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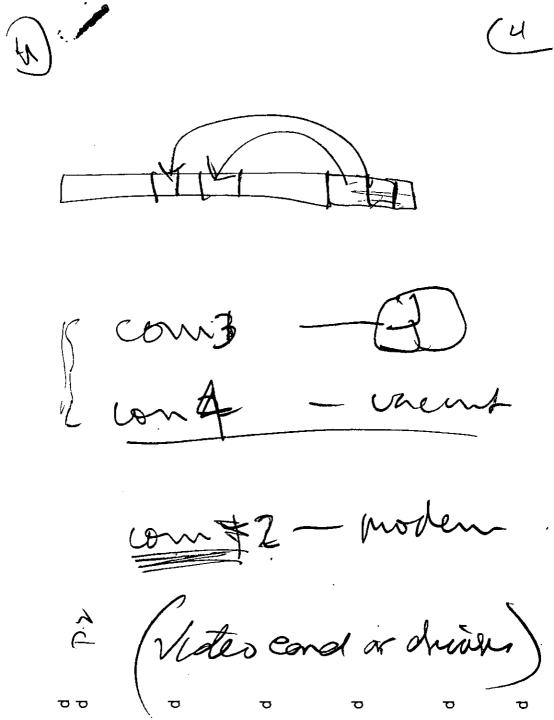
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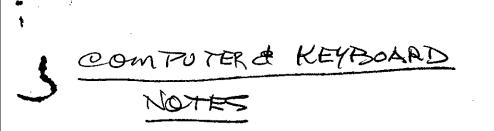
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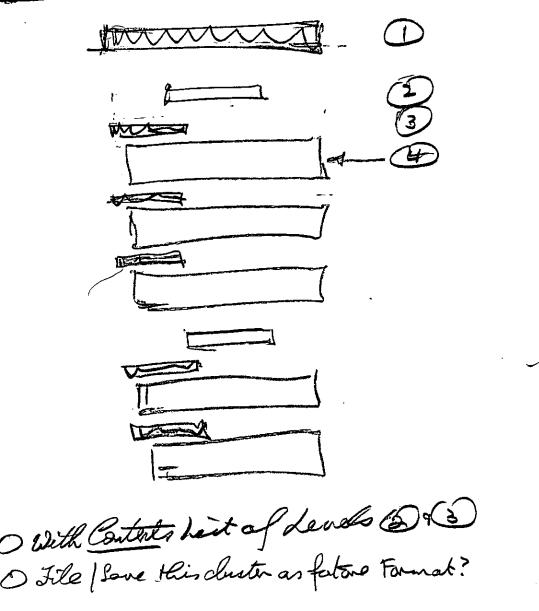
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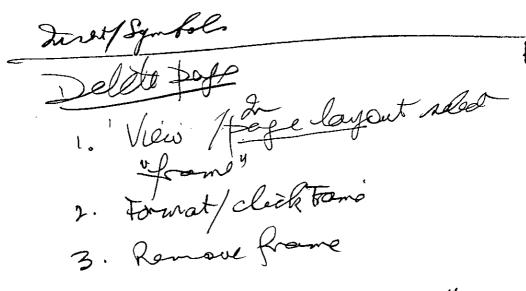
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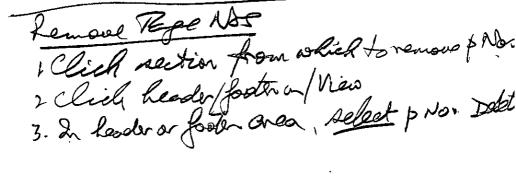
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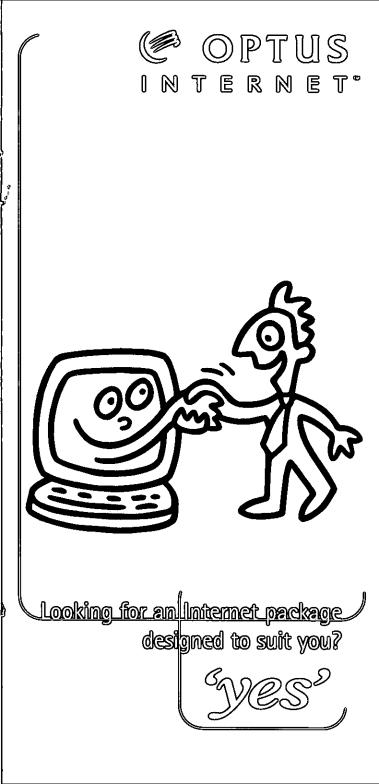
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Can Optus help you get what you want from the Internet?

At Optus, we understand different people want different things from the Internet. That's



why we've designed a range of CDs and pricing plans for you to choose from. Each one comes with some very special features designed exclusively to suit your individual requirements.

Depending on your needs, you can choose from:

Optus Internet Family CD

Packed with great features so the whole family can get the most out of the Internet. See page 3

Optus Internet Business CD

Designed to give your business a competitive edge. See page 5

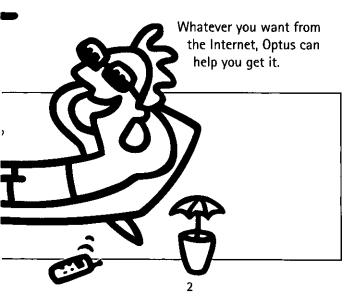


Optus Internet Express

Everything you need to get up and running with no registration fees or monthly bills. You simply purchase a pre-paid pack before you use the Net. See page 7

Choice of pricing plans

You choose the payment plan that suits your needs. See page 9



Optus Internet Family CD

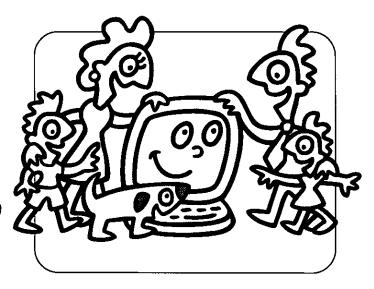
The Optus Internet Family CD will get everyone in your family on the Internet in no time. The kids can experience a new world which is both educational and fun. Our interactive tutorial will teach everyone how to get the best out of the Internet and how to use e-mail – so you can all stay in touch with friends and loved ones – worldwide. You can even customise your home page to meet everyone's needs – such as direct links to banking, travel and children's sites.

Get the most out of the Internet with these great features:

- Up to 5 e-mail addresses so everyone in the family can stay in touch with friends and loved ones
- 5Mb of space to help you create your own family Web page
- Free usage of Net Nanny[™] Restricts the access your kids have to adult only sites (valued at \$50)*
- Free unlimited access to Britannica Online[™] for 12 months. A worldwide library for your kids. (valued at \$80) **
- Free Travel BookM@rker software. Visit the world's best holiday destinations from your home
- An interactive tutorial with everything you need to know on how to surf the Net and use e-mail

- Optus Internet Update gives you exclusive news, sports, weather and financial information resource delivered directly to your desk top
- Trial Microsoft games and anti-virus software
- Free 24 hour customer service 7 days a week
- Registration is simple, all you need is a valid credit card

Pricing plans to suit your needs. Depending on your Internet requirements you can choose from a range of pricing plans. To find out more about our Pricing Plans, just take a look at page 10.



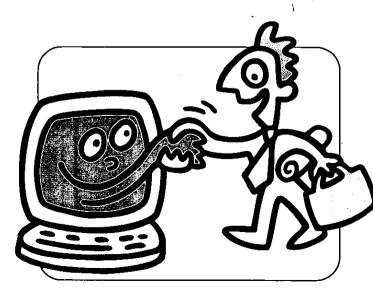
* Net Nanny not available on Macintosh. **Receive 12 months access to Britannica Online when you connect to Optus Internet by 30 June 1999 and stay connected for 12 months.

Optus Internet Business CD

Give your business a boost with Optus Internet. Not only will e-mail save you valuable time and money, you can also create your own web page and advertise your company to millions of potential customers – worldwide. You can even customise your home page with all your banking, trading and travel needs.

Help your business stay ahead with these great features:

- 5 e-mail addresses for your staff to communicate faster with customers and suppliers
- Optus Em@il UpDate will notify you via your
 Optus Digital Mobile phone when you've received an e-mail for just 20 cents per e-mail message⁺



- 5 Mb of space to create your own web page and put your business on the World Wide Web
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 MYOB can help you manage your own accounts in half the time
- Optus Internet UpDate exclusive news, sports, weather and financial information resource delivered directly to your desk top
- Free Travel BookM@rker software. Visit the world's best holiday destinations, and book your flights without leaving your desk
- An interactive tutorial with everything you need to know on how to surf the Net and e-mail
- Trial anti-virus software
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- Registration is simple all you need is a valid credit card

Pricing plans to suit your needs. Depending on your Internet requirements you can choose from a range of pricing plans. To find out more about our Pricing Plans, just take a look at page 10.

⁺ Service not available to Optus Express Pre-paid Mobiles. Handsets must support SMS-MO please refer to handset manual for details. 20¢ charged to your mobile account.

Optus Internet Express

Looking for an Internet package that lets you stay in control of your costs? Then Optus Internet Express* is right for you. There's no registration fees, no monthly bills, and no nasty surprises. This complete package comes with everything you need to get the most out of the Internet without signing up for a monthly plan. Instead you simply purchase a card with a set number of hours, over a set period of time. Once that's finished, you just buy another one.

Get the most out of the Internet with these great features:

- Up to 5 e-mail addresses so you can stay in touch with loved ones, friends and business associates
- 5Mb of space to help you create your own Web page
- Optus Internet Update gives you exclusive news, sports, weather and financial information resource delivered directly to your desk top
- Trial Microsoft games and anti-virus software
- Free usage of Net Nanny. Restricts access to adult only sites (valued at \$50)**
- Free unlimited access to Britannica Online for 12 months. A worldwide library in your home. (valued at \$80)[†]

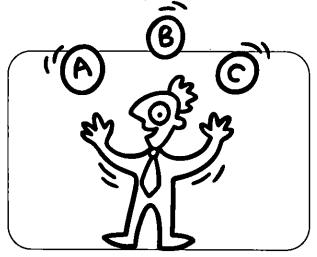
- Free Travel BookM@rker software. Visit the world's best holiday destinations from your home or office
- An interactive tutorial with everything you need to know on how to surf the Net and e-mail
- Free 24 hour customer service 7 days a week

Enjoy all this and stay in control of the costs too.

Optus Internet Express Pre-paid cards

Name	රියෝ ග් හැසෙන	Nours
Browser	\$20	10
Surfer	\$35	20
NetMaster	\$50	35

All Express cards good for 31 days.



* Optus Internet Express not available for Macintosh. Call connection costs are extra. ** Net Nanny not available on Macintosh. † Receive 12 months access to Britannica Online when you connect to Optus Internet by 30 June 1999 and stay connected for 12 months by purchasing on-going Internet hours.

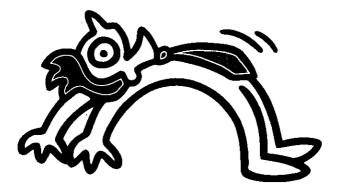
A choice of pricing plans to suit your usage

Optus Internet Family and Business CDs offer a choice of pricing options under our credit card payment plans. And to get you up and surfing the Net, we'll give you 50 bonus hours* when you register with Optus Internet.

Choose a monthly plan that suits your usage

If you know roughly how much time you'll spend on the Net each month then one of our 5 monthly payment options may suit your usage.

Plan Name	Monthly Charge	Included Hours	Cost per additional hour
Messenger	\$10	4	\$5.00
Browser	\$20	10	\$4.50
Surfer	\$35	20	\$4.00
NetMaster	\$45	200	\$0.50



NetSaver – the more you use, the more you save!

Alternatively, NetSaver is a unique new pricing plan that allows you to use the Net as much or as little as you like each month, at the best possible rate.

Plan Name	Monthly Charge	lineluded Hours	Cost per additional travs	
NetSaver	\$10	4	5th-24th hour	\$2.00
			25th-44th hour	\$1.00
			45th-200th hour	FREE
			200th+ hour	\$0.50

And you can use Optus Internet for up to 200 hours a month and you'll never pay more than \$70.

You can also opt for our Internet Express package which allows you to control your costs as you pre-pay for your usage (see page 7).

5 Free hours each & every month

If you are an exisiting Optus customer⁺ and you connect to Optus Internet, as a reward you will receive 5 free extra hours^{**} each and every month. When you consider that's up to 60 free hours a year – it soon adds up.

Isn't it about time you got what you wanted from the Internet? To get connected just visit your local Optus retail outlet or call our Hotline on:



^{*} Connect to Optus Internet by 30 June 1999. The 50 bonus hours expire at the end of the first month. **Except for NetMaster where you receive a \$5 discount off the monthly fee. Excludes Optus Internet Express. † This offer is only valid when Optus Internet is used in conjunction with Mobile, Optus Local (excl. resale), Switched Long Distance or Pay TV. (Cont. overleaf)











Direct Access Terms and Conditions

 Free hours only apply while you remain an Optus customer and must be used within the month.
 Offer not available for Optus Internet Express users.
 Optus reserves the right to vary or withdraw the free hours.
 In extreme cases of high network usage, time restrictions may apply.

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Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees. The Book of Revelation

Mrs Hona K Lind 2606 Lamper Ln Wilmington, DE 19808

1/20/28

Dear Friend of the Earth, My Friends and I are mainfesting a vision of a Vermont Farm on 40 acres +, becoming a place for a simple Earth Skills School and some what of a self sustainable nature in central Vt. We are groping with a way to have a partnership with the land in a "Non Ownership" context:

John Seed referred us to you regarding the Bodi Church in that you may have some ideas in this area. Would you be willing to share with us your By-Laws and statement of intention or conditions of partnership which you teel are working to, your Church? We appreciate any information for could chare with us. My internet address is (rainbowwn @ aol.com). Also my Sak# is 302-194-2503 Surerely P.O P

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A Journal of Positive Futures

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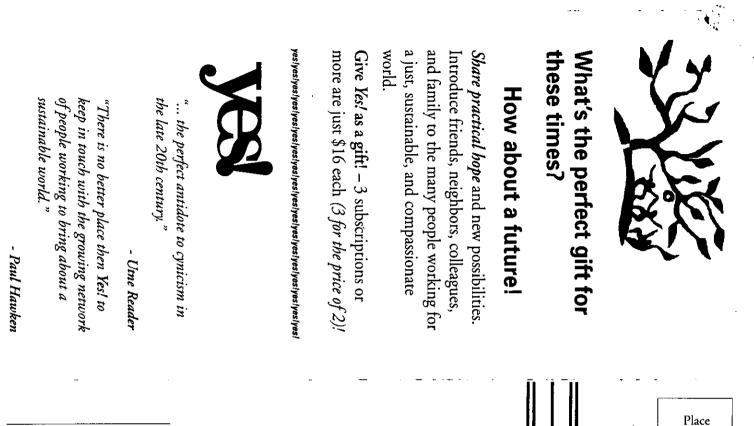
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Stamp Here

Contributors

Reverend Mariah Britton is a youth pastor at Riverside Church in New York. She is studying in the doctoral program on human sexuality at New York University.

Carolyn Heilbrun is the author of *The Education of a Woman: The Life of Gloria Steinem, Reinventing Womanhood,* and *Writing a Woman's Life.* Her most recent book, *The Last Gift of Time,* focuses on women over 60.

Alan Durning is the executive director of Northwest Environment Watch and formerly a senior researcher with the Worldwatch Institute. Alan's most recent books is *Misplaced Blame*, on the causes of population growth in the Northwest.

Sam Keen is a graduate of Harvard Divinity School and Princeton University. He was a consulting editor of *Psychology Today*, and is the author of *Faces of the Enemy*, *Hymns to an Unknown God*, and the bestseller, *Fire in the Belly*.

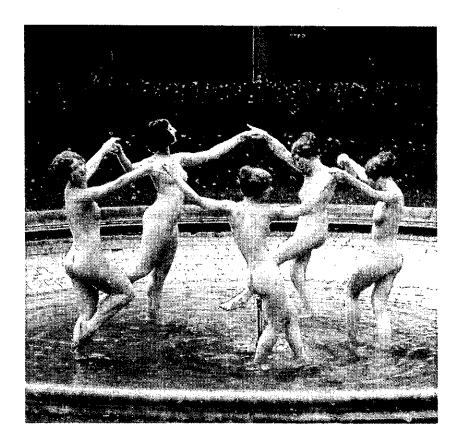
Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi is the co-author of *From Age-ing to Sage-ing*, and a professor emeritus at Temple University. He collaborated on this piece with his wife **Eve Ilsen**, a therapist, performance artist, and gatherer of stories and songs.

Daniel Taveras became a dad at age 15; he's now 17, and has acquired a new view of women, children, and self-respect.

At the time **Naomi Wolf** came of age, her parents were thought of as strict because they made her clean her room before her boyfriend could spend the night. Her book, *Promiscuities*, explores girls' passage into womanhood.

Photographer Linda Wolf is also co-creator of the Daughters/Sisters Project, which convened in-depth conversations among teenage girls and boys. The recently released book Daughters of the Moon, Sisters of the Sun, is based on these conversations.

Richard Stine, whose illustrations are on the cover and on pages 12 to 15, has written several illustrated books, including Off to Sea and The World of Richard Stine. He and his wife Margaret Stine create and publish greeting cards here on Bainbridge Island through their company, Pal Press.



"Obviously, we need

BETTER RITES OF PASSAGE

IN OUR CULTURE."

-NAOMI WOLF

Photo COURTESY OF LINDA WOLF



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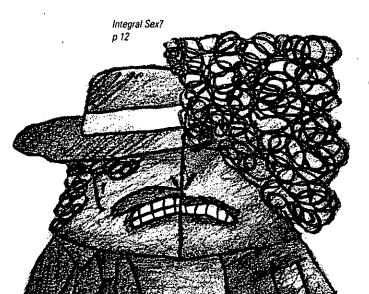
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READERS' FORUM

Readers' Forum is a place for your feedback and ideas. Although we can't print all the letters we receive, all letters are read and circulated. Please note that letters are edited for length and clarity.



Jazzed

1

I had to tell you how much YES! has inspired me. I co-hosted a retreat last May for community leaders to talk about improving community dialogue about environmental and economic issues.

There is now a group creating a community currency system, another looking at community health issues, and yet another trying to get funding for a community indicators process and a sustainability education center. Lots of great stuff! Sorry for rambling, but I am jazzed!!

Thank you for your inspiration, and I am really looking forward to your next issue.

J.MONJURE Whatcom County, Washington

Money talks

E-mail yes@futurenet.org

YES! A Journal of

Positive Futures

Bainbridge Island

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Write us!

Editors

When the subscription renewal reminder came a month ago, I neglected to renew. But last night I began reading the *fascinating* interview with Bernard Lietaer (*YES*! #2, Spring 1997). Wow! I understood more about money from his simple, clear examples than I'd managed to glean in all of my 47 years. I'm very impressed.

So...I'm renewing today! Thanks for a superb publication. JAN OLDS

Dublin, California

Underwriting or advertising? I'm very pleased with the Spring '97 issue and excited by how widespread the movement toward sustainability is getting! Of course, I noticed the lack of advertising in YES! which I hope allows you to say what must be said. But then I read about "underwriting?" Is it really a fact that subscribers cannot pay enough to fully support a periodical?

> DAN DEWEY Cambridge, Massachusetts

Editor's note: Most publications without advertising are funded either by foundations, larger organizations, or by underwriting. Our underwriters are like-minded groups with whom we've formed a symbiotic partnership. We feel that their presence strengthens our publication.

Cyberspace manipulation

In general, I love your journal. Your attention to sustainability issues and your analysis of the destructiveness of the global economy and of monoculture have been fantastic.

I was really taken aback by the article "Transformation in Cyberspace" (YES! #3, Fall 97). I don't perceive a society controlled by megatechnology as a positive future. While recognizing that some technologies have brought some benefits, overwhelmingly they have wrought environmental destruction, social anxiety, and centralized power.

Specifically, I find it hard to swallow that cyberspace is building community and interconnectedness. Ironically, co-workers in the same room frequently communicate through e-mail. Is this any way to build community? With increased dependence and addiction to computers, are we really strengthening our connection to the natural world?

In my life, I feel more and more controlled by corporations, particularly computer corporations. Computers are speeding up our pace of life, causing stress and health problems, and are a tool for expanding global economy and industrial monoculture.

I think you should reconsider whether a society modeled on 1984 is a positive future.

