good. Our Ethical Societies are here because whatever the traditional beliefs may mean to those who accept them, they do not answer our needs. To break new paths is harder than to walk those already trodden by the centuries. But we accept the responsibility because we feel the need. Nor must the independent mind part company with only the older beliefs. Dozens of new beliefs clamor for our support today. Their newness does not make them necessarily better. There are radical spirits who ridicule the older views, but are quite ready to swallow new absurdities in their place. The latest proposal put forward in the interest of progress may not mean advance at all, but on the contrary, a relapse to the cave-life from which the race has scarcely emerged. It is by no means so important to be a radical or a conservative as it is to be intelligently radical or intelligently conservative, and to have the courage to reject either the new or the old when your own best thinking so decides.

The Courage of Ethical Faith

by Henry Neumann, Ethical Culture Leader, 1925

Our Ethical Societies have a faith, in some respects a faith more fundamental than that of many who speak of us as infidels. It is a faith that there is a supreme task which we are expected to promote, and in the furthering of which our lives find their leading justification. We are not here only to multiply acts of kindness or truthfulness. These are undoubtedly necessary. We take them for granted as the mere ABC's of right living. Nor are we here merely to work at this or that piece of social reform or reconstruction. Profound changes are necessary, but in the interests of a still more profound inner transformation. Acts of integrity and kindness, civic and social remaking, a radically better schooling, are all vitally requisite; but we need to see them all of a piece in the light of the chief demand made upon thinking men and women - the demand to be clear in their own minds about what gives the whole business of living its final importance.

First among the obstacles which an ethical faith encounters is the fact that the ethical interest is far from being popular. This does not refer to the downright badness there is in the world. There is more than enough of positive cruelty and greed. But all in all, there is relatively much less sheer malevolence than we are apt to suppose. Most people would rather not do wrong if they think they can avoid it. So far as they reflect on the matter at all, they would rather be neighborly than quarrelsome, kindly than cruel, upright than dishonest. But what a tiny thing it is, after all, that one is not a scoundrel, in jail or out of it. The threshold virtues of truth telling, kindness, and the like, no more comprise the whole of an excellent life than a good day is one in which a person has washed himself or staved off an illness. The real man or woman grows with the years - grows in the taking on of heavier responsibilities, grows in understanding, grows in the broadening and elevation of his mind, grows in earnestness and in fineness. Such a person is different from a child, not merely because

This excerpt is from an article by BSEC Leader Henry Neumann published in The Standard Vol XII., No. 4 Section 1 December 1925. The original article, titled The Heroic Appeal of the Ethical Faith, was based on an address given before the Ethical Societies of Brooklyn and St. Louis. The article in our copy of The Standard, however, is unique, for it is full of Dr. Neumann's own handwritten corrections. The changes begin with the title itself.

OPENING PLATFORM - SEPTEMBER 18 - 11 AM

Lisel Burns speaks briefly on the theme: "Beginning Our Second Century Putting Ethics First" and then we invite members and friends, young and old, to share your own understanding of what "Putting Ethics First" means to you today. We particularly welcome our wonderful children and their families to share with us this first opening Sunday Program, for as long as they like!

**The Brooklyn Women's Chorus will perform,
led by Bev Grant!**

**THE BROOKLYN SOCIETY
FOR ETHICAL CULTURE**

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Ethically Speaking is published 10 times a year by BSEC. This month's issue includes contributions by Lisel Burns, Constance Pigozzi, Tina Aridas, Maureen Egginton, Audrey Kindred, Nettie Paisley, Tony Severo. Please send contributions to Maureen Egginton at brooklynethicalsociety@yahoo.com

**September 16 deadline for
October Issue**

Unfortunately, space constraints sometimes dictate whether a contribution can be included.

LETTER FROM THE LEADER

Dear BSEC Members and Friends,

"The power went out. We saw the water rising. We saw helicopters flying over, but nobody coming to get us. We took an air mattress, put four babies and their mothers on it and started ferrying people to safety." - Brian Anthony Kafman, Corey Williams, African American young men who later used a boat they found abandoned to ferry many people to safety as waters flooded New Orleans.

"The good parts - the people I was able to save; the bad parts- the people I wasn't able to save." Gregory Scott, who is still piloting a small boat to ferry people to safety.