> MIYOKO SAKASHITA Foundation for Deep Ecology San Francisco, California

With appreciation

I am on the board of directors of the Northwest Earth Institute which organizes bioregionalism, voluntary simplicity, and deep ecology discussion groups. You should know that your work is very much appreciated and respected by all.

> JIM TRUMBULL Portland, Oregon

Synergy

I have recommended YES! to many folks who care about ecology, Earth as home for all peoples, a just economy, gender issues, etc. So ... thanks – it feels wonderful to connect the energies of all the folks who think creatively of positive futures for everyone, not just a few!

> A. P. RIECKELMAN Bethesda, Maryland

Greetings!

I just picked up your latest issue on the Pacific Northwest at the bookstore. My subscription will be in the mail today. The magazine is super, and I will surely lend my support to your efforts. My heart lives in your neck of the woods.

> DICK POHL E-mail

A critical view

We have read parts of the Fall 97 issue and found plenty of implied and explicit criticism of "environmentalists," but only once did mention of the role of Big Timber Corporations crop up. In "Applegate Partners," Boise Cascade, with a history of being one of the most rapacious timber companies, was painted as a good guy by bidding to log somewhat more "sustainably." (Helicopter logging is not necessarily sustainable.)

Nowhere, except in Gifford Pinchot III's commentary, where he mentioned obliquely the cynicism of calling "commodity production" "wise use," was mention made of the huge role the corporate timber company has in the destruction of community in forest country.

Lynn Jungwirth, in "Watershed Stewards," criticizes the Dwyer decision but never mentions the hostile takeover of Pacific Lumber (once a more reasonable extractive company) by Charles Hurwitz, now logging the irreplaceable Headwaters 60,000 acres of ancient redwoods. Never once did she mention corporate timbering and sawmill automation and exporting to Japan of unprocessed lumber as causes of job loss. Never once did she mention how much Big Timber has concentrated wealth upward and outward from her community.

Robert Leo Heilman criticized the bioregional political activists in the conference for "not ever mentioning compassion." Maybe they didn't, and for that I am greatly saddened. Mr. Heilman never once acknowledged the role of Big Readers' Forum continues on page 61



We just returned from Herrmannsdorf, about 20 miles outside of Munich, which is Karl Ludwig Schweisfurth's agricultural vision.

Karl Ludwig founded and was the CEO of Herte, the biggest, most industrialized meatpacking industry in Europe. Then he realized that the food he sold was raised, processed, frozen, and packaged in a way that kills the land, degrades the animals, and fails to nourish the customer. So he sold it all (or almost all) and put his money into the Schweisfurth Foundation, which supports sustainable agriculture, and into Herrmannsdorf.

Hermannsdorf consists of about 500 acres of fertile Bavarian plain, with fields growing wheat, corn, rye, and hay, and a little piggery, with animals in clean, spacious pens, able to sleep in the sun or tunnel in the shade, turning out 20 hogs a week for immaculate butchery.

There are small-scale processing and marketing facilities that turn produce from the farm (and many others in the area) into high-quality organic food.

There's a cheese factory, that turns out Parmesan, Camembert, Emmentaler, farmer's cheese, and a crème fraîche to die for – all from milk delivered daily by six nearby farmers

A beautiful bakery grinds

whole organic wheat and rye daily and bakes bread with carefully maintained sourdough cultures. A little brewery buys organic barley and hops from 30 local farmers and turns out the best beer I have ever tasted, bottled in returnable bottles. The cheerful restaurant in town serves this food, and eight shops in Munich sell it.

All the buildings are done in the Schweisfurth style – "green" architecture, natural materials,

A beautiful bakery grinds whole organic wheat and rye for bread

sculptures and paintings everywhere. Behind the buildings are a constructed wetland sewagetreatment plant and a biogas plant that turns organic waste into natural gas.

We spent all day there, asking questions as Karl Ludwig discoursed on his philosophy of keeping LIFE in soil and food so it transfers life to the eater. And the food from Herrmannsdorf is amazing. "Maybe it's the power of suggestion," said a friend, "but my body really feels different with this kind of food in it!"

DONELLA MEADOWS

INDICATORS

FAST TRACK TO MAI

oday, many issues – labor rights, environmental protection, food safety – are tied up in trade deals like the Multilateral Agreement on Investment. (See **YESI** #3) Opponents of these trade deals are worried that President Clinton will try to hammer the MAI through using Fast Track; Clinton has asked Congress for Fast Track authority for approving trade agreements.

Under Fast Track, Congress would have to agree (before seeing any text and before negotiations begin) to vote on a trade pact with a minimum of debate. Congress must also hold an up or down vote only, with no amendments. This limits its authority and ability to shape issues surrounding trade agreements. Fast Track procedures result in Congress delegating much of its authority to thoroughly review or amend trade deals to the Executive Branch.

Greenpeace activists dangled from Seattle's Aurora Bridge for two days to protest factory trawler fishing in Puget Sound

Says Chantell Taylor of Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch, "The MAI would give corporations the legal power to sue governments directly for monetary compensation. It limits what governments can do to regulate corporate behavior and accountability. And it binds all member countries for 20 years. This is not an issue to be forced through Congress using Fast Track."

Anti-MAI coalitions did celebrate an unexpected victory in the House on October 8th. By a vote of 356 to 64, the House passed an amendment to force the US Trade Representative's office to notify Congress and local and state governments whenever national, state, and local laws are challenged by foreign countries before the World Trade Organization, or "when new trade negotiations are entered into that could result in the repeals or modification of



pertinent existing laws." Rep. Robert Ney (R-OH) called the amendment "the people's right to know."

-Public Citizen To let your member of Congress know how you feel, call toll free: 888/723-5246. For further information, check out the Public Citizen web site at http:// www.citizen.org/gtw, or call Chantell Taylor at 202/546-4996



Greenpeace Cutbacks

Plagued by financial problems and declining membership, the environmental group Greenpeace has made massive cutbacks in its US offices.

The organization is best known for its gutsy, no-holdsbarred tactics that included highprofile protests against nuclear weapons and whaling from behind the banner of the Greenpeace flagship, *Rainbow Warrior*.

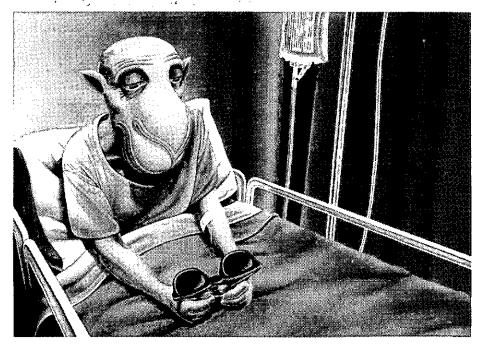
Greenpeace plans to adopt a more grassroots approach, lobbying for change instead of launching ships. The US division will reduce its staff from 400 to 65 employees, cut its budget from \$29 million to \$21 million, and end its door-to-door canvassing program. The group, which once embraced many diverse environmental causes - from endangered dolphins and oldgrowth forests to genetically altered food and toxic waste will narrow its focus to just a handful of issues, primarily global climate change and logging.

– Tracy Rysavy

Tobacco Wars

The wake of lawsuits and debates over smoking's ill effects, several health organizations have banded together to coordinate an anti-tobacco ad campaign that uses humorous satire to unmask the harsh realities of smoking. In New York, the Coalition for a Smoke-Free City posted advertisements for "Virginia Slimes" on the rooftops of the city's yellow cabs. Another taxicab sign for "Cancer Country" depicts a ghastly gray skull smoking a cigarette in the Marlboro Man's trademark cowboy hat.

In a Taco Bell in Grand Junction, Colorado, an ailing Joe



Chemo (replacing the ubiquitous "Joe Camel" mascot for Camel cigarettes) greeted customers from the drive-thru windows for two weeks last April. Joe Chemo has been spotted on posters and t-shirts, and will soon appear on billboards across the US and Canada.

Said a teacher in Vancouver who put a Joe Chemo poster on the walls of his classroom, "This is the first anti-smoking ad that my students have described as 'cool.'" –Adbusters

To include Joe Chemo in your public health campaign, call campaign manager Allan MacDonald at 604/736-9401

Going Hog Wild

Using new confinement techniques, corporate hog operations now have up to 20,000 animals on one farm – causing serious pollution and health problems as well as running traditional hog farmers out of business. One operation outside Unionville, Missouri, has 80,000 hogs. The odor from the farm can be smelled two to five miles away.

These Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) dwarf the typical hog farm of 500 animals. To get rid of the waste, some of the CAFOs have built lagoons, one of which holds more than 30 million gallons of effluent. There have been reports that some lagoons are leaking into local groundwater and rivers.

– The Progressive Review

Joe Chemo is showing up on posters, t-shirts, and billboards across North America

Grassroots Indicators

Tn Bhutan, herders know they I must alternate the grazing of their yak and cattle between northern and southern pastures when a special local shrub flowers. All over the world, people use locally developed "grassroots indicators" to glean better insights into their environments. Long dismissed as the unscientific stuff of folk tales, such ancient indicators are gaining recognition because of the special validity of measures derived and field-tested over generations.

In the Dutch town of Rijnmond, environmental monitoring specialists are experimenting with a more modern form of grassroots indicator. Citizens are asked to call central hotline number if they see, hear, or smell any evidence of air pollution. The results are being compared with more conventional data and could provide the basis for a more public approach to monitoring the environment.

- Developing Ideas

Smog & Violence

Pollution causes people to commit violent crimes – homicide, aggravated assault, sexual assault, and robbery – according to new research by Roger D. Masters and co-workers at Dartmouth College.

Areas with high levels of toxic pollutants have violent crime rates three times above the US average Some US counties only have 100 violent crimes per 100,000 people per year, while in other counties, violent crime rates are 30 times as high. Masters says that this discrepancy is caused in part by pollution levels.

Masters has developed what he calls "the neurotoxicity



hypothesis of violent crime," which states that toxic pollutants – specifically lead and manganese – cause learning disabilities, an increase in aggressive behavior, and, most importantly, loss of control over impulsive behavior. These traits combine with poverty, social stress, alcohol and drug abuse, and other social factors to exacerbate an individual's tendency to commit violent crimes.

After controlling for all the conventional measures of social deterioration (poverty, school dropouts, alcohol, etc.), Masters found that counties having high measures of lead and maganese, have rates of violent crime three times the national average.

In other words, environmental pollution has a strong effect on violent crimes, completely independent of any of the standard predictors of such crimes.

Neurotoxicity is only one of many factors contributing to violence, but Masters believes it may be especially important in explaining why violent crime rates differ so widely between geographic areas and by ethnic group. "The presence of pollution is as big a factor as poverty," he says. When our brain chemistry is altered by exposure to toxins, Masters believes we lose the natural restraint that holds our violent urges in check.

– Rachel's Environment & Health Weekly

Recycle-A-Bicycle

program which began in 1994 as part of the industrial arts curriculum at New York's Intermediate School 218 has now branched out into five different locations throughout New York City. Recycle-A-Bicycle (RAB) collects discarded bikes and teaches disadvantaged children how to refurbish and repair them. The bicycles are then sold or rented to customers in the RAB shops. Besides the obvious recycling benefits, the students learn valuable mechanical skills, self-discipline, and an awareness of the benefits of cvclina.

In 1996, RAB workshops educated 452 young people, collected and processed approximately 800 bicycles, and thereby prevented 14 tons of bicycle parts from entering the waste stream.

RAB also runs a Saturday Earn-A-Bike program, in which young people exchange 24 hours of work in the bike shop for the bike of their choice, which they select with great ceremony. And if the bicycles break down again, current RAB students and graduates are encouraged to return to the shop to fix them, again trading work hours for bike parts.

The bike project has formed a partnership with the Green Guerrillas, a group dedicated to urban gardening. The students construct wheelbarrows out of spare bicycle parts and frames while they learn the joys of gardening in New York City.

Says RAB co-founder Karen Overton, "These kids are our future, and we hope we're giving them the means to embrace and respect that future."

--Transportation Alternatives Tools for Life, a book on how to start your own Recycle-A-Bicycle program is now available, and the first 2,000 copies are free! Send \$3 for shipping to: Transportation Alternatives – Recycle-A-Bicycle, 115 W. 30th, Suite 1207, New York, NY 10001 Tel 212/260-7055

Ocean Warming

The normally innocuous conversation opener, "How's the weather?" has taken on a whole new twist thanks to the El Niño effect. Tropical marlin are being reeled in by Pacific Northwest fishermen and severe droughts are plaguing Australia, the Philippines, and Indonesia. Hundreds of seabirds are dying in Alaska, a phenomenon attributed in part to ocean temperatures averaging 10°F higher than normal.

Since the 1970s, El Niño

patterns have increased in frequency and severity, and the 1997-98 El Niño is predicted to be the most tempermental yet.

Although many scientists are balking at the idea, Dr. Kevin Trenberth of the National Center for Atmospheric Research feels that El Niño's heightened appearances, coupled with an abnormally prolonged event from the beginning of 1990 to mid-1995, are indicators of a larger shift in climate. In fact, Trenberth says that the chances of the severe 1990-95 El Niño being caused by "natural variablilty" alone are 1 in 2000.

Global warming could be the other part of the equation, exacerbating El Niño's already bad attitude. Trenberth and other scientists say that climate models show that changes in El Niño are associated with global warming.

- Tracy Rysavy

Green Freeze

T n the Spring of 1992, L Greenpeace International and German refrigerator manufacturer DKK Scharfenstein began researching the use of propane and butane natural gases as refrigerants. Their findings resulted in the birth of a new technology called Greenfreeze the world's first ozone- and climate-safe refrigerator technology. Greenfreeze uses the hydrocarbons propane, isobutane, and cyclopentane as replacements for ozone-depleting CFCs, HFCs, and HCFCs. According to Greenpeace spokesperson John Maté, these hydrocarbon gases are completely ozone-friendly and have minimal global warming impact.

Although the large manufacturers – Electrolux, Whirlpool, Bosch-Siemens, and Liebherr – now produce hydrocarbon refrigerators for the European market, this technology has not yet made it to America. Most refrigerators now being manufactured in the United States use HFCs and HCFCs which, while safer for the environment than CFCs, are still ozone-depleting gases. Global manufacturers question whether Greenfreeze is compatible with the large size and automatic defrost features of American refrigerators.

In the four years since its development, Greenfreeze has become the dominant refrigeration technology in northwestern Europe, comprising 100 percent of the German market, where it has been illegal to trade in refrigerators containing CFCs since 1995.

Greenfreeze has also spread to other continents. One of the largest refrigeration companies in China is set to convert its production lines to Greenfreeze, as are companies in Argentina, Turkey, and Russia. There are over 12 million hydrocarbon refrigerators in the world today, and Greenpeace estimates that by the year 2000, almost four times that many will be built in Europe alone.

-Greenpeace International

Sustainable San Francisco

The Health, Family, and Environment Center of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors has unanimously endorsed a Sustainability Plan to guide policy-making decisions of all city commissions and departments. Mayor Willie Brown supports the proposal and the board is likely to pass the package.

Air quality, solid waste, biodiversity, food, and agriculture are among the plan's major topics. The transportation section proposes creating 10 auto-free zones over the next four years, increasing the city's parking tax, raising gas taxes and bridge tolls, and introducing higher "road congestion" tolls at rush hour.

While municipal environmental plans are relatively common in Europe, they are rare in the US. San Francisco is now one of only a handful of US cities with such plans, joining Santa Monica and Chattanooga.

– EcoNews

When Corporations Rule the Web

Use corporations have found a new way to combat antiindustry legislation – companygenerated letter-writing campaigns. New computer technologies now enable companies not only to e-mail sample letters to thousands of their employees with the push of a button, but also to monitor how the employees respond.

A crop of new computer programs are allowing businesses to create databases of former and current employees together with their phone numbers, e-mail addresses, zip codes, and matching state and federal districts. With this information, corporations can identify each worker's state and federal legislators and voter precinct.

When integrated with "campaign management software," CEOs can keep a record of each employee's political lobbying on behalf of the company. Net Action, a program being marketed by Gnossos Software, enables businesses to broadcast companydrafted letters to all employees via e-mail and to route the responses to the workers' respective legislators. Net Action also generates a full list of employees who respond to the mailing.

Pharmaceutical giant Merck and Co. has used the web to mobilize the "Merck Action Network," a group of 8,800 employees and retirees. Participants receive quarterly updates and periodic "Action Alerts." Merck recently generated 800 individual telephone calls to Congress lobbying for swifter approval of pharmaceutical drugs and gathered 80,000 names in a petition drive for the same cause. -The Ecologist

Sustainable Lattés

Scientists at the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center say that the cup of coffee you drink in the morning could be causing the gradual disappearance of North American songbirds.

Orioles, hummingbirds, warblers, and other familiar avian species have traditionally spent their winters in trees that shade the coffee plantations of South and Central America.

In the 1970s, the US Agency for International Development spent \$81 million encouraging growers to yank out existing coffee bushes and the trees above them and replant three to four times as many coffee plants. The original intent was to stop the spread of a plant disease believed to thrive in the shade.

Although the disease never turned out to be a threat, many growers are still cutting down the overhanging trees and converting their land to more densely planted "sun plantations" to keep pace with high demand. The scientists see a link between the falling US populations of migratory birds and the disappearance of the shade trees that provided their food and shelter. About one-third of the North American wood-thrush population has vanished since 1966, and the Baltimore oriole's numbers have been cut by onefifth in the past decade.

Studies in the past have found as many as 150 bird species in traditional, shaded coffee plantations, but that number has been reduced by half in the sun fields of Guatemala. Sun plantations in other countries have been reported as being almost devoid of birds.

There are no labels for shadegrown coffees right now, says Ted Lingle, executive director of the Specialty Coffee Association of America, but most Central American gourmet coffees still come from shade-grown plantations, and organic coffee is almost always shade-grown. Shade-grown coffees taste better than the sun plantation coffees that are used in grocery store mass-market brands.

Jeanne McKay, a spokeswoman for Starbucks, a large specialty coffee chain based in Seattle, said the company knows of no reliable source for shadegrown coffee. Although Starbucks has signed a pledge of environmental responsibility, it declines to sell organic coffee.

"We don't want to confuse our customers with too many choices," said McKay. "We are very concerned about the land in coffee-producing countries, but our first concern has to be coffee quality."

-The Seattle Times

Oasis of Peace

The cooperative village Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam (NS/ WAS) – which means "oasis of peace" in Hebrew and Arabic – is campaigning to stop the introduction of Jewish-only housing.

NS/WAS was built 20 years ago when a group of Israeli Arabs and Jews became convinced that they could overcome their deeply rooted hostilities. The two groups constructed their homes side by side on a hill halfway between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Since then, the village has grown into a dynamic intentional community that preserves the cultural identity of both Arab and Jewish residents while fostering mutual respect.

In 1979, NS/ WAS built the School for Peace, which offers peacebuilding programs to ethnic groups in conflict. More than 20,000 people have participated in the village education programs. The village also boasts a model multicultural, bilingual elementary school.

The village currently houses 35 families with a waiting list of over 200. When NS/WAS petitioned the government for more land to accommodate these families, the Israel Lands Authority said they would only grant them a new parcel if the village accepted the addition of several Jewish-only housing developments. This would result in the infusion of 300 Jewish families into NS/WAS.

The village won municipal status after it was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. This status makes it an attractive site for those wishing to circumvent legislation that prevents new settlements in the area. By settling in the NS/WAS village, new developments would be recognized by state authorities as an integral part of the NS/WAS municipality.

But these Jewish-only settlements would upset the balance between the Arab and Jewish residents, creating a Jewish majority that isn't necessarily committed to the village ideals of peaceful coexistence between Jews and Arabs.

As an independent entity, NS/ WAS does not have any sort of political movement behind it. Says villager Howard Shippin, "Our only means of defense is to try to muster popular support and transform this support into political influence."

-Craig Hymson For more information, contact American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, 121 Sixth Ave, New York, NY 10013 212/226-9246



Average amount of time US patients are allowed to speak before being interrupted by their doctors: 18 seconds Percentage who, once interrupted, finish their statement or question: 2%¹

Number of Americans who claim to have been abducted by aliens: 3.7 million Number of US federal laws that make it illegal to have contact with extraterrestrials or their vehicles: 1²

> Percentage of principals who report that their school is drug free: 73% Percentage of parents who believe their children's schools are drug free: 42% Percentage of students who think their school is drug free: 36%³

Percent of consumers who say they consider environmental concerns when shopping for groceries and household products: 80%⁴

Number of shopping bags each American could fill with natural resources s/he uses per week: 300 5

Percentage of US daily newspapers independently owned in 1945: 80% Percentage of US daily newspapers owned by corporate chains in 1995: 80% ⁶

Number of North America's six sea turtle species that are not on the endangered list: 1⁷ First edition of *Joy of Cooking* not to include a recipe for a soup made from endangered turtles: 1997⁸

Estimated largest number of languages that existed simultaneously in the world: 10,000 Estimated number of languages that survive in 1997: 6,000 Estimated number of languages that will survive to the end of the next century: 3,000 ⁹

Percent drier your clothes will be if you run 100 meters in the rain rather than walking: 40% 10

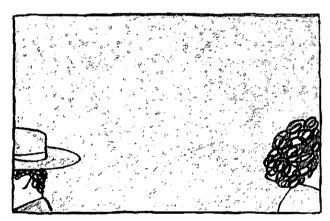
Average speed of New York City traffic today: 10 mph Average speed of traffic in London today: 8 mph Average speed of a London horse-drawn carriage in 1900: 8 mph¹¹

Number of cellular phone users in the US in 1984: 100,000 Number of cellular phone users in the US in 1995: Over 25 million ¹² Amount that your chances of getting into an accident increase when you drive while using a cellular phone: 34% ¹³

Sources: 1. Robbins, John. Reclaiming Our Health. Cited in Adbusters, Summer 1997. 2. Tuttle, Cameron. The Paranoid's Pocket Guide. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1997. 3. The Progressive Review On-Line, Sept. 30, 1997. 4. The President's Council on Sustainable Development, Population & Consumption Task Force Report, 1997. 5. Enough! Vol. 1, No. 1, Summer 1997. 6. Success Digest On-Line, April, 1997. 7. Center for Marine Conservation, cited in Harper's Magazine, August 1997. 8. Scribner Publishing, New York, cited in Harper's Magazine, August 1997. 9. Worldwatch Institute, Vital Signs 1997, New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1997. 10. The Progressive Review On-Line, Sept. 15, 1997. 11. Use Less Stuff, Vol. 4, No. 4, July/August 1997. 2. C. Edward Wall, et al, eds. A Matter of Fact. Ann Arbor: Pierian Press, 1996. 13. Tuttle, Cameron. The Paranoid's Pocket Guide. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1997.



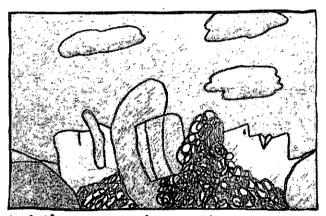
And for awhile they both said YES, YES



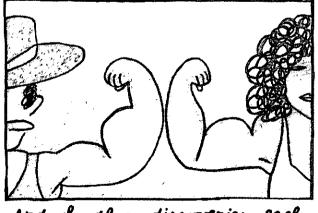
and each went off to see.



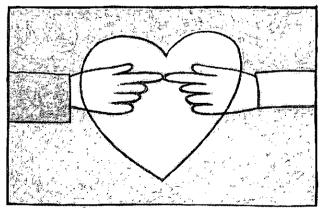




And they returned from it all, net again and religed they had both one for and experienced much. And for they bowed respectfully a sach other and lays clown to rest. And in their sleep they dreamed...



And by those discoveries, each was strengthened.



And they were cleansed and deepened beyond themselves, and there they lound Love.

SEXUALIT

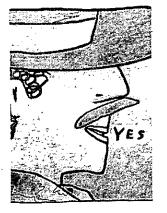
Integral Sex

hy do so many people believe that everyone else is having all the fun, while their own sex lives are drab? How did pregnant (and poor) teenage girls become the symbol for all that is immoral in America? With so many techniques for beautifying our bodies, why do so many

people loathe their bodies? Why has loving touch become such a scarcity? ¶ Sex is big business, a surefire way to rile up voters, and a source of endless speculation and anxiety.

¶ There are patterns to these cultural dysfunctions around sexuality. In this issue, we explore those patterns and the possibility that a new form and practice of sex is emerging – which we might call *integral* sex. In particular, we'll look at whether integral sex could lead to deeper and more authentic connections to lovers and friends, a joyful acceptance of our bodies and our desires, and perhaps even a deeper experience of interconnectedness.

The old divide



Before we get into integral sex, let's look at the two dominant sexual paradigms. To oversimplify, these could be divided between fundamentalist and modern liberalism. The modern liberal position is concerned with the freedoms of consenting adults. Women's rights, access to contraception, no-fault divorce, gay and lesbian rights are all part of this philosophy. The emergence of modern sexuality, which oc-

curred in conjunction with the advent of The Pill and women's rights, represented an enormous liberation compared to eras in which gays and lesbians, women who committed adultery, and others who deviated from a narrow norm were ostracized and sometimes brutalized.

However, modern liberalism has also created the conditions for the exploitation of sex, which now

How much of our yearning for sex is actually a yearning to be held and cherished?

sells everything from toothpaste to bombers. The mysteries of sexual ecstacy are trivialized – all is laid out in magazines and videos. There is little discussion of the effects of inundating the culture with superficial images of sexuality and of associating those images with consumerism, violence, and exploitation rather than love and creativity.

Liberalism, with its focus on individual freedom, is firmly entrenched in the rational/secular world; ethical debates over such questions as pornography, the commercialization of sex, divorce, and abortion don't fit well in that world. While many liberals do private soul searching about these matters, the commitment to a secular approach has kept liberalism out of the public debate about spiritual and ethical values as they relate to sex, except to insist on individual rights. What happens if you project this approach into the future? The proliferation of sex in advertising, videos, and cyberspace could be just the beginning. Computerized sex-robots along with chemical or electrical stimulation of the hypothalamus might eclipse sex with mere humans, predicts one writer in a recent issue of *The Futurist*. Robots don't get headaches, always do it your way, and never ask for alimony. Virtual sex will be cleaner as well; no need to worry about the messiness of disease – or emotional entanglement.

It's not surprising that many people are turned off to valueless sexuality and seek instead the safety of clearly defined rights and wrongs in a context that acknowledges an ethical and spiritual dimension. The fundamentalist Christian (and Muslim) view has been until recently the only widely available alternative to the alienation of modern sexual mores.

If the strength of the traditionalist perspective is its willingness to consider the spiritual and ethical implications of issues related to sex, its weakness is its inability to consider the complexities and nuances of the human experience.

It may be appealing to reduce our choices to a few simple rules – for example that sex is permitted only within heterosexual marriage and that the man is the head of the household. When people feel embattled and fearful, such simplicity may seem necessary for survival, as Reverend Mariah Britton points out in her article about the evolution of African-American sexuality (see page 30).

But the inadequacy of this oversimplification can be seen in the large numbers within the ranks of the fundamentalists who violate their own rules – well-known cases of fundamentalist preachers caught in extramarital affairs, the large number of prostitutes and women seeking abortions who come from fundamentalist households.

And adhering to oversimplified rules can mean denying our true nature as passionate creatures who crave touch and sexual intimacy. This denial has caused real damage. Maria Dolan (page 17) describes the dilemma faced by teenage girls, who cannot prepare for safe sex without admitting to their desires. Reverend Britton speaks of the silence of the black church in the face of the spread of HIV/ AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. The denial shows up in high divorce rates and bad marriages, as people try to conform to a two-dimensional image of happy coupledom that fails to incorporate the multifaceted quality of ever-changing human beings.

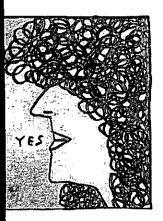
So while fundamentalists have good reasons for rejecting the alienation and value-free quality of modern liberalism, simplistic rules are too confining and too dogmatic to meet complex and evolving human needs.

Since the liberal and the fundamentalist versions of sexuality are both turning people off, what might be the alternative? Just as there appears to be an emerging integral culture that transcends both the modern and traditional cultures of the west, there may be an emerging integral sexuality. What might be the characteristics of integral sexuality?

The politics of touch

We are embodied creatures, as Sam Keen points out (page 34). Neither the modern vision of disembodied cyber-sex nor the denial of lusts and passions of fundamentalism gets it. Babies crave the touch, motion, sound, and smells of their parents. I expected my two children to eventually outgrow their desire for bedtime snuggles, but at age seven and twelve, neither have shown any signs of wanting fewer hugs or less physical closeness.

Our society has created a completely unnecessary scarcity of touch. Touch is so closely associated with sexual contact that it has become taboo in most settings. Friends can't hold hands. Teachers can't touch children. In China I used to see male soldiers walking down the street holding hands. In Central America, women often walk arm in arm. How much of our yearning for sex is actually a yearning to be held and cherished?



There's no need for a scarcity of touch. Hugs, strokes, and massages are gifts we can give away freely, if we can get over associating them exclusively with sex.

Likewise, there is no need for a scarcity of enjoyment of our bodies. We compare our bodies endlessly with commercial images of sexually attractive men and women.

What will it take for us to move, dance, exercise, and make love joyfully, released from the burden of comparing ourselves to stereotypes and supermodels?

The capacity to fully and comfortably inhabit

our bodies is associated with our capacity to experience connection to the physical body of planet Earth. We are biological creatures, with close evolutionary links to other animals; the reptilian brain and the mammalian brain are as much a part of us

The Genesis of Sex

Richard Heinberg's samplings from the anthropology of sex indicates that variety in sexual practices and mores is nothing new

ur closest relatives, chimpanzees and bonobos, present contradictory evidence on the genesis of our sexual character. Chimps are hot-tempered and obsessed with power and status. Males dominate chimp society and compete for females, occasionally killing rivals' offspring. However, bonobo behavior provides a counter example. Bonobos - who are just as close to humans genetically as chimps, have a peaceful, female-dominant society in which frequent sex in every conceivable form and combination appears to maintain social harmony.

It would be a mistake to make too many generalizations about sexuality among early humans, since an extremely wide variety of practices has been observed among the thousands of cultures studied by anthropologists in the past two centuries. These range from the genital mutilation rites of the Aboriginal Australians, to the sanctioning of rape among the Yanomami of Amazonia, to transvestite homosexuality among Native American tribes, to the practice among the Fulani of Niger of brides selecting their husbands at special festivals in which, unmarried men make themselves attractive by dressing and painting themselves.

As archaeologist Marija Gimbutas and historian Riane Eisler have documented, the early civilizations of Old Europe (including the Minoan culture) appear to have been matrifocal, worshipping images of the Great Goddess. Women seem to have enjoyed a social status at least equal to that of men, and surviving art from the period suggests an open and permissive attitude toward sex.

Much of this changed during the period from 4300 to 2800 BCE with the invasion of Indo-European (Kurgan) warriorherdsmen from the east. The Kurgans regarded women as chattel and introduced slavery, militarism, and human sacrifice.

Still, among the post-Bronze Age agricultural civilizations of the Near and Far East, there remained a fairly wide range of attitudes toward sex. In India, sexual pleasure was celebrated and spiritualized in mythology, sex manuals, religious art, and temple prostitution. The pantheon of Indic delties included both gods and goddesses – and the divine equivalents of hermaphrodites, transvestites, and transsexuals.

In ancient China, while the social status of women was generally low, the doctrine of the need for balance in the universal generative principles of yang and yin resulted in the pursuit of mystical sex practices.

 Richard Heinberg is author of A New Covenant with Nature and creator of the MuseLetter, http:// www.museletter.com/museletter as the cerebral cortex – the part of the brain that distinguishes us from other animals. And, according to biologists Lynn Margulis and Elisabet Sahtouris, our bodies are in part communities of previously autonomous bacteria and mitochondria, working together in an astonishing harmony that goes unnoticed except when something goes wrong.

What would it take to fully inhabit our own body and celebrate our lover's body, without feeling inadequate or shameful? How would our feelings about the natural world change if we felt more at home in our bodies? What if there was no scarcity of touch?

Sacred sex

The ethic of interconnectedness, or at-one-ness, which is so central to many spiritual traditions is also fundamental to integral sex.

The question that shows up in so much of the modern media is, "How can I get the most out of a relationship?" and "Do I stand to gain by moving on to someone else?" While the fundamentalists ask, "How can I make my life fit into expected patterns and overcome the pain when it doesn't?"

Sam Keen suggests inhabiting our lover's world and seeing life and lovemaking from his or her perspective (page 38). Can we get inside the deepest desires of our mate? Can we take the chance of shar-

If we reclaim sex and touch from commercialism and exploitation, shame and denial, we may open the doorway to enchantment

ing our own hopes and dreams? Can we support our lover, not just in having great orgasms, but in creating a deeply meaningful life?

The experience of ecstacy and the glimpse it reveals of greater mysteries indicate a sacred dimension to sexuality, say Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi and Eve Ilsen (see page 27). There is a thinning of the ego that occurs as we mature, which allows transcendent light to shine through, and sexuality to become an experience of spirit.

When we actually experience the sacred in one another and in our intimacy, the trivialization of sex and the exploitation of a lover becomes impossible. When we see sex as an expression of God (as Zalman and Eve suggest) we can also leave behind the sense of shame that many people associate with eroticism. If we reclaim sex and touch from the world of commercialism and exploitation, shame and denial, we may open the doorway to enchantment.

Freedom and creativity

The freedom to create a unique path through life is basic to integral sex – and fundamental to stemming population growth.

Alan Durning (page 18) says that young women who feel they have choices about their future – college, careers, marriage – tend to delay motherhood. Girls brought up in abusive situations or in poverty tend to believe they have few choices and may be less inclined to actively avoid pregnancy. ("Just Say No" sex education has no effect either way, according to a study by the Alan Guttmacher Institute.)

This confirms the findings internationally of population researchers: women who feel in charge of their lives and believe they have meaningful choices for their future have fewer children.

Likewise, the teenage fathers who addressed soap opera producers about the issues they face in real life said they had access to condoms, but hadn't used them. They only began using condoms when they had met their basic needs for security and selfesteem – and began experiencing themselves as haying real choices (see page 24).

Integral sex offers freedom but asks in return that we stay with complex questions, and challenge ourselves and each other to act in mindfulness of our interconnectedness.

How do we choose whom and how to love, what commitments to make, when to have sex? What needs might we be seeking to fulfill in our relationship with a spouse or lover that could better be met in friendships, in therapy, or in solitude?

Integral sex is built neither on a modern version of valueless freedom, nor on a traditionalist view that dogma should determine the nature of our relationships. Instead, integral sex grows out of a joyful inhabiting of our body and senses, a recognition that our longing for one another and for transcendence contains elements of the erotic and the mysterious, and a realization that we have opportunities to embody in our lives the loving world we want to create. Naomi Wolf, Alan Thein Durning, Chris Crowther, Robyn Budd, and Maria Dolan on the desires, friendships, shames, and pleasures of the uncertain journey to womanhood

Girls' Initiation

Writer Maria Dolan recently edited an "all-grrrl" issue of synapse magazine, dedicated to the poetry, prose, and art of Seattle girls. This article first appeared in Steelhead magazine.

he first time I had sex I was just expecting some high school-style couchwrestling. My "partner" was a lanky young stockbroker, an older man whose interest flattered my 16-year-old ego. When he took my agreement to lie down with him in his apartment as the cue to pull down his pants in front of me, I literally lost my ability to speak. I looked away in shock from his naked eager body. I wanted him to put his clothes back on, wanted to return to kissing and stroking and the way things had always been, but I didn't know how to say that. I didn't know how two people communicated that they wanted it or didn't, but figured I'd given him some sign. If I backed out, I would be doing what I'd heard angrily described as leading a guy on. I was scared and ashamed, and while we had sex I thought mostly about how to forget it.

When I read *Schoolgirls*, journalist Peggy Orenstein's chronicle of a year spent getting to know eighth-grade girls, my first time came back to me with painful force. Orenstein found that this generation's girls are learning the same anxious confusion about their own desires that I once

learned. Dangerous lessons, I think, because girls ashamed of being sexual risk becoming spectators in their own lives, un-

able to clearly state their desires or their limits. How can you make decisions about what you want if you aren't even supposed to want? As Orenstein says, "Responsible preparation for in-



tercourse requires an active admission of desire."

A 1990 study by the American Association of University Women revealed a serious confidence loss in girls entering adolescence. While it's a hard time for all kids, by high school almost 50 percent of boys say they're happy the way they are, compared to less than a third of girls.

The anti-sex platforms of moral conservatives (premarital abstinence, family values) are questioned by much of the public who know from experience how hard it is to live within such narrow boundaries. A morality that calls a girl a slut if she doesn't protect her virginity, and values her by her ability to control both boys' hands and her own curious body, breeds shame and confusion – not smart decisions.

by Maria Dolan

Dolan Research has shown that sex-negative attitudes discourage only responsible use of contraception, not sex itself.

It is difficult to convince even liberals and feminists to teach a girl that her desire is normal and even good. Adults balk at helping girls become initiators as well as negotiators of sexual activity rather "A morality that values a girl by her ability to control boys" hands and her own curious body breeds shame and confusion ..."

RESOURCES: Rites of Passage

Mosaic Multicultural Foundation Michael Meade PO Box 364 Vashon, WA 98070 206/463-9387 fax: 206/463-9236 e-mail: mosaic @wolfenet.com Offers conferences and workshops for culturally diverse groups of all ages

Pathfinder

Learning Center 1011 Tyler-Foote Rd Nevada City, CA 95959 916/292-3858 Rites of passage wilderness programs for women, men, and families

Full Esteem Ahead

6663 SW Beaverton-Hillsdale Hwy, Suite 214 Portland, OR 97225 503/296-6748 fax: 503/297-8742 e-mail: kmasarie @europa.com **Programs** for 7th and 8th grade boys and girls to explore their identities than victims of male desire. It's scary letting girls feel good about the pleasures of their bodies even as we inform them of the dangers.

In other industrialized nations where sex education is taught from childhood, significantly fewer teenagers get pregnant, have kids, or have abortions. Researcher Michelle Fine compares the recommendations of a Swedish teachers' handbook for sexual education – "Equip [students] to experience sexual life as a source of happiness and joy in fellowship with other [people]" – to an exercise from our delight-impoverished high school sex curricula: "Discuss and evaluate things which may cause teenagers to engage in sexual relations before they are ready to assume the responsibility of marriage."

I now have friends who can talk about sex as if they know its wonders as well as its complications, as if they are as familiar as I am with what draws us to it: the smell of skin, the hunger for communion, the hormones nature floods us with long before most people are ready for a lifetime commitment. What would it be like for a generation of girls to be taught that their desire is not immoral or even embarrassing? If I recreate the scene in that apartment - me again, but after years of this kind of retraining – I don't have sex. I recognize when I'm ready to stop and say so and go home. No, I don't remain a virgin until marriage. I decide to have sex when I feel ready, and even if the experience is more awkward experiment than ecstasy, I get up from the bed with my self-esteem and my health intact.

Sex, Lies, & Child Abuse

Alan Thein Durning is executive director and Chris Crowther is an intern at Northwest Environment Watch. This article is adapted from Misplaced Blame: The Real Roots of Population Growth, available from Northwest Environment Watch, 206/ 447-1880; outside Washington, 888/643-9820.

Paige Latin always gets nervous before a talk. As the founder of Prostitution Alternatives Counseling and Education (PACE), she has given

by Alan Thein Durning and Chris Crowther

hundreds of informal speeches in all parts of British Columbia, but it's still difficult for her to get past the anxiety

of standing in front of 20 or 100 people and saying, "Hi. I'm Paige, and I used to be a prostitute." "It's hard sometimes," she says of her presentations, "but talking about it does help the healing."

That's not why she talks, though. She gives these lectures to find sexual abuse victims, to direct them toward help, and to inoculate others against the abuse that so often leads to prostitution later on.

"When I'm talking about what it feels like to be sexually abused, I see this look in their eyes – the kids who are being abused – of 'Oh, my God! That's what's been happening to me," Paige says. "There are three or four in every class." These three or four are at risk of involvement in prostitution.

Inside a classroom at an alternative secondary school, Paige launches into her story. It's an excruciating tale. It turns the stomach and incites rage, and Paige seems to live it over as she speaks, her form bent almost double. "I remember being sexually abused from age two," she recounts. "My parents didn't know about it, and I thought it happened to everyone. I was abused again at age three by a guy that used to work for my dad."

Like most sexually abused children, Paige came from a family with more than its share of problems. Her mother suffered from untreated clinical depression. Her father traveled extensively in his struggling construction business, and his income left them far short of middle class.

"At age five," Paige recalls, "it was a guy at a gas station. He gave me hepatitis, and I almost died. Ages six to eight, it was the guy that ran the tourist information booth next to the playground. He penetrated me at age six."