What a week. In the aftermath of the Hurricane Katrina and its devastation of Gulf Coast areas across Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, a terrifying natural disaster was compounded by an extreme delay regarding the disaster relief response to thousands of people who couldn't or wouldn't leave New Orleans as the waters from the breached levee surged in. The ethical issue to me starts with a grotesque double standard in the United States, giving us a virtual Apartheid system of separate and unequal services, wages standards, education and shelter. A system of injustice unthinkable to other industrialized nations but still romanticized by the right wing as "market-based freedom." Why else would it take so many days for federally mandated help to show up to rescue thousands and thousands of people too poor or stubborn to leave New Orleans earlier? This is a question that will haunt this nation down through future history, and is already bringing our Homeland Security agency and it's FEMA agency to a sobering accout- in red states as well as blue. As for our regressive tax cuts for the rich, denying states moneys desperately needed for infrastructure and preventative work, the knowledge of steep federal cuts to grants for levee repair and improvement must also be explored in depth long-term.

Today as the evacuation seems "almost" completed, though many neighborhood home dwellers are still reported trapped and un-rescued, we view a complex assortment of volunteer and paid help more thoroughly available. These rescuers predict a death toll of not hundreds but thousands, with perhaps one million people now displaced from their homes and everything they considered normal in their lives for the foreseeable future.

Closer to home we are happy to report that Greta Gladney, formerly a member of BSEC, CSA parent and Treasurer of the AEU Board, has been heard from, thanks to Ethical Culture Leader David Reis, who heard from her. Greta is safe for now in Dallas, having evacuated her father (who is blind), her children and grandchildren, and her mother is also safe. We have sent them indirectly our love and promises of support for her non profit Renaissance Project's relief efforts and will let you know when we have more details or where support should go.

What are the ethical and other issues to which we will apply our resources in this next period? What is to be done, from where we sit, when a whole city lies almost empty and its inhabitants are either in flight or lie dead beneath its murky floodwaters? I know that Brooklyn's enormous and historic African American population will provide me leadership as they organize support efforts based upon reliable news from relatives on the ground in disaster areas or their sites of evacuation. With untold numbers of Brooklyn families are linked personally and historically to southern states east of the Mississippi, including Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. We as Brooklyn neighbors black and white have a historic opportunity to help mount both national systematic reparations and a substantial family by family response to this almost incomprehensible devastation of so many people's lives in the months and years to come.

Nettie Paisley, BSEC member and community educator and leader, has proposed a project we will call NOMA - for New Orleans, Mississippi and Alabama which can help us focus our caring and commitments in the coming period into helping Brooklyn neighbors and organizations. The first program for NOMA was held at the Society on September 6. (See enclosed flyer and October Newsletter for more information.) "...It's too doggone late! Now get off your asses and do something!" - Mayor of New Orleans -
Lisel Burns, Leader

ETHICS FOR CHILDREN

Sunday, September 18, 2005

CSA Opening and Welcome Day! 10am-12:30

Newcomers and Curious Friends Are Welcome.

- 10:00 -- Arrive for juice, coffee, crumb cake, play, information, registration
- 10:45 -- Families gather for a Welcome Circle
- 11:00 -- Arts-n-ethics project downstairs for children; Adults may choose to join "Platform" upstairs
- 11:30 -- Children join whole community for sharing of thoughts about "Putting Ethics First" and group drrrrrrrum-rrrrrrrrolllllll.....to open the Season at BSEC
- 12:15 -- Newcomers' Q & A

CSA OVER THE SUMMER

Once upon a time, two wonderful women Pam and Eda Mills-Kapsis, and their dear child, Owen, found CSA.....within it, they made friends and started dreaming of things to do with them.

In the hot, hot summer month of August they invited their CSA friends to gather for a unique experience at BSEC's mansion: kiddie-pooling with watermelon and bubbles, roasting marshmallows in a night fire, and for the most adventurous of all, including the very wonderful Janice Novet, and Kevin and James Brennen, and leader Lisel Burns... sleeping in tents outside in BSEC's very own backyard/wilderness. Young Lochy and dad Daniel Brooks came and told all about the new baby in their home --- wondrous welcome to dear Prajna, and hip-hip-hoo-rah's to mom Fiona Boneham.

CSA teachers, Simba Yangala and Audrey Kindred and friend Annie Lanzillotto visited for fireside songs, as did new friends of CSA Henry and Malcolm, and their mom Barbara. For this fantastic CSA fantasy, thanks to Owen Mills-Kapsis' family, for the dream and the follow through.. Audrey Kindred, Director

MEMBER COMPETITION - - NAME THAT BASEMENT!!!