Abuse seemed to seek her out – a commonplace pattern among abuse victims. Sexual abuse truncates the ability to sense unsafe situations and untrustworthy people. It corrodes children's self-esteem, making them desperate for approval, affection, and safety, and teaching them to expect violation as the price of these commodities.

"Another guy abused me from age eight to 12," says Paige. "That's the one that affected me the most. It was my girlfriend's dad." Authority figures commit more than half of all rapes. "He would give me alcohol and cigarettes and money," she says. "That's where I think I got my introduction into prostitution. He did a real number on my head, saying that I was 'really good at this."

All eyes are on Paige – almost. A boy in the back of the room pulls the hood of his sweatshirt up, drops his chin, and begins furiously doodling on his desk. Paige watches him for a moment. She is convinced that he is an abuse survivor. She takes a breath and goes on.

At 13, she was brutally raped by a stranger who abducted her at gun point from her family's motel room while they were on vacation in Florida. In the months that followed, she suffered a full-scale psychological crisis with nowhere to turn. "I started drinking when I was six. I started sniffing glue when I was nine." But after the rape, she took to drugs with a vengeance. "At times, I tried to kill myself by overdosing."

On the other side of the room, another boy has withdrawn into himself. She makes a mental note. She's not as sure about him as the boy who is doodling, but she is suspicious. And she's getting an uneasy feeling about two girls sitting on a bookcase against the wall. Their eyes are too big; they look like abuse survivors, too.

When she was 15, she left her home in the small Rocky Mountain town of Williams Lake, British Columbia. "I moved to Toronto," she says, "and it didn't take me very long to end up out on the streets. I worked as a prostitute from age 15 on and off, mostly on, until I was 29. I'm 35 now."

PAIGE LATIN HAS DONE this same basic presentation at dozens of schools, youth detention centers, universities, hospitals, and civic group meetings across BC in recent years. As far as she knows, she and the other former prostitutes she has recruited are the only people speaking out about sexual abuse to BC's young people and the professionals who work with them. She continues her story, telling how she got out of prostitution, thanks to a former prostitute who counseled her by phone for months.

In 1994, Paige established the nonprofit charitable group, PACE, to help women escape from – and avoid getting into – prostitution. Over time, she has focused more of her energy on preventing the sexual abuse from which prostitution stems.

"If abuse is happening in your life, you can talk to Natasha," Paige tells the class, pointing to the school counselor. "Nobody ever talked with me about sexual abuse when I was a kid, and I don't want that to happen to you."

Later, she will call Natasha about the four she has identified. She has a knack for finding abuse victims. "The terrible thing is that my hunches are almost always right," she says.

Paige doesn't talk much about the other major consequence of child sexual abuse: teen parenting.

But it's a consequence far more common than prostitution, so her fight against abuse is also preventing teen births.

The US has been in the midst of a national witch hunt, vilifying teenage mothers for corrupting the moral fiber of the nation, bearing most of the country's criminals, and soaking up public dollars to support idle lives. What is not common knowledge is that 62 percent of school-age mothers are

victims of sexual abuse before becoming pregnant – at least two and more likely five times larger than among the general population of teenage girls.

The litany of abuses they have suffered is shocking. 43 percent of school-age mothers are rape victims; 5 percent of them conceived their first child by rape. Physical abuse is also rampant: 59 percent have been hit with a belt or strap, 31 percent have been hit with a stick, 26 percent have been thrown against a wall, 5 percent have been intentionally burned or scalded, and 22 percent have been beaten up by a man to the point of requiring medical treatment.

The average teenage mother has also spent her childhood in poverty. It's been possible to predict the teen birthrate in the US with 90 percent accuracy by looking at the previous decade's child poverty rate – poor nine-yearolds become pregnant 18-year-olds.

Abused girls and those raised in poverty have babies not because they are foolish or ignorant, as common misconceptions hold, but because they are playing the hand they were dealt as best they can. Their life experience confirms that they will not go far in the new, fiercely competitive global economy. They do not actively seek pregnancy, but they are less aggressive than women who are not poor in attempting to prevent it. At least, they reason, they can be good mothers, raise good children, and fill their lives with the challenges and rewards of having a family. In a money-mad world, motherhood is one role they cannot be denied.

Abused women often look on reproduction as a healing event. Early childbearing is part of the pathology of child abuse, but to the victim, it appears to be part of the cure.

What's needed, Paige believes, is public mobilization against abuse of children by adults. As things

Wilderness Transitions, Inc Marilyn Riley PO Box 482 Ross, CA 94957 415/456-4370 Rites of passage programs – including four-day Vision Quests – for all ages. Offers assistance for

developing rituals

Illustration RUTH RICHARDS

Cultural Affairs Stan Crowe 22421 39th Avenue SE Bothell, WA 98021 425/486-5164 Offers ideas, information, and training for creating ritual rites of passage for all ages

Institute for

Midway Center for Creative Imagination 2112 F Street NW Suite 404 Washington, DC 20037 202/296-2299 fax: 202/296-5455 website: http:/ www.midwaycenter .com Teen, midlife, and elder rites of passage

Progressive

Life Center 100 E. 23 Street Baltimore, MD 21218 410/235-2800 **Rites** of passage for African-American youth based on the seven principles of Kwanzaa stand now, most adults do not know the signs of abuse, are uncomfortable discussing it, and do not know what to do when they suspect it. "In 1995," writes Mike Males in his book Scapegoat Generations, "a spokeswoman for the US National Commission on Child Abuse complained that it was easier to get information from the Centers for Disease Control on soccer goalpost injuries than on adult violence against children." Six-year-olds have a better chance of knowing what to do if a stranger offers them candy than if their uncle tries to rape them, yet sexual assault by a parent or parent-substitute in the home is 200 times more common than abduction off the streets by a stranger. We live in a massive state of denial about the sexual crimes suffered by our children.

Lifelines

Robyn Budd, artist, manager of a nature conservancy, and graphic designer of YESI, writes about the ambiguous territory between being best friends and lovers.

There was, of course, a time when I didn't know her. But that reach of years seems somehow indistinct, as if lightly sketched on someone else's lifeline. The details of our first meeting, however, stand out in clear contrast.

I was photocopying the first draft of my thesis. She sauntered into the grads' copy room and said, "So. I hear you ride a motorcycle. So do I."

The first conversation began with an exchange of statistics: make and age of bikes, respective mileage, engine size – we both rode 400s – then progressed through the multiple checkpoints of mutual interest. We both made drawings and sculpture. We grew up playing with the boys. We loved mountains and wild places. We learned best by bruising our knees. She'd lost her brother three years earlier at sea, and now she rode his motorcycle and made art that asked questions about loss and where you find grace.

That year we pulled all-nighters, drank red wine, wrote grant proposals, and constellated around our-

by Robyn Budd

IN Budd selves a girls' gang of artists who invested in lottery tickets to raise funding for one of our shows.

I remember that landscape well, its terrain mapped out in words, meanings, contradictions, objects, and images. It was the territory that taught us how to navigate.

That summer I'd decided to celebrate the end of indoor school by finding an outdoor school, this one in Atlin, BC, just south of the Yukon border. I was off to make installation art up north for six weeks – I had no idea how I would get there – and I asked her to come.

Four weeks before we were to leave, she strode into my studio and said, "I know how we're getting there. We're going on our bikes."

I think I laughed. I think I said, "You're crazy. On the 400s? On a dirt road to the *Yukon*?"

She said, "You can wear my brother's motorcycle jacket."

So we went to the Yukon on our bikes. We left Toronto and rode for two weeks across the country, far into the north where the days stretched longer than the road that took us there. It was by turns fierce, elegant, colder than bone, and precious. Once we ran into the tailwinds of a hurricane. Once I spirited (just) out of a semi's trajectory as he took a corner blind on my side of the road. Once – more than once – we cried in our helmets because the mountains were so achingly beautiful.

One morning too early on the gravel shoulder of a highway, we crouched over our bikes trying to warm our hands by the heat of our engines. She lost a contact lens. We knelt there, poring over a grey sea of pebbles as the semi's whistled past, rocking our bikes in their backwind. Ten minutes passed, 15, maybe 20. No lens. Finally, out of stiffness or boredom or both, I said, "Stop looking for the contact lens. Just look for pretty stones." So we did. Within minutes the lens was found, spit upon, and placed back in the eye of its owner.

Some months later she gave me an oval-shaped, ordinary looking brown stone. On its upward face were two words neatly scribed in black letraset: 'CON-TACT LENS' was all they said.

It's TEN YEARS LATER, plus some months. She's teaching art in Toronto at a blue chip boys' school. I live and work on a small island off mainland BC. She goes out with men, and even married one once. I have relationships with women. She is curious about sleeping with her own kind. I made love this summer with a man, and now a woman is my partner.

I traded my motorcycle for a boat and salt water streaming past its hull. She rides a bicycle through snarly city streets to work. In the summers we meet on mountains, climb rock faces, compare muscle tone and share ceremonies in the desert. People who meet us for the first time mistake me for her partner and say, "But of course you two are lovers?"

And we say, "No, it's not like that." But yes, in some extraordinary way I do know this person well.

Ten years has not yielded us a name that speaks our partnering in a way that says *this* is what we are. Sometimes we make art together and teach together, sometimes we do sweats and ceremonies and say prayers of intent right out loud. But that's not all; so we revert to a belief we hold in common. It says the *this*-

ness of our relating can't exist as a noun. It occurs only in the verb, in the doing, in the inquiry, in the practice. It exists only when we push our bodies up the rock and dare the rope to hold. And we test it by distance, over time, across a big landscape.

We've set ourselves a task this year. It is the tender disclosure of our softer selves; what we know about, and how we run, our female energy. We, who do mountains and motorcycles so well, now we turn our inquiry to what keeps us still shy from ourselves and from each other.

Girls to Women

Naomi Wolf is a bestselling author and lecturer on women's issues and a visiting scholar at George Washington University. The following is excerpted from Promiscuities © 1997 by Naomi Wolf. Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc.

osing our virginity was supposed to pass for attaining sexual maturity. But it was too easy, what we did, and it didn't matter enough to satisfy us more than physically.

We knew what was expected of us by boys and men better than we knew our own strengths in the world – better even than we knew our own bodies.

But we knew, though we could not have expressed it, that intercourse in itself was not enough to "make us women." It's not as if we didn't search for alternative places – our dieting, our various manias, anorexia – to stage the female adolescent *agon*, or struggle, into initiation. But in our sexualized and commodified world, the primary passage that was established and recognized for us as women was sexual intercourse.



Anthropologists have recorded the rites of passage that mark many organized social systems. In contemporary North American and European societies, such rituals are the exception rather than the rule. Other cultures are not so impoverished in this respect. Girls in South and Central American countries have the *quinceañera* festival at 15, when they dress up in magnificent gowns, are consecrated at a special mass, and announce themselves to the community, with great formality, to be nubile.

Girls in the Trobriand Islands of northwestern Melanesia at the turn of the century moved to a separate unmarried girls' house, paid close attention to their skill in weaving clothing, and spent several years in casual, safe erotic play before the serious business of settling down. ...

Obviously, girls need better rites of passage in our culture. Such rituals require rigor, separation from males and from the daily environment, and the exchange of privileged information. It is important, in such rituals, for grown women outside the family to be part of that initiation. I'd like to propose that groups of friends with children sign one another up, upon the birth of a daughter, for the responsibility. Instead, or in addition to, the familiar role of godparent, someone who signs on for such a task would join with a few other women, and a small cohort of girls, in the girls' 13th year, for a retreat such as a hiking or camping trip – or at least for a series of informal all-female gather-

ings. There, the older women would pass on to the younger

everything they have learned about womanhood, and answer *every single question*. According to their culture and religion, the older women would teach the younger skills and techniques, such as self-deLifequest Rites of Passage 547 NE 105th St. Seattle, WA 98115 206/527-5308 e-mail: threshold @earthlink.net Individually designed rites of passage for teens and adults

Center for the Advancement of Youth, Family, and Community Service PO Box 816 Glastonbury, CT 06033 860/633-5349 e-mail: davidbl@ pcnet.com Helps communities and groups develop contemporary rites of passage

by Naomi Wolf

GenderTalks

The Daughters/Sisters Foundation, a non-profit organization based on Bainbridge Island, Washington, facilitates focus groups for both boys and girls.

Co-founders Linda Wolf and K. Wind Hughes describes the groups as follows: "We are a circle of elders, sitting around the fire with the next generation, sharing our stories, our mistakes, and our wisdom, and listening to each other's experiences, ideals, and plans for the future of our world."

The Boys and the Girls Focus Groups were created to give young people a safe place to be real, and not judge whether someone or something said was right or wrong, acceptable or unacceptable.

After a year of meeting separately and discussing sex, spirituality, politics, religion, music, and race, the boys and girls came together for GenderTalks to hear each other's thoughts and feelings.

During one exercise, both genders donned blindfolds. The girls were asked, "What do you want from men?" They responded:



"I would like there to be enough trust in a relationship, whether it's friendship or an intimate relationship, that things can be talked about; so things big or small can be brought up and no one has to be embarrassed about it or feel awful about it." "I would like men to ask us about us. When you are confused and when you can't figure us out, I want you to be comfortable coming to us and getting to know us better."

"I would like to ask men to stop stereotyping and let women have equal opportunity, pay, good jobs. Don't have us doing most of the work at home. I want you to really help us make a change for both of us."



THEN THE BOYS were asked, "What do you want from women?" Here's what they had to say:

"I would like to be able to walk down a

city street and smile at or say 'Hi' to a woman, or be able to pick up something she has dropped without her thinking I'm doing it out of some bad intentions."

"I need women to realize that there are guys out there that just don't fit the stereotype at all. The idea that you have to find the guy that sucks least *sucks!* You have to look at us as individuals."

"It would be nice if you did not just tell us what we were failing to do. Tell us what

you've really enjoyed, what has made you happy. Sometimes we do stuff right, and it goes unnoticed, so we stop."

Adapted from Daughters of the Moon, Sisters of the Sun, by K. Wind Hughes and Linda Wolf, published this year by New Society Publishers.

fense, contraception, sexual pleasure, and parenting, passing on to them an ethic of adulthood as well as an ethic of sexual responsibility – helping them, too, to recognize when they are truly ready to become women.

In addition to this intimate education, a family's friends can commit to being part of a wisdom initiation: transmitting their professional skills to the girl whom they are assigned to guide. I have, for instance, such a commitment of exchange from the scientist parents of a two-year-old girl; as my daughter grows up, they have agreed to teach her about earth sciences, show her experiments, and explain to her the jobs that one can do in the field - something in which I have no expertise - and I in turn have committed to working with their daughter on her writing. Through these commitments of mentoring exchanges, girls feel valued not only by their families but by the extended community the locus of initiation tensions - and the possibilities of what they might love and become good at expands. ...

In our culture, we tell girls that what boys do with them is more significant to their maturing than what they themselves choose to do.

Instead, we should be telling girls what they already know but rarely see affirmed: that the lives they lead inside their own selfcontained bodies, the skills they attain through their own concentration and rigor, and the unique phase in their lives during which they may explore boys and eroticism at their own pace – these are magical. And they constitute the entrance point to a life cycle of a sexuality that should be held sacred. ▲ Teen fans of the soaps tell producers and writers to get real about sex, teenage parenting, and HIV/AIDS. Population Communications International presents ...

The Soap Summit

Conside F. Johnson works with at-risk boys and teenage fathers at the National Family Life & Education Center in Los Angeles. To his surprise, he often finds his boys rushing back from school, not just to take part in the many programs and activities his organization offers, but to watch soap operas.

"I work with guys who carry guns. I work with guys who sell dope. And those same guys watch *One Life to Live*. They all like Carlos from this soap opera. So they're rushing home 'cause they gotta watch Carlos, 'cause they down with Carlos. He's a bad guy. But he's cool, I understand."

After a bit of thought, Johnson adds, "So if Carlos would use a condom, we would get a lot of mileage out of this."

Johnson isn't the only one to recognize the power of daytime serial dramas, for better or worse. Studies show Americans spending up to one-third of their free time in front of the tube; the average teenager spends more time watching TV than sleeping. In the daytime serial dramas favored by junior and senior high school students, the name of the game is entertainment, with all of the sex, scandal, and intrigue that entails. Each weekday, viewers are transported to a world where everyone is thin and Hollywood beautiful, cases of total amnesia are common but not incurable, people in comas are always picture perfect, and romance reigns supreme.

Unfortunately for impressionable young viewers, safe sex often does not. In one study cited by Advocates for Youth, adolescents actually mimicked the sexual themes of the soap operas they watched.



In other words, if their favorite soap characters use condoms during sex, teenage viewers are likely to follow suit. The average daytime drama contains more than three sexual acts per hour, and research from 1994 showed that out of 50 hours of programming (containing 156 acts of intercourse), only five references were made to contraception or safe sex.

The one time HIV/AIDS was mentioned, it was contracted through IV drug use. Frightening numbers from an industry that has such an impact on its viewers.

Armed with these statistics and more, the nonprofit Population Communications International (PCI) decided that it was time to impress upon the daytime entertainment industry that it could do Teen fathers tell soap opera writers and producers about life better. PCI invited soap opera producers and writers to a series of non-confrontational dialogues on issues of sexuality, teen pregnancy, domestic violence, and overpopulation. The goal of Soap Summits I and II was not to lambast the soap people for putting trash on television, but to encourage writers to use what PCI senior vice president Sonny Fox calls "a unique instrument for changing attitudes and behavior" to its best benefit.

Ronald Johnson and the other speakers at the Soap Summits strongly believe that the daytime writ-

> ers can have a positive impact. Says Johnson, who works with at-risk teenage fathers in Los Angeles, "Selfimage is important. Once we work on self-image, then we work on the vision of 'what do you really want out of life?' TV helps the boys to construct a vision. And that's not bad. ... But someone has got to tell at-risk kids the truth. It's important to give them access to resources that make their lives productive, to teach young people that you can't play all the time and expect good results."

Family planning choices

PCI has hard evidence to back up the importance of showing realistic stories and healthy lifestyles on television. The organization has demonstrated

LA teen fathers rush home to watch soap villian Carlos (Tom Christopher) from One Life to Live

over 13 developing countries where women's status, population, and health issues are critical. PCI has collaborated with local media in India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Kenya, Brazil, and elsewhere on family planning soaps designed to motivate individuals and communities to make choices that reduce world population growth. These choices include banning dowries, limiting family size through birth control, practicing safe sex, and elevating the status of women.

the impact of the educational serial drama in

A recent study shows that 28 percent of new seekers of family planning services in Tanzania cited a PCI radio drama called *Twende No Wakati* ("Go With the Times" in Kiswahili) as the impetus that drew them to the clinics. Eighty-two percent of the same program's listeners said that the show caused them to change their behavior to prevent AIDS.

And the organization has seen similar results in each of the countries in which its dramas are broadcast. The village of Lutsaan in India recently sent a letter to producers of another PCI family planning soap stating, "All of us listeners of the radio soap vow not to take nor give dowry."

Poor women whose families could not provide dowries had been "compelled to commit suicide" or were murdered by their husband's families for not bringing enough money into the marriage, the letter said. The villagers credited the soap opera for changing the prevailing attitudes on dowries.

In the same letter, the villagers said, "Our society has to take a new turn in its thinking concerning family size," a realization they also attributed to the radio drama.

The shows work, says Fox, because the facts in the radio soaps are not dry and passive, but dramatized in a way that gives them "a human face."

When focusing on the United States, PCI chose

About Respect

Daniel Taveras, a 17-year-old father with a son, Daniel Jr., age two, described his life to writers and producers during Soap Summit II. This story is taken from a transcript of the Summit.

Ben Powell, Daniel's mentor and counselor at the Inwood House Young Fathers Program in New York City, says that Daniel's newfound maturity is not exceptional among the teen fathers in his program: "Once you help these guys help themselves and deal with their problems – poverty, lack of education, limited knowledge about birth control, unemployment – they can start to care about others, including their children."

My son's mother was pregnant when I was 14, but she had the baby when I turned 15. I see her every day, almost, but we don't get along. We try to fix our problems, 'cause we have a son. I have temporary custody until she finishes college. Then he's going back to her.

I had condoms in my pocket, but I didn't think of using them. I heard about 'em, but I never took the time to learn how you put them on, or anything. I just had them in my pockets, just to say, "I have



not to create an American family planning drama, but to encourage the writers and producers to modify the existing programs. Even the smallest nudge towards responsible behavior by the characters in the soaps, with a collective following of over 40 million people, would have lasting clout.

Dr. Felicia Hance Stewart, a speaker at Soap Summit II from the Kaiser Foundation, cited responses to an 800 number on contraception as an example of the power of popular programs. The hotline was averaging about 130 calls per day until Kaiser decided to advertise it on MTV, the rock music video network. MTV ran a less-than-oneminute clip in the middle of April for two days. The calls jumped to 3,000 per day for that short time frame.

"Get reall"

The first Soap Summit, which took place in 1994 in Los Angeles, and its 1996 sequel focused on overpopulation, reproductive health issues, and teenage sexuality. PCI brought in a cadre of experts and government officials, including US Secretary of Health & Human Services Donna Shalala, to speak to the daytime writers and producers, but it was people with a different kind of expertise that really brought the message home.

Daniel Taveras (see sidebar), a member of a teen father panel from Soap Summit II, admitted to being an avid soap opera viewer before he became a father at age 15. He admonished the producers and writers for making issues like teen parenting unrealistically simple.

"The soaps ain't real. They make it seem like two kids have a child, okay, they get married, and everything ends up good now."

After having his own child, Taveras realized just how wrong the TV-land version of parenthood was. Soaps, he feels, could help young people understand the difficulties of teen parenting. "If you're going to make a soap," he says, "make it seem like, yo, that could happen to me."

Another panelist, Raymond Rios, age 17, sat with his one-year-old son on his lap and agreed with

condoms." That's it.

I was just 14. When I saw that body, I was just thinking about gettin' busy. There was no condom on my mind, see? I was just thinking about having sex.

In my family, there's never been an abortion. And there's not gonna be one by me. So when I found out my girlfriend was pregnant, I told her, "Keep that child. I'll try to feed him any way possible." I asked her to keep it. Her mom was gonna make her have an abortion, but I said, "No way." I took her to my house, and she lived with me for a couple of months.

The first time I told my friends the news, they were like, "Danny, you're the man! You're the man!" And I was feeling glad, 'cause I was really not thinking.

There are some problems that I can't handle, 'cause, you know, I never had a father. But there's so much love between me and my son, it's kinda easy for me. I never had a father, but I love my son so much, I can understand everything. I can understand when he's hungry, when he's feeling sad, when he needs his mother. I understand everything. My child is why I'm going to school and why I'm working. 'Cause before I didn't have no life at all. I dropped out of school. I was just in the street. I think my child came into this world to make me realize that

> life ain't no joke. Since my kid came into this world, the first thing I said, "My kid's not gonna be on welfare." He's not on welfare yet. He has a father with a body. Talk of working, busting my ass.... I'm still gonna make money for my son. He's never gonna be on welfare. Because he has a father.

I use condoms now. A condom is sort of about respect.

Back then, I didn't respect the woman, 'cause I didn't know nothing about it. But now I think, even if my girl loves me and she don't want to bring up the condom, I use it, 'cause even if I don't like it, I respect her body, and now I wouldn't like nothin' to happen to it.

Daniel Taveras is currently working at Staples Supplies and attending Yala High School's G.E.D. program in the Bronx. He plans to obtain his G.E.D. and become a computer technician. Seventeenyear-old Daniel Taveras speaks of respect, safe sex, and fatherhood



Taveras. "When it comes down to young kids having kids? That's real serious. And you really can't play with no situation like that. On the soaps it seems like a fairy tale that they're in love. ... It's not really like that."

The third panelist, 21-year-old Max Soto, whose three children range in age from one to five, pointed out that in the soaps, kids disappear when they're no longer needed for the plot. "When a child is in a soap, all of a sudden the child gotta go somewhere, and you never see the child again. I mean, be real, you know what I'm sayin'? Leave the child there. You know, raise the child."

Although Soto's mother tried to instruct him about birth control, he said that her words were just that – words with very little impact. "My mother used to bring condoms home for me, and I'd just throw 'em right in the drawer, right in the drawer, right in the drawer," he says, motioning with his hands. "And it was full – 378 condoms.

And I threw 'em all away as soon as my baby's mother got pregnant."

Ben Powell, mentor to the three boys and counselor for the Inwood House Young Fathers Program adds, "You know, a condom is just a choice. ... You have to teach young people that they have a certain amount of power. And they have choices."

Less glamor – more grit

Thanks in part to the powerful messages from the teen fathers, Ronald Johnson, and other speakers, daytime TV couples are now breaking out packages of condoms, characters are living with AIDS, and teenagers are finding

that it's socially acceptable for an 18year-old to be a virgin. Writers from *Sunset Beach* stated, "We all think twice about the possible 'messages' we are sending with our story lines, plot points; etc. We found a way to get subtle, positive messages out."

Writers from All My Children said they were also inspired by the Soap Summits to create more responsible scenes. On one such episode, a teenage couple was thinking about having sex for the first time. Laura was a virgin, and Scott had fathered a child in a previous relationship. At one point, the two are in Scott's living room and things start to get, well, steamy. Laura brings out a condom, and at that opportune moment, Scott's father walks in. Instead of acting scandalized, the father plunks down between them and starts a dialogue about responsible, safe sex and delaying intercourse.

Research performed for PCI showed that the Summits influenced soap writers to create characters with decidedly unglamorous drug or alcohol problems, integrate people overcoming illiteracy into their plots, and examine issues of women and negative body image. Many followed up on the Summits' suggestion of airing toll-free information and referral numbers after shows dealing with such issues as illiteracy, domestic violence, and drugs. All told, seven out of the 10 dramas made modifications directly attributed to the Summit presentations.

Fox says that the Soap Summits will continue because the writers and producers want them to. In the words of Francesca James, executive producer of *All My Children*, "The Summit focused our caring and made people who are empowered and responsible for creating the information highly sensitive to their responsibilities."

That's not to say that the fantasy element of the soaps isn't still there. Remember Carlos, the character that Ronald Johnson's boys were following? Well, he died and the actor magically reappeared as his long-lost twin. Weddings are still interrupted at the eleventh hour by presumed-dead spouses, and villains still manage to cheat death in the face of explosions, fails from cliff edges, and fatal car crashes.

However, the Summits have inspired new scenes that insert realistic messages into the fantasy and even foster dialogues between kids and their mentors. Ben Powell recalled an episode from *The Young* and the Restless: "This guy was cheating on his wife, and the girl, Keisha, she had HIV, and she died. And then it messed up the whole family," he says. "That whole scene – that was real. That really hit home. I brought a tape of the soap opera in, and we talked about it to the group, because that was something that was concrete that everybody could relate to."

For more information, write to Population Communications International, 4421 Riverside Drive, Suite 204, Burbank, CA 91505. E-mail: PCIUSA@earthlink.net. Web site: http:// www.population.org.

An All My Children teen couple chose abstinence after a candid talk with their TV-land parents Making love can be a gateway to unity with the great mysteries, says Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi and Eve llsen

> Sacred Sex

Sacred sex, which is the experience of ecstasy, is the real sexual revolution. Sacred sexuality is about love – not merely the positive feeling between intimates, but an overwhelming reverence for all embodied life on whatever level of existence. Through sacred sexuality, we directly participate in the vastness of being – the mountains, rivers, and animals of the Earth, the planets and the stars, and our next-door neighbors.

Sacred sexuality is about recovering our authentic being, which knows bliss beyond mere pleasurable sensations. It is a special form of communication, even communion, that fills us with awe and stillness.

Sacred sexuality is about the re-enchantment of our lives. It is about embracing the imponderable mystery of existence, about the curious fact that you and I and 5 billion others cannot account for our existence and our sexuality.

Spiritual seekers have struggled in vain to realize truth, God, or higher knowledge by escaping from what they termed "the prison of the body." In treating the body as an enemy, the antagonist of the spirit, they doomed themselves to experiences of an amputated God. They failed to see that the body is part of the great Mystery. **by Rabbi Zalman Schachter**-

When I was a student in

the yeshiva, I remember thinking of sexuality as that lousy trick that God played on us. How could God do such a terrible thing as to implant in us an urge that is so difficult to resist? I would even get "bad thoughts" from looking at the ads for Maidenform bras that were in the subway.

Shalomi and Eve llsen

This very same urge has been reinforced time



Through sacred sexuality, we participate in the vastness of being – the mountains, rivers, and animals of the Earth, the planets and the stars ...

and time again since we stopped being amoebas and turned into humans. Just think about how this was reinforced. I had two parents, four grandparents, eight great-grandparents. They all did it. Now see

> how it spreads out to countless beings who all did it. Now think of the children who will

have children who will have children who will all do it. And all this fantastic amount of genetic information is concentrated in one flash, as it were, of transmission. How else could it be but ecstatic? How else could it be when so much of the past has to transfer itself to so much of the future through such narrow orifices? It can't be but ecstatic. The Baal Shem Tov, who was a great master of Hasidism, once said, "When you get these bad thoughts, what's bad about them is the garments that they're in. If you take off the bad garments, you see the holy sparks behind them. And these are the ones that glitter in God's crown."

The body holographic

In body-positive spirituality, body and world are rendered transparent. They become like glass, pervious to ordinary light. The body reveals itself to be a hologram in which the universe is captured – a vision that is at once playful and humorous.

In the sexual act, we want to escape the sense of being imprisoned by skin and separated from the rest of the universe. Often, however, this desire remains quite unconscious, and then sex is engaged in as a mere diversion from the concerns and stresses

In the sexual act, we want to escape feeling imprisoned by skin and separated from the rest of the universe



of daily life. Our contact is only skin deep, and consequently we continue to feel alone, abandoned, betrayed, and unloved.

But sexual love can be a hidden window onto the spiritual reality. At the height of passion or in the fullness of love, we might suddenly feel transported to a different plane of existence where all of our sensations, experiences, and thoughts occur against the peaceful backdrop of an overriding sense of at-oneness.

Love is so universal in the world that it even underlies the physical forces of nature. What is gravity but the loving force of attraction between two bodies in space? How marvelous, how basic love is in the universe!

The ecological spirituality called for today is founded in a deep recognition of the unity of life – a unity that is celebrated in the act of love. Through erotic passion we overcome our habitual egoistic insularity and reach into the core of other beings.

There is a rumor that there were times when sex was practiced in sacred precincts. There, both males and females were in the priestly service of ministering to the worshippers and embracing them within the mysteries of life.

I am not sure if this is factual. But the vision and the dream that it ought to have been that way is what makes that thought not just a fantasy. The deep drive in our being is to that intent. Those of us who have experienced this have sought to experience it again.

Somewhere in the dark there lurks the thought that the puberty rites of Bar/Bat Mitzvah and confirmation had something to do with initiation into sexuality.

I ask my Bar Mitzvah boys, "Do you masturbate?" And first they are a little sheepish about it and then they say, "Yes," and I say, "You know what? It is a good thing to do on the Sabbath! Take your time, put on some music, and explore your body and what feels good for you, and most important, let God in."

Can you imagine when a youth learns to honor the power and the fire how different their sexual encounters are going to be later on?

The language that we have currently to speak about sexuality and to impart it to the next generation needs help because we aren't able to bring it into holy discourse any more. We badly need a word other than "fuck." Hear the short vowel in there? It's all expletive. I would like a "000000 eeeee00000ww" in there!

The language of sexuality was at one time embedded in the sacred. Take the first sentence of the Songs of Songs of King Solomon, for instance, "Oh, please kiss me with the kisses of your mouth. Your loving is sweeter than wine."

How I wish that people would begin to create films with a couple caring, nurturing each other, preparing for lovemaking. I wish they would produce films that would show a young person how loving happens, because I fail my children when I cannot take them into our bedroom and show them how it's done. Every generation learns so much from generations past about everything else but our sexuality and how to make it sacred. Sex we have to pick up in the gutter.

A blessing

Holy lovemaking remains a mystery in our culture. Imagine taking a retreat with someone like Zada Zalman, a spiritual elder, who as part of his spiritual instruction guides men and women into the experience of sacred sexuality. The realized elder can lead younger people into seeing the relationship between sex and God, teaching how the union between man and woman, between the masculine principle and the feminine principle, can lead to a state of mystical rapture and oneness with the universe – the same state described by the mystics of all the world's religious traditions. With this attitude, the wise elder can encourage people to make love sacramentally, transforming a physical act into prayer and celebration.

It's similar to the feeling of blessing I give as a rabbi when I preside over a wedding. The blessing runs: "Give great joy to these beloved companions, as You gave joy to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Blessed art Thou, Oh Lord, Who causeth the bridegroom and the bride to rejoice in each other."

This blessing sanctifies the couple's lovemaking. I'm saying, in effect, Dear God, be present with them in their lovemaking; make it a divine celebration.

This type of guidance gets away from the terrible stereotype of the dirty old man. What I'm suggesting is that there's another dimension to an older man's sexual nature. We might call this "the sacred old man." This speaks to the fact that older men – and women also – bear witness to and experience a profound opening to the universe of sex and sexual energy, along with an understanding of its sacred place in the cosmos. This comes only when there's a certain thinning out, a certain transparency of the ego, which generally comes with older age. This egothinning doesn't destroy the ability to experience and enjoy sex, but in fact universalizes it. One's happiness is then extended into the happiness of others. One becomes, then, the principle of blessing.

Imagine a young couple having a sweat with elders. The grandmothers and grandfathers would sit in the sweat lodge, feel the billowing heat and inhale the sweet fragrances, and purify and bless the young couple. They might even give instruction in the ecstatic nature of spiritualized sex. In



When you think about what your partner needs in his or her life and call down blessing with every gentle loving touch, God is not absent ...

this way, the elders, speaking as representatives of the generative goodness of life, could initiate the couple into one of life's deepest mysteries.

God willing, whether you do it alone or you do it with a wonderful partner, send out blessings! You will see what a shift this will make. When you think about what your partner needs in his or her life and call down blessing with every gentle loving touch, God is not absent from the sacred altar – the bed. God is invited. \blacktriangle

Rabbi Zalman M. Schachter-Shalomi founded the Spiritual Eldering Institute and is professor emeritus at Temple University. He holds the World Wisdom Chair at the Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado, and is the co-author of From Age-ing to Sage-ing, published by Warner, NY. He has studied with Sufi masters, Native American elders, Catholic monks, and Buddhist teachers, including the Dalai Lama.

Eve IIsen is Rabbi Schachter's wife and a therapist and performance artist specializing in the practice of transformational imagery. She has studied with mythologist Joseph Campbell, and has gathered songs, stories, and wisdom from around the world.

This piece includes material from a talk given to the 1994 conference of the Association of Transpersonal Psychology and published by the Journal of Family Life. Reverend Mariah Britton challenges the black church to talk openly about marriage, parenting, and "wild, loose ways"

Breaking Silence



Though there may not have been absolute silence on issues of sexuality and the black church, there certainly have been questions that have raged somewhere in our consciousness.

When we talk about sex, on the one hand, there is a saturation of messages and images in the media. On the other hand, sexuality remains an extremely private and uniquely complex sphere of human behavior with social taboos and rules of behavior that make talking openly about it quite unusual. In one sense, it may require more intimacy to *discuss* sex than to engage in it.

Fear of these feelings, mostly fear of lack of control of these

feelings, has dominated Christian teaching for centuries; the early "church fathers" revered the ascetic denial of bodily urges. The body was a burden. And though most of us today would agree that sex is a good that God gave humanity, we still have few clues

by Reverend Mariah Britton

as to what to tell our children to do with

their sexual feelings – except just say "no." Or, by example, we show them the roles we play but do not offer insight into the depth and range of our actions or discuss with them the new possibilities.

What is Christian sexuality? How can we encourage young people to explore the world and ignore their sexual passions? What is it that the black church is saying, has said, or wants to say about sexuality?

In many ways, I think answers to this question are linked to how we view our bodies. Are they for pleasure? Are they for suffering? A great deal of our religious tradition speaks to the suffering black people experience on this Earthly plane under the lash of racism and oppression. Delores Williams (at a Union Seminary Women's Conference in 1995) contends that we must do away with the overemphasis on suffering because it sets up a complacency, even an expectancy, for suffering rather than strengthening people for hope and working out the difficulty.

The silence of history

The history of slavery in this country is one that has left deep psychological scars that pose obstacles to every aspect of our vitality and even basic survival. During slavery, black bodies were beasts of burden, subject to command of the plantation owner; female bodies were used by the plantation owner for satisfaction of his sexual urges and for breeding children. Black men, stripped of all possible opportunity to act as husbands, fathers, and providers for their families were "thingified" as a work tool or in some cases used as a stud.

After the civil war and reconstruction, black women continued to be abused by white men and black men were portrayed as sexual monsters, eager to de-flower the purity of white women. Between 1882 and 1962, Ida B. Wells recorded that some 5,000 lynchings occurred in the South, and about one fourth were predicated upon accusations of attempted rape.

In the 1960s black became beautiful, and there were many years of self-denigration – characterized by bleaching creams, straightening creams, processed hair, blond wigs, and a general longing for European standards of beauty – that needed to be overcome. Grier and Cobbs in their late 1960s landmark work, *Black Rage*, talk about the struggle for black women to feel they are beautiful, desirable, and worthy of tender love. They also talk about the struggle for black men to realize that their sense of personal worth is not always linked to sexual conquest.

"Black Power!" and "Self-determination!" were the cries of the youth beginning to examine the world from a black perspective; these voices broke the silence of Euro-centered models, standards, and cultural codes.

Conquering this world

Throughout all the decades of struggle for black people in this country, the church offered renewal through the salvation story. It was the church that provided opportunities to learn how to read, acted as a social service for many who had no place to go, and was the rallying point in times of trouble. The church was also the place where one learned how to behave in a Christian way. As means of protection against the fragile fears of menacing whites in the South, the church preached against wild, loose ways. The church showed a path to Christian life that was not the way of the world – no drinking, no dancing, no cursing, no intimate relations before marriage. Prayer, church-going, and clean living were the ways to conquer this world.

For many of us today, going to church is still synonymous with getting cleaned up and going the straight and narrow, but few of us, if we are single, have an understanding of what it means to be single from a contemporary Christian perspective. Premarital chastity expresses an ambivalence about women. On the one hand, it protected them from the ravages of men when no contraception was widely available; on the other hand, it views women as property to be handled only by their husbands. Premarital chastity ignores the sexual feelings which all healthy human beings have. Premarital chastity espouses repression and denial of vital life forces. Yes, celibacy is a gift, but what to do about the countless many who don't have the gift and who don't have any prospect of getting married or don't even want to get married?

There are many in our midst who are gay and lesbian, who are loving, caring, giving members of our congregation. Some of them are in hiding because of the homophobia we preach from our pulpits; many love the Lord so much they are even tolerant of the hostility we spew. What say you? Does Jesus love them? Our hearts already know – everyone is precious, everyone is known by God.

This day calls for a new ethic – one that is of compassion, one that trusts and has love as the guiding principle. The truth of the matter is that people – young and old – are making sexual choices with or without the blessing of the pastor or benefit of civil ceremony. In this climate where your selection of mate could be your death sentence, it is critical that the church speak with knowledge and compassion about condoms, contraceptives, and STDs.

If the black church is going to impact the outrageous numbers of reported STDs among black youth, it must break the silence about human sexuality and sex. Data shows that only 11 percent of US teens get most STD information from their parents or other family members. Eighty-nine percent get it from peers and the media. Where is the voice of the church?

We need to help parents explore issues about their own sexuality and develop the facility to talk with their children. In a previous job as liaison to churches, trying to prevent early teen parenting and the spread of STDs, I encountered many pastors who refused the program, saying, "We don't have

It may require more intimacy to *discuss* sex than to actually have sex

this problem with kids in our church." With an attitude like that, it was clear that if they did have young persons who were sexually active, they certainly were not confiding in the pastor.

The problems in our community are opportunities for companionate ministry. The time has come for us to awaken from complacency and move from self-righteousness to struggle with these issues. If we are going to break the silence, let's go all the way.

Reverend Mariah Britton is the associate minister to youth at Riverside Church in New York City. She is in the doctoral program in human sexuality at NYU. This article is adapted from a talk Rev. Britton gave at Howard University.