If you have not stopped down in the basement recently, take a look. Built in closet and shelves, sparkling tiles – Thanks Jim! Now all we need is a naming ceremony. There's the rub. We need a great name to advertise the space for rentals to bring income for programs and building repair. So, put your Ethical Thinking Caps on and send in your best ideas. **THE WINNER TAKES THE CAKE!** The person who comes up with the winning name gets a scrumptious cake donated by our gourmand member of the Building & Grounds Committee, Rozanne Gold, from the famous Greyston Bakery. Many thanks to Rozanne! Send your suggestions to Constance: constancefp@hotmail.com.

8TH ANNUAL PARK SLOPE BLUEGRASS & OLD TIME JAMBOREE —
FRIDAY 9/16 8:00PM: – SAT – 9/17 12:30AM-10PM: \$4 ALL DAY
info@jamesreams.com

9/16: Concert by James Reams & The Barnstormers \$10, kids \$6. **9/17:** The only event of its kind in the Northeast, this is the place to play and hear the best in old-time and bluegrass music. A day and a half of workshops (harmony singing, mandolin, fiddle, guitar, banjo and more) start at **12:30**, jamming goes on all day, evening showcase concerts start at **6pm – ALL FOR \$4**, jamming and concerts of traditional American music. **GOOD COFFEE HOUSE CONCERTS: 9/23 – 8pm – \$15 adults, \$6 kids** African folk-rocker Tony Bird Malawi-born song man (www.mangotime.net) **9/30 — 8pm** Andy Cohen/Ragtime Jack Radcliffe with special guest Ragtime Jack Radcliffe (Traveling Troubadours show) - call 718-768-2972

HAPPY SUMMER BIRTHDAYS

August

- Cynthia Stallard--2
- Dorothy Wood--2
- Lois Kellerman---3
- Laura Duffy-12
- Rita Wilson---18
- Edith Calabro---21
- Gary Schechter--23
- Constance Pigozzi--26
- Jason Leibowitz-29
- Valerie Francis-30



July

- Christiane Siebert--18
- Kurt Johnson--21
- Oufa Jindyeh--23
- Robin Feld---24

September

- Annette Berntein--8
- Fiona Bonham--9
- Justin Stallard--17
- Annemarie Mogil--18
- Abraham Lieberman--18
- Maureen Egginton--19

PLATFORM : 9/25 – 11am A "Singing Platform " hosted by Lisel Burns and Tasha Paley, facilitated by Marcia Bernstein - singer, harmonizer, song-leader and student of African drumming. This program is designed to recognize the efforts of the Sept 24 Peace March on Washington. The format is inspired by "Singing in the African American Tradition" workshops led by Ysaye Barnwell of the acclaimed women's a cappella singing group, Sweet Honey in the Rock. Refreshments to be supplied by the Ethical Action Committee and the local community group, Imani House.

PLATFORM –10/2 11AM: PUTTING ETHICS FIRST IN THE LARGER COMMUNITY – PANEL DISCUSSION. AN ETHICAL ACTION MINI FAIR WILL FOLLOW – We hope that CSA Families and Friends will participate with other BSEC members and community partner groups in the panel discussion, "Putting Ethics First in the Larger Community," followed by an EAC **MINI FAIR**. Tables will be made available for displays by members and friends who have information on particular social projects or organizations which they are willing to share. To participate in the fair, contact liselburns@earthlink.net or Nancy at nancyrye@earthlink.net.

MONDAY, 9/12 – 7PM : A PANTHER IN AFRICA - F R E E

THE INDIGOCAFE.COM 2005 LIFE & ETHICS FILM SERIES
PETE O'NEAL FOUNDED THE KANSAS CITY CHAPTER OF THE BLACK PANTHERS IN THE 1960s. ON OCTOBER 30, 1969 HE FLED CHARGES OF TRANSPORTING A GUN ACROSS STATE LINES AND FOR OVER 30 YEARS, HE HAS LIVED IN TANZANIA.

This event is a collaboration with Indigocafe.com, P.O.V., the acclaimed PBS (POV) independent nonfiction film series and is co-sponsored by the Ethical Action Committee. This event will be followed by a discussion, refreshments, and a book sale at BSEC 53 PPW & 2nd Street.