Can women in their golden years have an adventure that isn't romance? Carolyn Heilbrun urges society's older women to answer their cravings for risk, excitement, and new challenges

Sex Over Sixty

cannot quite cure myself of the conviction that if we could discover a word that meant "adventure" and did not mean "romance," we in our late decades would be able to free ourselves from the compulsion always to connect yearning and sex. If

an ancient (by American standards)

by Carolyn Heilbrun

woman finds herself longing for something new, something as yet not found, must that something always be sex or till-deathdo-us-part romance? The reason for the predominance of sexual aspiration, I have decided, is that no other adventure has quite the symbolic force, not to mention the force of the entire culture, behind it. Elder hostels at colleges and overplanned excursions to foreign parts hardly suggest the éclat

If an ancient woman finds herself longing for something new, something not yet found, must that something *always* be sex?

of a new experience, and our society offers us who are old nothing but the same promises it holds out, with only slightly more sanity, to the young.

An example leapt out at me from a recent issue of *The New York Times Book Review*. Kate Muir had been allowed an entire page to write about *Desert Queen*, Janet Wallace's biography of Gertrude Bell. Bell was an intrepid traveler and diplomat of the early 20th century whose influence on Middle Eastern affairs was profound. She had courage, energy, and intelligence, and lived an extraordinary life for her time, perhaps even for ours. But the reviewer ends on a pitying note:

"The only man who proposed to her was vetoed by her parents as too poor and unsuitable. She had a romance with a married man, largely conducted by letter, that was never consummated. Another relationship during her 50s dwindled away into friendship."

As Ms. Muir bemoans Bell's "lack of success as a woman in personal relationships," she could not be more off track if she had worked on it with both hands for a fortnight. There is not a single implication in this judgment of Gertrude Bell or of any woman with which I agree. A romance with a married man, accomplished in letters and "unconsummated," is accounted as sad, but not half so sad as a relationship with a man that is allowed to "dwindle away into friendship." This is a particularly silly statement and poor advice to those of us advancing in years. Nearer the truth is the fact that if an older woman's relationship to a man has not dwindled (I would say developed) into friendship, it has either continued as a weekly sexual rite, or been dissipated altogether.

It certainly seems true that Gertrude Bell suffered a "broken heart" when young because her father would not let her marry her young man; Muir goes on to suggest that Bell might have had a fuller life if her parents had not interfered and she had married "the poor, unsuitable chap." What the definition of a "fuller life" might, in the case of Gertrude Bell, possibly have been eludes me; no doubt it would have been nicer if she could have enjoyed



both sex and the Middle East, but Muir's implication is clearly that the former would have been the wiser choice. I am reminded of how Clara Wieck's wicked father actually tried to stop her from marrying Robert Schumann, fearing it would be the end of her career as a highly regarded pianist and composer. Foolish, anti- romantic Papa, standing in the way of true love. So Clara married Robert, bore eight children, nursed Robert through his breakdowns, and spent the years after he was institutionalized playing his music (some of which she may have written) all over Europe to keep his name before the public. She had no time for her own musical ambitions; a woman's professional life is always considered well lost for love. But need we always mourn the lack of enduring love when, in hindsight, we consider the life of an accomplished woman?

We often hear that the old are absorbed, indeed compelled, by their interest in sex, and that it is

cruel to deprive them of this compulsion, or to mock it. I'm not saying that the old may not be, or should not be, as active sexually as fate and inclination allow. But I am going out on a limb here to declare that it is likely that aging women who have had a career of adventure and accomplishment still find themselves at as great a loss to come up with a late adventure that is not romance. In my view, highly successful women who have all they want of life's material blessings and furnishings, often find themselves overcome by a desire for something risk, adventure, a new challenge they know not exactly what. And today's proliferation of the romantic story stands ready to answer that craving or need.

Am I able to suggest a substitute, unromantic adventure for women's later life? No, alas, I am not, although I have considered the matter long and hard. I do believe, however, that as we women reach our later years, sex, if it is part of our lives, is a byproduct, not the dominant element. Like happiness, or beauty in a work of art, sex after 60 cannot be the object of any un-

dertaking, though it may sometimes be a wonderful and unsought-for result. Whatever the satisfying and as yet culturally endorsed adventure after 60 may be, its necessary element is the sense of something essential and vital having been achieved or discovered or learned. (I do wish I could say this in a sexier way.)

Carolyn Heilbrun is the author of The Education of a Woman: The Life of Gloria Steinem, Toward a Recognition of Androgyny, Reinventing Womanhood, and the now classic Writing a Woman's Life, among other works of criticism. She is also the author of the acclaimed Amanda Cross mystery series.

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HEARTESOUL

Sarah van Gelder talks with Sam Keen about the complex arts of loving and the many forms love takes – romantic and otherwise

The Loving Arts

SARAH: Your new book is about what it means to be a great lover, but it's clearly not a sex manual. What do you mean by being a great lover?

SAM: Well, first of

all, if I start off

asking, "Am I a

great sexual part-

ner?" that's a

recipe for disaster.

question is "How

do I become a

loving human

being?" My inti-

mate sexual re-

lationship will

be healthy and

The primary



creative only in the degree that I stay with that question.

The great heresy of our time is when we start talking about love in terms of sex. Our concentration on sex has paradoxically ruined our sexual relationships – has trivialized them.

The Balinese say, "We don't have any art, we do everything as beautifully as we can." For premodern society, what we call sex is an integral part of life – even an integral part of metaphysics. The goddess or god figures placed in the fields signify the fertility and creativity of the Earth. Fertility and creativity is very much a part of the original experience of sexuality.

When we strip sex of all of its meaning and focus instead on heightening sensation or even on heightening commitment between two lovers, it's really a very truncated vision.

SARAH: So you'd turn Freud's theory on its head. He says that all desire has a sexual root, but you're saying that desire for sex is actually rooted in other desires?

SAM: Absolutely! All sexuality, even the most twisted sexuality, is rooted in the desire to create.

Plato's idea of Eros wasn't exclusively sexual. Eros was a force that drove the water through the rock and the sap through the tree.

Plato would ask: Why is it that an acorn becomes an oak tree? Because it has a *longing*. The longing to become an oak tree is contained within the acorn.

I think that sexuality is a part of our longing to join with others, to become who we are, to create. Paradoxically, it's when we see it in that context that we are going to have the best sex.

SARAH: You've said that our emphasis on sex as the foundation for all relationships actually cuts us off from other forms of love.

SAM: That's right. We're all going to be out of any sexual relationship for a good part of our lives – at the very least when we're children and much of the time when we're old. So, what do we do? In most traditional societies it's friendship, not romance, that is most highly valued.

SARAH: I've been struck by how often outside North America you see touching that has nothing to do with sex. For example, in China it's not unusual to see two male soldiers holding hands. Friends hold hands as just a normal expression of affection.

SAM: That shows one of the deep kinds of sicknesses of our society - that we have so sexualized touch: If you touch me, that's sexual; if I didn't want it, it's harassment.

It's become almost taboo for us to touch people when we don't

The Heart & Soul section is supported by the Fetzer Institute have sexual intentions. I mean teachers can't touch kids anymore!

And we're creatures of touch! We live more and more in a world of electronics, in a world of images of images of images – the world of "information." Information doesn't smell, it's not tactile, it's a bunch of wavering images on a screen. But we're *embodied* creatures. We were created within a body and nurtured by a body. Most of our experiences of ecstasy have to do with touch. So, what kind of civilization are we creating in which we are literally "out of touch?"

SARAH: It's interesting that we're losing track of touch at the same time as the news is dominated by stories of sex: sexual harassment in the military, Clinton's alleged affairs, the rape in Brooklyn. Why do you think there's such a preoccupation now?

SAM: I suspect that to the degree that our relational lives – our love life in the largest sense – are impoverished, we become interested in sex.

And the more frustrated we become in our efforts to create, the more we become hypnotized by violence. Violence is the final resort of impotent people, and a great deal of what we're talking about in terms of sex is really about violence.

Our consumer society dehumanizes – we've become consumers of images, and sex is a big part of that. It's treating other people as objects, and treating this ecstatic relationship as a joining between a couple of anonymous bodies; this dehumanization is also a form of violence.

SARAH: You've coined the phrase, the colonization of desire ...

SAM: That's right. We are creatures of longing; every religious tradition has told us that. But the great change in the modern world came as mass advertising began SARAH: I believe you've also said "You can never get enough of what you don't really need."

SAM: Well, no. I've said, you can't



to creep inside our desire system and say, "Look, I know what you want. This is what you want. This will really satisfy you."

We are bombarded by images that literally *colonize* our desire system. The advertising industry get enough of what you didn't want in the first place. And that's the basic wisdom all addicts finally come to – the discovery that alcohol or gambling was a substitute for something else.

Likewise, this excess - this

Most of our experiences of ecstasy have to do with touch. So, what kind of civilization are we creating in which we are literally "out of touch?"

tells us that our deepest longings are going to be satisfied by a Rolex, or by a new Buick, or now it's the Range Rover.

And when we get those things and we're still not satisfied, we're hooked into trying again, like addicts. We're hooked on getting the next fix instead of going back to those deep, deep questions: "What is it that has real meaning for me? What is it that I *really* desire?" drive for that fifth million – isn't about money. The great American parable about that is Citizen Kane. What was all his striving about? What did he really want? Rosebud!

When we're addicted, we're obsessed with getting more – whether it's sex or money or luxuries. In all of our lives there's a 'Rosebud,' a longing that's not satisfied by whatever we've become addicted to. **SARAH:** Was there a moment of epiphany for you when you realized you didn't know what you really desired?

SAM: Yeah, it was a gradual epiphany that came in the period before the breakup of my first marriage. I thought that I was a loving guy who knew what I wanted. I'd always thought the problems in my marriage were just my wife's dissatisfactions. Unfortunately, it turned out I was wrong.

I got my wife to go to a therapist to get her "fixed up" and then went along to the therapist myself to help him fix her up. He gingerly suggested to her that maybe half of the problems were Somebody once said, "When the clock strikes 13, everything that went before becomes questionable." I never, *never* thought there would be a divorce, but when it happened, the clock struck 13.

After that, I began to ask myself, "What is it that I do want? And what is it that I call love?"

SARAH: One of the themes that you return to repeatedly is the tension between solitude and inner work, and deeply knowing and being known by another person. Was that a significant issue in your marriage?

SAM: Well I didn't have that separation in my first marriage;



mine – that I was angry at her, angry at my mother, and distrustful of women. Boy, that got me really pissed off with that jerk!

Then one day it came down on me – oh my God, he's right!

At the time I was teaching courses on love at a seminary; I was supposed to know about this stuff! And to find out that I didn't – to find out that a lot of what I called love was fear, and a lot of what I called caring was just trying to control somebody, and what I called play was sarcasm and cruelty. ... I didn't know the difference between me and her.

Now, I'm sitting in a beautiful little studio 300 feet from the house. My wife has a little apartment downtown; I don't even know where it is. I come here to my studio to write, and sometimes I sleep here. It's a place where I cultivate my relationship with myself in solitude. If I don't do that, I get very confused in the intimacy about who I am and what the difference is between what she wants and what I want. Then I cease to deepen the wells out of which I have water to bring to others.

SARAH: Many people spend a lot of time alone, but their experience is more one of isolation.

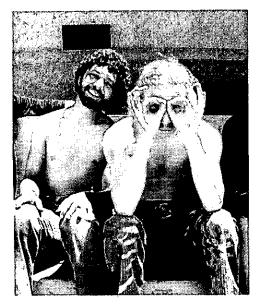
SAM: That's true, but solitude has nothing to do with isolation. One of the major things that we find in solitude is how much we need other people. In solitude we discover that the idea that we are individuals isolated from other people is a lie. Buddhism and other practices of meditation are about busting through the illusion that I am separate and apart and isolated.

And many of the scientific discoveries related to quantum physics and the study of ecology have confirmed this intrinsic connectedness.

SARAH: Let me follow up on that. In some spiritual traditions, the ties of love and sex are seen as distractions from a search for transcendence, and in others they are seen as a means to greater union with God. How do you see that?

SAM: In the Buddhist tradition when you come to somebody, you bow and say "Namaste," which means I recognize that which is sacred in you. That fundamental religious insight doesn't mean that I recognize that the *mind* in you is sacred, or any one part of you is sacred; it means I recognize all of you as sacred. It means that I'm not going to violate you economically, and I'm not going to rip you off sexually. Nor am I going to be ripped off sexually.

It means that whatever relationship we come into is going to be one of respect and of acknowledgment of the sacredness of each other.



And it's within that sacred context, and a context of celebrating the body and celebrating sexuality that we can try to figure out whether sex is appropriate or not appropriate - not whether we're legally married, and have taken a bath, and it's Friday night and the lights are off.

SARAH: Hinduism and Buddhism also have a tradition of celibacy.

SAM: They do, that's right. What's interesting about these

traditions is that the celibacy is not antisexual. People don't flaunt their sexuality they aren't out with miniskirts advertising but they're not prudish either.

Buddhism and Hinduism say celibacy is fine, but there is also

a path to God which uses sexual intercourse and the conscious disciplining of desire. There's choice; you can chose the lefthand path or the right-hand path.

That was not part of the Christianity I grew up with. Nobody ever said, "Get a sexual partner, and practice

breathing and allowing the ecstasy to go into your mind and into your sense of unity with God."

Both Catholicism and the tradition I grew up with, the Protestant/Fundamentalist church, have injured people a great deal. Both impose guilt, hypocrisy and shame.

If you work with people in any kind of therapeutic situation,

you see how many enter into marriages and relationships with an enormous sense of guilt and a sense of the dirtiness and unacceptability of their own bodies.

SARAH: What is the relationship between the skills that make you a good lover and those that make you a compassionate, loving citizen of the world?

SAM: I think that the journey of love is the journey away from

guy who spent time with herds of wild mustangs and learned to talk like a horse by using his body the way they do.

It's a marvelous book because it shows the difference between the old idea of breaking horses and making them fear you, versus this very concrete illustration of what it means to become a cosmic lover.

We can't love nature in the abstract. But we can go out and observe and appreciate. I am sitting in my office right now looking out over the creek, and a pileated woodpecker just landed on a tree right in front of me. It's enormous, the largest kind of woodpecker in the United States.

Well, I can say that I love those woodpeckers. There used to be a nest right over there, and I would sit and watch them – I would pay attention to them.

And I give them respect even a kind of commitment that I won't hurt them. There's

a big dead tree out here, and somebody once



The notion that we can have satisfying love only in intimacy, without loving strangers, is psychological nonsense

feeling that we are at the center and the raison d'etre for all things. I think the journey of love is a journey into union with other forms of life - the realization that we are in a commonwealth of beings.

I'm reading a book that's on the bestsellers' list, The Man Who Talked to Horses, about a

told me I should cut it down, but I said, "No. The woodpeckers need that tree."

The elements of attention, appreciation, and respect are exactly the same elements or skills that I practice in relationship to my daughter or my son.





SARAH: Why would someone choose to cultivate empathy or compassion when it opens you to a greater number of painful experiences?

SAM: The deepest forms of love always involve suffering. I remember when my first baby got her first shot. The doctor came with a needle and put that shot in Lael's bottom, and man, I winced! I felt that needle go right in *my* bottom, and it hurt!

Then there's the compassion I might have for the people killed in the little village in Algeria. I see a picture of a slaughtered child, and my heart goes out to those people. I'm not intimate with them – I will never be intimate with them – but it's not accidental that the great religions of the world have said that compassion, not intimacy, is necessary to becoming fully human.

We have only one choice; whether to feel more or less. We can try not to come in contact with anyone else's suffering, or we can open up and get more suffering – and more joy!

Ultimately, the great crisis in our society is that we increasingly try to privatize love. We think we can have our little love nest down where the roses bloom. Outside, it's okay to be against other people, it's okay to compete, it's okay not to know or care about your neighbors. The community as a whole can go to hell!

The notion that we can have satisfying love only in intimacy, without loving strangers, is psy-chological nonsense. We are not splittable that way. It's the great illusion.

Sam Keen is author of To Love and Be Loved, (Bantam), Hymns to an Unknown God, and Fire in the Belly. He is a graduate of Harvard Divinity School and holds a PhD in philosophy of religion from Princeton University.

A Workbook of LOVE

Sam Keen's new book, *To Love and Be Loved*, describes 16 elements of love, and includes ideas for reflecting on and perhaps relearning habits of love. Here's a sampling:

attention – *noticing and focusing:* Cultivate the habit of interrupting yourself to take note of what you habitually notice and what you ignore. Meditate on how you invest your consciousness.

desire – erotic attraction: To reprogram your desires, experiment with different kinds of fasts. ... Practice celibacy for a while, and you may gain insight into how much your habitual mode of sexual expression contains a hidden agenda for possession, conquest, power, revenge, or security. Go into solitude and retreat from friends, family, and associates, and you will discover a lot about what kinds of relationships you really want.



prison, dying of starvation, wandering homeless. Invite your far-flung kinfolk into the hospitality of your heartful imagination ... in time, you will discover something you can do to lessen their pain.

storytelling – *the loving narrative:* One measure of love is the degree to which it unlocks the tongue. Where are you tongue-tied? What inner dialogues do you not share? What are the unfinished conversations in your life?

repenting – forgiving and renewal: Who have you wronged, betrayed, ignored, injured, manipulated, used? Where do you feel guilty for what you have done or

ashamed for what you have left undone? For what and from whom do you need forgiveness?

self-love – *solitary communion:* Listen to how you talk to yourself. What tone of voice do you use? Include in your self-talk all the components of loving dialogue – encourage, comfort, question, praise, laugh at, and listen to your selves.

commitment – willing to love: What are the unstated conditions in your intimate relationships? Fill in the blank: "I will continue to love you if ______"

adoration – wondering love: If your mate or lover has had, or has been tempted to have, an affair, look at your partner through the eyes of the other woman or the other man. An affair is an X-ray of longing, a diagnosis of what has been ignored. Allow your beloved to escape from the Procrustean bed of familiarity, and you will discover an untamed and wonderful person waiting to meet you at the edge of the forest. And you never can tell what will happen next.

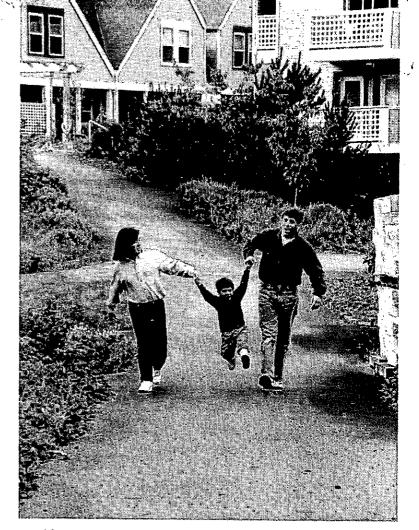
empathy – the loving imagination: Use empathy as an aphrodisiac. Put aside thoughts about the kinds of sexual behavior that excite you, and imagine switching bodies, emotions, values, erotic tastes, and world views with your lover.

compassion – sympathetic suffering: Make it a daily practice to remember the suffering of others. Meditate on the men and women who at this instant are being tortured in

COMMUNITY

A cohousing community becomes home to a gay couple and their newly-adopted Latino son

Family Values



magine this ad appearing in your local paper: "Tri-racial gay family seeks warm, accepting and safe community. Good schools a plus."

How would you respond to such an ad? How would your neighbors respond? Do you know your neighbors well enough to know how they would respond? It was such an ad that my partner, an Anglo-American, and I, an Asian-American, had in our minds as we searched for a community in which to raise our newly adopted, Latino-American son.

At the time, we lived in a typical American suburb – rows and rows of '50s-style houses perched on a California hillside complete with yucca trees and crabgrass, automatic garage door openers and large picture windows that allowed neighbors to

look at each other, but seldom interact. And while we were surrounded with love and acceptance from our family and friends, not a single neighbor came over to wish us and our newly adopted baby boy well. It was not that we were gay. They were simply adhering to the unwritten rule of our neighborhood and so many across the country: Look, but never, never interact.

Long before we adopted Rafael, we had decided to search for a different type of community where our child would feel accepted and included in spite of the fact that he had two fathers who did not look like him. A community that would treat us like any other family, even though we do not represent a "traditional" American family. A community that would support us and endeavor to understand the unique issues that we would face.

For most gay and lesbian people, raising children involves an inordinate amount of hardship. According to the laws in most states, unmarried couples, gay or straight, are unfit to adopt children. And since marriage is not an option for us, the only way we could adopt a child was for one of us to do so as a "single" man, while the other disappeared from legal sight. None of the documents

by Kevin Fong

mentioned any word of our relationship, let alone the existence of another man in the house.

When Rusty went to South America to adopt Rafael, he could not mention my name to the other adopting families for fear that he would be discovered. Seven weeks and 10,000 miles separated us from what should have been one of the most profound and joyous experiences of our relationship. A long, complicated, and expensive legal process followed before I was granted equal custody of Rafael. It was experiences like these that furthered our resolve to find a supportive community.

Having heard about cohousing through a newspaper ad, we decided to take a tour of Winslow Kevin, Rafael, and Rusty relish the normalcy of family life in cohousing Cohousing in Bainbridge Island, Washington. Cohousing is a kind of intentional neighborhood – each family has its own living space, but there are facilities held in common as well as frequent shared meals. Not many people were out on that crisp January morning, but we were greeted warmly by those we met. We brought forth our concerns, and our future neighbors were both sincere about their enthusiasm and honest about their shortcomings. Their biggest fear, it seemed, was not whether we would fit in with them, but whether they or their children would fall short of our expectations! As luck would have it, a home was available, and we moved in eight weeks later.

Normal life

One of the first things that struck me about living in cohousing was how normally we were treated – especially Rafael. So many things set him apart as unique and special: he is adopted, he is from South America, he has two fathers, he lives in a multicultural household. But among the 35 children at Winslow Cohousing, he is just another kid, treated with the same respect as all the rest.

Likewise, Rusty and I are treated like any other adults in the community. Sure there were the initial questions: "Which one of you is Rafael's mommy?" "Is Rusty your wife?" Inevitably, such



questions would come from the children, although it seemed that the adults were often just as curious. We would answer in a straightforward manner, and satisfied, the children would go about their lives.

Our 6-year old neighbor was overheard defending the argument that two men can get "married." He used us as his example, and his word

was accepted. For the most part, the curiosity has long disappeared, and we are, simply, Kevin and Rusty – Rafael's dads.

The acceptance provided by our neighbors and the greater community of Bainbridge Island means that we do not have to hide our relationship behind closed doors. We can be a family, fully and freely – something so many others take for granted.

Surely there will be difficult issues and situations, especially as Rafael enters school. We are doing our part to prepare ourselves and our son for such situations. Surrounding ourselves with people who accept, embrace, and even defend us has been a key factor.

I recently spoke to a teacher at the local elementary school. She told me that she can distinguish cohousing children from the others in two ways: 1) Because they have daily contact with such a variety of adults, they can relate to her much more easily; 2) Whenever a cohousing child is being bullied, the other cohousing children are right there to provide support and protection.

This support and protection will greatly contribute to Rafael's self-esteem. Rafael has already developed a unique charm and a disarming sense of humor that draws people into a world that is completely healthy and natural to him. During a recent visit with his godmother, Rafael proudly proclaimed, "I have two daddies! How many daddies do you have?" When his godmother replied that she only had one, Rafael asked, "What happened to your other daddy?"

One of the greatest advantages of living in a cohousing community has been the consistent presence of women in our lives. Rafael has a number of cherished "mother figures" in the community, with whom he interacts on a near daily basis." While we did not seek or expect this, it has been a wonderful bonus.

Our neighbors have taken the time to hear our stories and build relationships. We, in turn, have opened our hearts and our lives to them, taking the risk of walking through the doors of our community – only to discover that they remain open. Living in cohousing allows us to look beyond the surface and discover that our core values of respect, love, and community are indeed the same.

It is a typical Saturday morning. Our door is wide open as Rafael and his friends run about, screaming with wild abandon. He has already had three breakfasts – the first sitting in our home, the second at the neighbors' place across the way, and the third at another neighbor's home down the footpath. That our child, whom two gay men adopted from a land 10,000 miles away, can feel such a level of acceptance in this neighborhood is truly the essence of community.

Kevin Fong is a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of YESI A Journal of Positive Futures. He lives on Bainbridge Island, Washington, with his partner and son. The people of Sri Lanka are building a strong, healthy, and self-sufficient society based on Buddhist and Ghandian principles. Sharif Abdullah witnesses a ...

Village Revolution

Following is the second part of "Letter from Sri Lanka," continued from YES! #3, Fall 1997. In this excerpt, Commonway director and Positive Futures board member Sharif Abdullah recounts his recent travels to

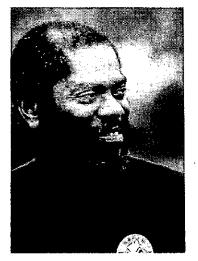
Sri Lanka and the time he spent with Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne, founder and president of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement and winner of the Ghandi Peace Prize.

I'm eating with my hands. I'm wearing a skirt. Other than that, I'm the same old Sharif. The sarong is by necessity; even my so-called warm weather clothes are no match for this heat. So Dr. Ariyaratne found me a white sarong that fits me well. I look cool, and after cultural adjustments in the bathroom, it's working out fine.

I'm in Sri Lanka to learn more about Sarvodaya and Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne. As the head of my own organization dedicated to making the world a better place, I am here to benefit from the experiences of a man who has been doing non-violent, social/ spiritual work since I was a child.

Sarvodaya began 40 years ago when Dr. Ariyaratne, then a young teacher, took some of his students to poor villages to donate their labor. Since that time, Sarvodaya has become Sri Lanka's largest – perhaps the world's largest – people's development movement. Today over 8,000 villages are actively involved in Sarvodaya projects, which include orphanages, water and solar energy projects, a school for the deaf, a library, legal services, women's projects, economic development, and more.

Two days after my arrival, we attend opening ceremonies for several Sarvodaya village banks. I am dumbstruck by the large scale and simple dig-



by Sharif Abdullah

nity of these banks.

But getting there is a challenge. Because I have been feeling motion sick after two hours of driving Sri Lankan style (careening from one near collision to another as fast as possible), I lie down in the back seat. After a few hours, Ari announces, "Wake up, we're here." Still half-asleep, I stumble out of our four-wheeler as a horde of little school girls hand me a stack of leaves, then bow, palms together in greeting.

I try to hang back and get my bearings when I realize that as the second honored guest, everything

that Ari does, I am supposed to do! It really helps to be awake at times like this.

Each of the welcoming ceremonies follows a similar pattern: Outside the village there is a colorful archway which says, in Sinhalese: "Welcome Gandhi Peace Prize Winner." We are met at the arch by 6-10 little girls in white, who offer leaves and bow. Then another 6-10 little girls are lined up to sing a song made up for Ari. The songs are long. Then, *another* 6-10 little girls line up and lead the group in a folk dance into the village. These can be *very* long. Once, Ari leans over and says, "This dance is like the pace of development: two steps forward, one step back."

The Sarvodaya banks are built by village people pooling their hard-earned rupees. All of the village banks are run by women, and women make up 70 percent of the depositors and 80 percent of the borrowers. (When asked about the breakdown, a Sarvodaya official shrugs; it just happens that way.)

If the village has reached its goal of saving 150,000 rupees (about 3,000 dollars), Ari lays a cornerstone for the creation of a physical bank. If they have reached the 1,000,000 rupee mark, he is cutting the ribbon on a completed bank building.

The first ceremony is a ribbon cutting. The "bank" building is a 10-by-10 cement structure with a corrugated metal roof and no electricity. The only interior furnishing is a counter and a small table (no chair) where the Sarvodaya bank person will record the transactions in ledger books.

A revolution in progress

Here I am, on the other side of the world, in this very cramped, dark, tiny, hot room, the oil lamp consuming all available oxygen, watching a revolution in progress. I get tears in my eyes as I watch a village woman, dressed in her best sari, hand a 100 rupee note to Ari. 100 rupees is about two dollars – a day's wages for this woman, if she's lucky. The humbleness of the structure and the audacity of Ari's plan are truly amazing.

Sarvodaya presently has 104 such banks in operation; they aim for 10,000. They now have 7,000,000 rupees collected. If they can get even 1,000 banks operating, they will be the single largest economic force in Sri Lanka.

All around the world, poor people's money and labor are used to feed the insatiable appetites of transnational banking corporations. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund make the world safe for continued western consumption. The exceptions to this rule are significant because they are so few: Grameen Bank in India, the Mondragon economic system, South Shore Bank in the US. And the Sarvodaya banking system.

The Sarvodaya village banks lie at the heart of a development plan that harnesses the strength of the village instead of saddling it with crippling debt. Micro-loans are made only to villagers and for such things as purchasing more seed for a larger rice crop, digging a well, or starting a small business. In small, incremental steps, the entire village benefits from a stronger, healthier, and independent internal economic structure. (On a later visit to the village of Hedidenekanda, I met with the Sarvodaya village president, Mr. Samaresenahewitarana, who told me that of the 7,000 loans the village has made in the past eight years, there has been only one default!)

After the deposits, we are ushered outside to a seating area, where Ari gives speeches to the villagers. He tells the villagers that they are a part of a revolution and that the money they save now will make the villages better for their children. Everyone listens with rapt attention; it doesn't seem like they are blinking. Even the young children hang on his every word.

After the speeches, we go to a table laden with food, then jump into the vehicles where we are whisked away to the next ceremony.

At the third ceremony, the district administrator for something or another leans over to me and says, "In our country, men wear their sarongs the way you are wearing yours. But generally, when they do, it is flooding." Everyone dies laughing, and the joke has to be repeated at every stop. I am honored guest and comic relief.

At 8:30 pm, as we are driving around in the dark, everyone in the vehicle is speaking Sinhalese – except, of course, me. I think we are going to find our resting place; we are actually going to yet another meeting. Ari hands me a stack of their reports. They're in Sinhalese, but I'm so tired that they're actually starting to make sense.

The future of Sarvodaya

Sarvodaya is at a crossroads in its history. On the bleak side, with the ethnic/civil war still raging in the country, the opportunities for achieving Dr. Ariyaratne's vision of full-scale, people-centered development are limited. And, because the war is primarily ethnic, it can continue as long as Sinhalese and Tamils bear children.

On the bright side are Dr. Ariyaratne and Sarvodaya. For over 40 years, Ari has been the champion of a style of development that emphasizes spirituality, one very different from, and at times in conflict with, Western notions of development.

As more people in the West discover the limits of a society based on materialistic excesses, the simplicity that Sarvodaya offers will become increasingly appealing. As one Sarvodaya worker said to me, "Perhaps one day the West will discover that it needs *our* aid."

BUSINESS & LIVELIHOOD

Near Burlington, Vermont, an old dump is becoming fertile farmland and seeds are sown for an eco-industrial park. Donella Meadows on turning waste to treasure....

Seeds of Restoration

The Intervale, the green floodplain where the Winooski River winds through Burlington, was once the site of flourishing farms. Green Mountain Boy Ethan Allen had a homestead there, and

long before him the Abenaki Indians cultivated the fertile soil. But as the city grew, the valley degenerated into a weedy urban wasteland, literally on the wrong side of the tracks. People still went there to fish, but also to dump garbage, old tires, and cars. It wasn't a pretty or safe place to hang out; it was no community asset.

The turnaround began with the McNeil wood-burning power plant. It was built at the entrance to the Intervale during the 1970s, when everyone was scrambling for energy that didn't come from the Middle East. Then Gardener's Supply, a gardening equipment store and

mail-order house, settled nearby because its founder, Will Raap, was attracted by the energy-saving idea of warming his building and greenhouses with the power plant's waste heat.

Under Raap's leadership, and with the partner-

ship of the city and the utility, the practice of turning waste into resources has been moving steadily down the Intervale, transforming it from a dump to a source of beauty, recreation, food, and jobs.

Now just past Gardener's Supply there is, appropriately, a garden. A seed company, The Cooks' Garden, tests and demonstrates its special vegetable and herb varieties here. There are The Intervale Farmstand was once an old train depot



also plots for Gardener's Supply workers and a market garden that supplies a farmstand at the entrance to the valley.

A nature trail and a bike path take off from the gardens and wind along the river. On a sunny Sat-

urday, there are joggers, bikers, and families with baby carriages. The trails pass by a nearby field that grows organic produce for the kitchens of Fletcher-Allen Hospital, Burlington's main medical facility.

A bit farther down river is the regenerative engine of the Intervale, an urban composting project. The city's yard and food wastes come here, get mixed with milky wastewater from the Ben & Jerry's ice cream plant (the place smells of sour milk), and cook into mountains of fertilizer. This operation saves the county hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in landfill costs. The compost is sold to city gardeners and landscapers and blended into the Intervale's fields to revive depleted farmland. Every few years, the compost project is picked up and moved down the valley, leaving behind a fertilized clearing that forms the basis for a new farm.

Farmers' incubator

On the previous site of the compost operation is now a subscription farm, which sells shares to 350 families and 600 individuals who live nearby in the

Everything runs from renewable energy and recycled materials – using no toxins – and turns out fresh, nutritious food for local consumption

densely settled Old North End of Burlington.

Member families pay a monthly or yearly fee and come by once a week to pick up a bag of freshly picked greens, beans, tomatoes, corn, potatoes – whatever is in season. Farther on, there's a community garden where families work their own plots.

Scattered within easy reach of the compost are other small farms. The Stray Cat Farm grows cut flowers for sale at the farm stand and the Burlington Farmer's Market. Diggers Mirth is a collective that produces veggies for families in the Old North End. Maxwell & Berry grow perennial flowers, Green Mountain Mesclun turns out tender baby salad leaves, and there's even, improbably, an artichoke farm.

The farmers starting out here are required to use

organic methods and to draw up a careful business plan. In return, they get cheap land rent, greenhouse space, shared equipment, and compost for a few years until they are up and running.

Gradually, new space is opened for these ventures. Ben & Jerry's employees organize a work day; the city brings in trucks, and volunteers clear out tires and garbage, plow the soil, spread it with compost, and plant cover crops, readying the soil for serious agriculture.

Raap envisions moving right on down the Intervale, keeping natural vegetation along the river and in the wetlands and flood channels, but returning the rest of the land to a breadbasket that could supply as much as 10 percent of Burlington's fresh produce.

Raap is also still musing about that waste heat from the power plant, only a fraction of which is used in his own business. Some of it could heat bio-domes, big greenhouses that could grow vegetables year-round. And he's picturing an eco-industrial park on 9 acres next to the power plant. He's fascinated by the idea of waste from one industry becoming raw material for another. One

> of the first occupants of the eco-park will be Living Technologies, a company that designs and builds biological wastewater treatment plants that turn sewage into material for producing flowers, decorative plants, and fish.

On a bright day, walking the Intervale with

Raap, seeing what has already been accomplished and hearing his dreams, I could picture clearly what is still to come: 150 more good jobs in addition to those already created by the power plant, Gardener's Supply, and the existing farms. And, says Raap, up to \$50 million a year in new economic value. Everything runs from renewable energy and recycled materials using now toxins, and fresh, nutritious food is produced for local consumption.

A businessman walking with us caught the vision, too, and looked at Raap with awe. "Now there," he whispered to me, "is an entrepreneur!"

Donella Meadows lives in Plainfeld and is an adjunct professor of environmental studies at Dartmouth College.

GLOBAL SHIFT

Everybody's talking about the weather. President Clinton seems ready – at long last – to do something about it

Slouching to Kyoto

n recent years, global climate change has emerged as a threat of potentially cataclysmic dimensions.

Changing precipitation patterns will threaten now-fertile croplands. A rise in insect-borne and infectious disease is expected – and it is not only insects and microbes that will travel more. As climate change wreaks havoc, people will migrate in search of sanctuary, and in an overcrowded world, this is a prescription for chaos.

Extreme weather events – hurricanes, tornadoes, floods – are expected to increase in frequency and severity. Rising oceans will swamp low-lying areas.

Seventeen percent of Bangladesh is threatened, as are 9,000 square miles of coastland in the US. Entire island nations will disappear.

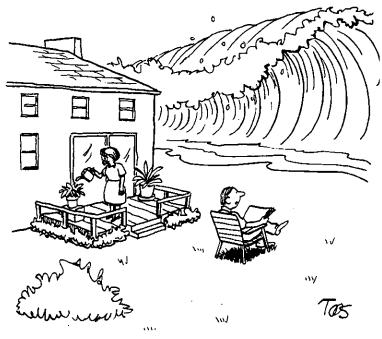
This December, diplomats from 166 nations will convene in Kyoto, Japan to agree on a global strategy for reducing 'anthropogenic' - human-produced greenhouse gas emissions, which scientific consensus now accepts as the main cause of climate change. The gathering will culminate a United Nations process that began at the 1992 Earth Summit with the enactment of the global Framework Convention on Climate Change, and has continued with stops in Bonn, Berlin, and elsewhere.

With the possible exception of the fossil-fuel industry, the US

has not made many friends during this process. The Clinton Administration has been taken to task by

Frankel the European Union, the Alliance of Small Island States, and others for failing to exercise leadership on the climate change issue and even for being outright obstructionist.

One set of problems involves performance. As a signatory to the Framework Convention, the US pledged to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions at 1990 levels by the year 2000. However, according to Department of Energy data, US emission levels have risen to at least 8 percent above the 1990 level,



"Marge, I've been thinking we should write Congress and encourage them to take action on global warming."

with the figure projected to exceed 13 percent by the year 2000.

US negotiating positions have raised hackles as well. The country is waffling on its commitment, made in 1992 and reaffirmed in 1995, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions ahead of the developing countries. And the US has so far refused to commit to a specific emissions reduction target. This is in sharp contrast to the Alliance of Small Island States, which has proposed a 20 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2005, and the European Union, which wants to bring emissions to 15 percent under 1990 levels by the year 2010, with half of those reductions coming by 2005.

The US isn't the only country that's been recalcitrant – Australia, a major coal exporter, has threatened to pull out of the negotiations entirely. But more is expected of the US, which has only 4 percent of the world's population but produces over 20 percent of anthropogenic greenhouse gases.

The heat is on

Not all the news is bad, though. With things heating up in the final countdown to the Kyoto conference, the Clinton administration's attitude toward climate change seems to be taking a turn for the better. "Clinton appears to have become a convert," says Ross Gelbspan, the Pulitzer-winning author of *The Heat Is On*, a hard-hitting work that sounds

The president emerged from a meeting with eminent scientists saying he found the scientific reasons for concern "clear and compelling"

> the alarm about global climate change and charges carbon interests with attempting to undermine the debate through a disinformation campaign.

> According to Kelly Sims, Ozone Action's science policy director, Clinton got the climate-change gospel through a bruising series of diplomatic encounters earlier this year. At the G-8 economic summit in Denver this past June, he was attacked by other participants for having neither targets nor a timetable for greenhouse gas reductions.

In that same month, some 2,700 scientists, including three Nobel laureates, issued a statement of concern about global climate change. A few days later, the United Nations' Rio+5 gathering was held in New York City to review progress – or the lack thereof – since the 1992 Earth Summit. Here, too, according to Sims, "even more pressure was placed on the US." The heads of state of Germany, France, and the United Kingdom objected to the US position in a manner that Sims says "wasn't even diplomatic."

President Clinton was one of the last speakers at Rio+5, and his speech indicated that he had finally gotten the message. "Frankly," he acknowledged, "our record since Rio is not sufficient. We have been blessed with high rates of growth, ... but that has led to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions. ... So we must do better, and we will."

To that end, Clinton announced a four-part program to ramp up the national commitment. First, he pledged \$1 billion in assistance to developing countries to support energy efficiency, alternative energy, and improved resource management. Second, he promised to "do more to encourage private investment to meet environmental standards." Third, he pledged to launch a program to install solar panels on one million roofs by 2010.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Clinton committed to a massive public education program to "convince the American people and the Congress that the climate change problem is real and imminent."

This will not be easy. For the most part, the US public treats unlimited energy consumption as an inalienable right, right up there alongside freedom of speech and the press, and the powerful carbon lobby does its best to encourage this attitude in Congress.

Recent advertisements sponsored by the carbon lobby complained, "The United Nations is negotiating a climate treaty that will require severe restrictions on the amount of energy we use. And it puts the entire burden on the US and a few other countries."

In a parallel development, a Sense-of-the-Senate resolution favoring a firm stance toward the developing countries was approved by 95-0. This resolution, which was sponsored by Senator Robert Byrd, a Democrat from the coal-producing state of West Virginia, did not carry legal weight but delivered a powerful warning shot across the bows of the US Kyoto delegation. None of this has been missed by the Clinton Administration, which publicly frets about the favorable treatment accorded developing countries.

On the road

Still, the newly motivated president is doing what he can. In July of this year, the president convened a meeting with eminent scientists to discuss climate change. He emerged telling the press that he found the scientific reasons for concern "clear and compelling." In August, he brought 10 CEOs from Fortune 500 companies to discuss the business implications of climate change. In September, he met with the heads of leading environmental organizations. In October, he brought business leaders, scientists, labor leaders, academics, and others to a day-long conference. And the administration arranged for television meteorologists to be briefed on climate change.