- **SATURDAY 9/ 24- MARCH ON WASHINGTON TO END THE WAR -** Contact Brooklyn Parents for Peace for information about bus tickets; mention BSEC so we can go together as a delegation from BSEC. Go to www.brooklynpeace.org or call 718-624-5921. If you are interested email Nancy Richardson at nancyrye@earthlink.net to help organize us.
- **Contact Nettie Paisley** to donate items to help displaced families of Hurricane Katrina through a division of SCO Family of Services, Family Dynamics. The Kinship Network, is based in Brooklyn and is dedicated to helping up to 50 families who have been re-located here in Brooklyn. See enclosed flyer. Email Nettie, SouthComforts@aol.com.



THE KINSHIP NETWORK

(Helping Displaced Families of Hurricane Katrina, One Family at a Time)

Family Dynamics, a division of SCO Family of Services, has launched **THE KINSHIP NETWORK** as its relief efforts for the displaced families of Hurricane Katrina. Through **THE KINSHIP NETWORK, donations of goods, cash contributions, and services will be sent directly to individual families who are housing family members displaced by the effects of Hurricane Katrina.** Many family members from Dallas, Houston, and even, Brooklyn, have opened their homes to more than 10 – 20 displaced relatives and friends who have lost everything and must rebuild their lives from the beginning. For the host family, they are desperate for resources that will help their loved ones while incurring tremendous hardship as they become the sole providers for their family until additional resources can be obtained.

This network of individuals and/or groups will have an opportunity to make donations that will specifically go to designated families in the Dallas and Houston area. Profiles of the families will be provided with a comprehensive list of their needs, information and services. Donors can opt to receive updates on the families who received their donation throughout the year.

As families move to the Central Brooklyn area, Family Dynamics will expand our kinship network by providing care packages to these families and assisting individuals in accessing services to help them rebuild their lives and gain self-sufficiency. In addition to the donated goods for families, Family Dynamics will offer our support services of counseling, navigating public education and entitlement services, legal and financial assistance, home based visiting services, and after school and weekend activities for all ages, among other services.

THE KINSHIP NETWORK allows us to return to the tradition of taking care of each other during hard times, and eventually, triumph; ONE FAMILY AT A TIME. The rebuilding process will take time and we need to commit to these families to insure that they are not forgotten throughout the year.

For more information regarding making a donation (goods and/or monetary) OR to volunteer, please contact:

Family Dynamics
613-619 Throop Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11216
(718) 919-1226
oholloway@sco.org

Family Dynamics Beacon Center @ MS 35
272 MacDonough Street, Room 101
Brooklyn, NY 11233
(718) 453-7004
jharris@sco.org

Preferable Donation of Non-Perishable Goods: School Supplies (notebooks, paper, pens, pencils, bookbags, folders); Toiletries (soap, deodorant, wipes, sanitary napkin, razors, shaving cream, diapers, formula etc); Household/Cleaning Goods; Medical Goods; Canned Food Items/Bottled goods, clothing items and accessories.

Monetary contributions: Checks can be made out to Family Dynamics or SCO Family of Services or directly to identified family (must request this option); Cash donations accepted, receipts will be given upon request; Coins for “Penny Harvest” drive at Family Dynamics locations; Gift Cards from major stores (Target, Wal mart, Kmart, etc.).

Names of families in need will be accepted until we reach 50 families. Please send their names, contact information to oholloway@sco.org . Verification will be made before being placed on THE KINSHIP NETWORK list. Referrals to other resources nationally and/or locally will be offered where possible. SCO Family of Services is a not for profit organization; donations are tax deductible.

HE'S NOT HEAVY, HE'S MY BROTHER.....

Katrina has exposed America as a rich and powerful nation full of third world communities.

The water and wind have swept away the covers and revealed the reality of race and class in America.

Poor people have always been abandoned and neglected in America. Their world is full of third world conditions within our "inner cities" and "rural areas" with no running or hot water, electricity or heat. Rat/roach infestation, red lining, corruption, price gouging, inadequate schools, health care and city services, second class citizenship, racial profiling, police brutality, high unemployment, low wages and long hours are a way of life. And.....now the ultimate in abandonment and neglect during a natural disaster.

What is that song...."What the World Needs Now is Love Sweet Love!"

Let' s see if we can finally establish and maintain that love in the world' s richest and most powerful country.

*Nettie Paisley
BSEC Member, & Ethical Action Committee Member*

**WE'RE ON THE WEB
WWW.BSEC.ORG**

Ethical Culture members join together in Ethical Societies to assist each other in developing ethical ideas and ideals and to work together to improve our world and the world of our children.



"Always act to elicit the best in others and thereby in oneself."

Felix Adler, Founder



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REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

"Wars are poor chisels for carving out peaceful tomorrows"

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.