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In addition, the administration has been conducting a series of regional workshops to build awareness of the local impacts of climate change. Dirk Forrester, chair of the White House Climate Change Task Force, emphasizes the two-way nature of these communications. "We want to improve public awareness about the science of climate change, and we also want to increase public involvement in the policy-making process."

Blair Henry, chair of the Northwest Council on Climate Change, a citizen group, confirms that public participation is now considered crucial, and that's a very important shift. "Federal officials are also viewing this shift as revolutionary," he says. "Things are really starting to snowball politically."

Storm Warnings

There are signs that global weather patterns have already begun to shift . . .

Storm warming. The continental US experiences 20 percent more blizzards and severe rainstorms than it did before 1970, as well as 10 percent more winter precipitation, according to a 1995 study by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Tom Karl.

Breaking the ice. Five of the Antarctic Peninsula's nine ice shelves have disintegrated in the last half-century (three in the last three years) as Antarctic surface temperatures have risen 4 to 5 degrees Fahrenheit.

Forest growth. Forest growth in Alaska and Canada is slowing, following a 4 degree temperature rise in the last 90 years, according to Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory researchers. Higher temperatures appear to increase the trees' respiration and their vulnerability to insects.

Glacial retreat. Mountain glaciers are retreating at an accelerating pace, and average temperatures in high tropical mountains are higher now than at any time in 2000 to 3000 years. Over the past 150 years, large ice fields in Canada have shrunk by nearly 25 percent. Altered seasons. Spring comes a week earlier to the northern hemisphere than it did 20 years ago. One researcher at the Scripps Institute of Oceanography noted that "small changes in temperature – averaging only a fraction of a degree Celsius a year – are nevertheless causing large changes in plant growth."

Migration patterns. Driven by changing temperatures, the Edith's Checkerspot butterfly has shifted its entire range northward and upward, reported the National Center for Ecological

Analysis and Synthesis at UC Santa Barbara in 1996. Such moves are considered a bellwether of climate change.

Early birds. Several species of migratory birds return to Michigan's Upper Peninsula up to three weeks earlier now than they did before 1960. This correlates with earlier thawing of ponds in the area. The World Wildlife Fund reports changes in bird

sightings at 15 critical sites, including the Great Salt Lake, Chesapeake Bay, the East China Coastal Plain, and Tierra del Fuego.

Rising seas. Sea levels have risen 4-10 inches in the last century – more than in the previous 1,000 years. Researchers discovered that average waves in the North Atlantic were 50 percent higher in 1993 than they were during the 1960s; storm waves averaged 10 percent higher.

The food chain's missing links. In 1995, Scripps biologist John McGowan reported that Pacific zooplankton – a key food source for fish – declined by 70 percent in 20 years because of a 2-3 degree increase in surface water temperatures.

Marine ins and outs. Stanford University biologist Chuck H. Baxter found that warming water in California's Monterey Bay has driven out cold-water crabs and

snails and allowed warmer-water snails, anemones, and others to move in.

Killer heat waves. More than 700 people were killed in 1995 as severe heat waves racked Chicago. The University of Delaware's Center for Climatic Research predicts that deaths in US cities from extreme hot weather will climb over the next 25 years.

Bigger Niños. El Niño events, central Pacific warmings that influence weather worldwide, typically last a year or two. The early

1990s saw a five-year-long El Niño, something Kevin Trenberth and Timothy Hoar of the National Center for Atmospheric Research have noted should occur once in 2,000 years. (See "Indicators," page 8.)

 Chris Carrel with material from Ross Gelbspan's The Heat Is On, adapted from the July 9, 1997 issue of Seattle Weekly



And now, Kyoto

Precisely what all this will mean in terms of actual policy changes is anybody's guess. In a June speech, Clinton pledged to bring to Kyoto "a strong American commitment to realistic and binding limits that will significantly reduce our emissions of greenhouse gases."

That may be good news, and then again it may not – Clinton's use of 'realistic' in this context is worrisome. Ozone Action's Kelly Sims believes that a weak agreement could act as a palliative, reducing grassroots concern and ensuring that activity remains limited to an emotionally reassuring but ineffectual rearrangement of the deck chairs on the Titanic. If the parties fail to reach agreement, however, that could trigger an international grassroots outcry. In Sims' view, this is what it might take to produce a truly effective agreement.

Ross Gelbspan, author of *The Heat Is On*, is also concerned about the chasm between the 5-20 percent reductions that are on the negotiating table and the much more drastic cuts in anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions that the influential Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change believes are required to stabilize the climate at current concentration levels.

"A reduction [of 50-70 percent in fossil fuel

Kids in Kyoto

On the opening day of the Kyoto conference, 21 children, from 21 countries, will present delegates with as many letters as they can gather asking for an enforceable agreement on a 20 percent reduction in greenhouse gases.

Children cannot vote, but they can remind delegates of the future. The effects of the world leaders' actions, or lack thereof, will be borne not by those currently

squandering the bounty of Gaia, but by their children.

If you feel attracted to their call please send them a postcard supporting the 20 percent reduction. It is in the dreams of youth, a poet once wrote, that our responsibilities begin.

Postcards may be sent to:

Global Voice in Kyoto 97 - The Group of 21

c/o The Kiko Forum, #305 Takakura Building,

Takakura-dori Shijo-agaru, Nakagyo-ku,

Kyoto 604, Japan

Web: http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/org/s-world/cop3/index/htm - PHILIP GRANT emissions]," he has written, "means, in essence, the virtual extinction of the \$2 trillion-a-year coal and oil industries." Gelbspan has called for a "global Manhattan project" to replace fossil fuels with alternative energy technologies.

Whatever the outcome of the Kyoto gathering, climate change is already transforming more than the weather. For one thing, it has undone the united front generally presented by business lobbies when confronted with policies that could drastically change business as usual. The insurance industry, which has seen its weather-related liabilities climb from an average \$2 billion per year in the 1980s to \$12 billion annually in this decade, is openly sparring with the fossil-fuel industry about the need to control greenhouse gas emissions.

Even the once-monolithic petroleum industry is showing rifts. Last May, British Petroleum's CEO John Browne announced a comprehensive program to address the challenge of climate change (see YES! #3). And, in late September, he called for the imposition of energy taxes to reduce energy use.

Meanwhile, alternative energy is taking off. The solar industry is expanding at over 25 percent per year, and wind power is booming, too. There are a lot of reasons for this – prices are falling and the technology is improving – but the long-term need to mitigate climate change is also an important factor.

What's especially noteworthy about all this is that it has been happening without much public awareness of the dangers of climate change. That's where President Clinton's public education program may really make a difference. Right now, the US public is largely uninterested in energy issues. A few more Red River floods, however, and that could change. With a lift from an extreme-weather tailwind, Clinton could end up getting more than he reckoned for – an aroused public, agitating for real change. \blacktriangle

Editor's Note: As YESI went to press, President Clinton had just announced the US position on climate change. Clinton proposes industrialized countries stabilize emissions from burning fossil fuels at 1990 levels by 2012. He also proposes \$5 billion in tax cuts, research to improve US energy efficiency, and tradeable CO2 emissions permits.

Carl Frankel is the US editor for Tomorrow Magazine and a contributing editor to YES1 His book, In Earth's Company: Business, Environment, and the Challenge of Sustainability (New Society Publishers) will be out in Spring 1998.



After a series of devastating floods, the people of Pattonsburg rebuilt their town on higher ground – and they did it sustainably. Here's how "weird, liberal ideas" ended up in the plan

Skipping Town

When the rains first started in by Steve June of 1993, everyone in Pattonsburg, Missouri began to keep an eye on the river. The Grand River had jumped its banks before without flooding the town, but by July, town residents and others up and down the Missouri and Mississippi rivers were packing their favorite possessions and moving uphill to escape the rising waters.

Not everyone, however, was in a hurry to get

out of Pattonsburg. One farmer simply took his armchair upstairs and rode out the flood on the second floor. This "flood macho" was also demonstrated by local patrons of the Double Eagle bar, who sat playing dominoes as the waters inched over their boot tops. The owner kept the bar open as long as she could, but abandoned ship when the tables began to float by with the bottles still on them.

When the flood waters finally receded, the residents of Pattonsburg fixed their houses and moved back in. But no sooner had they buried their dead and scraped the mud off their floors when a second, more devastating flood rolled into town.

The floods of 1993 were hardly the first major inundation

by Steve Lerner

enced. Since it was founded in 1845, Pattonsburg has been flooded at least 30 times, suffered a devastating fire, and been partially destroyed by a tornado. In the 1970s, the residents were hit by an economic catastrophe more powerful than any natural disaster: an interstate highway, I-35, was built a few miles east of Pattonsburg. Until then, Pattonsburg had drawn much of its commerce from

that Pattonsburg residents had experi-

The last straw – after the flood of '93, residents decided to move Pattonsburg



Route 69, a narrow two-lane blacktop.

When the interstate bypassed Pattonsburg, businesses in town shriveled up. The intermittent flooding didn't help either. Once a bustling town of 2,000 residents, Pattonsburg's population dwindled to 316. Evidence of the town's abandonment could be seen everywhere: many homes were boarded up, and along Main Street the grocery store, pizzeria, and a host of other enterprises had gone out of business. Yet it wasn't until the great flood of 1993 – the nation's costliest flood with \$12 to \$16 billion in damages in nine states – that Pattonsburg residents finally decided to move to higher ground.

Ideas into action

While the flood was having its way with the residents of Pattonsburg, Nancy Skinner, an entrepreneur who sold environmentally safe paint, was warm and dry in her apartment in Chicago watching television coverage of the massive Midwestern flooding. As news of the devastation unfolded, Skinner had an idea: since the government was poised to spend \$6 billion on flood relief in the Midwest, why not use the funds to relocate communities out of the flood zone so that in the future, federal dollars would not be needed to bail them out again?

While the federal government can't move L.A., it *can* move a small town like Pattonsburg

And why not rebuild these communities using the best available environmental and energy-efficient technologies?

These were reasonable questions, but for most people this kind of brilliant idea would have faded within an hour. Skinner, however, is a persistent woman whose bouts of enthusiasm have staying power. Over the following weeks she ran up an impressive phone bill calling the Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA), the Department of Interior, the White House Office on Environmental Policy, and a host of other bureaucracies. Her suggestion was generally received as a good idea, but the federal employees she spoke with just referred her to some other bureaucrat.

Skinner's telephone marathon continued until she spoke with Bill Becker at the Department of Energy, whose unique experience permitted him to appreciate Skinner's suggestion. As a former resident of Soldiers Grove, Wisconsin, he had been instrumental in lobbying to see his own beleaguered town moved out of the flood zone to higher ground in 1978.

Instead of just rebuilding the Soldiers Grove business district along conventional lines, government relief funds were spent constructing passive solar, superinsulated, energy-efficient buildings that were cost-effective. The town passed the first solar ordinance in the country requiring that newly constructed commercial buildings derive at least half of their heating from the sun. Planners also strategically planted trees in a pattern that blocked winter winds while channeling summer breezes. From the Soldiers Grove experience, Becker learned that the practical and frugal residents of small Midwestern towns could be convinced to relocate and rebuild along ecologically sustainable lines.

When Skinner and Becker connected over the telephone, two of the pieces for Skinner's plan fell into place. What they needed was someone who could pull together specialists fromaround the nation who knew how to design and build an environmentally friendly and energy-efficient community. Becker knew just the person for the job.

Robert Berkebile is a prominent Kansas City architect and an expert on the environmental costs of building materials and various construction methods. By the time DOE's Bill Becker called him in 1994, Berkebile had become one of the focal points for a loose network of green architects and experts in a number of fields. Through this network, Berkebile assembled a team of professionals who could travel to flood-devastated towns and help the residents plan cost-effective, ecologically sustainable communities.

Learning from the past

The design team first met in January of 1994 at the Johnson & Johnson Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin. To keep the 40 experts grounded, Dennis Knobloch, the mayor of Valmeyer, Illinois, was invited. Valmeyer (population 900) was a town largely destroyed by the flood of 1993, whose residents were living in trailers provided by FEMA. The government was providing \$30 million in disaster relief to relocate the town to higher ground.

While he had been reluctant initially to attend the conference, by the end of the presentations Knobloch had heard enough useful ideas that he invited the design team to use Valmeyer as a site for their first demonstration project.

Unfortunately, the planning process in Valmeyer was so far advanced that the design team had only marginal influence. Valmeyer's regional planners had already designed a suburban cul-de-sac community - the streets were laid out in the wrong direction to take advantage of the sun. Nevertheless, some modifications were made in the plans for the new town, including the use of ground-source heat pumps in a couple of buildings and improved energy efficiency measures. "It was a very good learning experience for us, even though the results were not what they might have been," Becker concludes.

Fortunately, Skinner (who now runs Daybreak International, a nonprofit organization that consults on

sustainability projects) had invited David Warford, the mayor of flood-damaged Pattonsburg to Valmeyer. She had heard from a FEMA official that the Pattonsburg residents' idea of how to relocate out of the flood zone was to move their town to an off-ramp of an interstate and throw up some truck stops to capture the passing vehicular business.

It turned out to be a good match. Pattonsburg's Mayor Warford was looking for all the help he could find, and at the end of the workshop, offered Pattonsburg as the next demonstration project for the design team. He pointed out that the residents of Pattonsburg were not wedded to a car-oriented suburban design.

Making their move

In Bettie's Cafe in downtown Pattonsburg, a halfdozen farmers are sitting around a table sipping coffee and eating breakfast. On the wall above them is a poster for the Road Kill Cafe, offering delicacies such as "smear of deer." In this flood-cursed town where 65 percent of the residents are over 60 years old, the farmers are debating plans to relocate their town out of the flood plain.

Some are in favor of the relocation. A young farmer who grew up in Pattonsburg sees it as the town's only hope. The town will continue to die until it moves to a place where businesses will feel safe without fear of being flooded out, he says.



But not everyone is anxious to agree. "Most people here can't afford to move," says a man wearing knee-high rubber boots. "We have a lot of widows and elderly people here on fixed incomes living in houses half chewed-up by termites. If you tried to move those houses, they'd turn into dust. Besides, why should we move?" he asks, shrugging his shoulders. "I've lived with the flooding all my life. It's just a part of living here. It's a hell of a lot better than living in Los Angeles with those earthquakes."

While the federal government can't move L.A., it can move a small town the size of Pattonsburg. Furthermore, a study directed by the Army Corps of engineers found that federal flood control efforts would be less expensive and more effective if people were moved out of flood plains. Experimenting with this flood relief strategy, government officials agreed to finance the largest post-flood relocation in the nation's history. Pattonsburg was an obvious candidate for one of these efforts, and \$12 million was set aside to move the town two miles to a higher elevation. Designers and residents meet for a "visioning session" Pattonsburg officials recognized that this large infusion of federal funds into a small town like theirs was unlikely to reoccur any time soon. To help them invest the money wisely, Berkebile's design team arrived in Pattonsburg in September of 1994 for a three-day planning session. The designers were scheduled to listen to what residents wanted their new town to look like at a "visioning session," present the residents with an expanded menu of options, and finally draw up a town plan.

Convincing skeptical Midwesterners to move their town was a task only slightly less daunting than negotiating an international nuclear arms reduction treaty. The first meeting, held in the Pattonsburg school gymnasium, was led by Milenko Matanovic, a consultant from the Pomegranate Center for Community Innovation based in Issaquah, Washington. After showing a documentary about Soldiers Grove, Wisconsin, Matanovic pinned a large map of Pattonsburg to the wall. He began to solicit ideas about what residents treasured in their community and wanted to incorporate in New Pattonsburg: some people liked the feel of walking down Main Street; others had grown accustomed to the faded red brick facade of the stores; some liked having separate entrances to each of the shops; someone spoke lyrically of a neighbor's garden: another resident didn't want to lose the sound of the town whistle that blows morning, noon, and night. The list of town treasures grew.

"I thought passive solar energy was just some weird liberal concept that had nothing to do with me"

Residents and members of the team of experts then visited the site of the new town, 640 acres purchased from several local farmers. The land stood on a hill, several miles from the old town and about a quarter of a mile from the interstate highway.

Standing at the edge of a cornfield, the designers took note of a line of trees they wanted to save. They brought with them large topographical maps of the site that helped them to plot precisely how stormwater drained from the land. From this inspection of the site, they recommended that the existing contours be preserved as far as possible so that the land would continue to drain naturally. This would save the town the considerable expense of building and maintaining a conventional stormwater system. Existing ponds could be augmented to work as detention ponds that would permit much of the stormwater to go back into the ground instead of running off the land. If the right plants were grown in this constructed wetland, contaminants in the stormwater could be filtered out so that the runoff from the town would actually be cleaner than the water currently draining from the cornfield.

Local farmers and rural residents easily grasped the advantage of using the lay of the land to drain stormwater from their new town. "We come from a farming community and a lot of these ideas are not so different from things farmers do regularly," says Mayor Warford. "People in farming communities are very aware of the cycles of nature and they tend to take the long view. When you make your livelihood from the soil you realize that you have to protect it or you won't have an income any more."

An enlightened way to build

Planners also suggested that the streets of the town be oriented along an east-west axis so the houses could take advantage of passive solar gain during the cold Missouri winters. Planting deciduous trees on the sunny side of the house would shade them in the summer while allowing the sun to shine through the bare branches for warmth in the winter. Furthermore, creating a tree line of windbreaks would protect the houses during the winter, channel summer breezes, and muffle noise from the highway.

The town was designed to be pedestrian-friendly - everyone was no more than a five-minute walk from downtown. Housing for the elderly was sited in the center of town so that older residents would not be isolated from the town's daily activities. The commercial and industrial zone was positioned closest to the interstate, while its Main Street was set farther back from the highway where it would have a quieter, slower-paced, feel to it. Following a neotraditional town design, planners also attempted to recreate some of the best aspects of the old Pattonsburg's Main Street. The retail section of the new town, for example, would be a single-walled structure, but each business would have its own entrance and the height of the facade would vary as it did in the old town.

To keep their new town on a sustainable trajectory, Pattonsburg residents were willing to put their environmentally friendly principles into a written

code. Pattonsburg's town council is poised to adopt a number of covenants and restrictions drawn up with the help of Dan Slone, an environmental attorney from Richmond, Virginia. In the prologue to these new regulations,



the town of New Pattonsburg commits itself to "encourage, and in some instances require, the use of energy-efficient designs and sustainable construction techniques within its limits."

These covenants and restrictions ensure that while New Pattonsburg will not be a perfect model of sustainability, at least it is headed in the right direction. "We could try to turn Pattonsburg into a utopian community but it wouldn't work," says Becker. "In the end it has to be what the community can afford to live with. What we hope is that New Pattonsburg will be far more sustainable than it would have been without input from the design team. We hope that it will be a model of an enlightened way to build a town."

A greater motivation

Both the Pattonsburg and the Valmeyer planning and relocation efforts demonstrate that sustainable development is more than just an attractive theory. The design team found that it could "sell" Midwesterners on a variety of cost-efficient strategies.

Nancy Skinner recalls an interview with a resident in Valmeyer who said: "When members of the design team first talked about passive solar energy, I thought this was just some weird liberal concept that had nothing to do with me. But when they explained what it meant in practical terms – that it was just how you orient your house in relation to the sun and the type of materials you build with – then it made perfect sense to me."

When surveyed, residents of Pattonsburg voted

to build a resource-efficient town largely for economic reasons. When they saw the film of what people did in Soldier's Grove, they realized they could save money building energy-efficient homes. "That message played very well in Pattonsburg. People said that they didn't care how freaky some

> of these newfangled ideas sounded as long as they worked and could save them money," Skinner observes.

> > But they also had a motivation that was greater than saving money. Mayor War- ford says that the relocation helped change his thinking.

The Pattonsburg move sensitized residents to environmental issues

"It sensitized me to environmental issues. I was aware of some of these issues before, but now I am seeing solutions to problems instead of just problems."

Warford recalls a trip he took to Washington, DC to search for funds to move Pattonsburg. While in Washington, he was struck by the large number of homeless people. Warford has a particularly strong recollection of standing outside the Smithsonian when a teacher advised his group of students to look the other way and pretend the homeless people outside the building did not exist.

"Part of the problem in this country is that we ignore problems and hope they go away," he says. "We can all put our heads in the sand and say there is no problem with the ozone layer. But I am sure not going to tell my 13-year-old boy to pretend that these homeless people don't exist. I'm going to say, 'Aren't we fortunate we are not in the same situation, and what can we do to help?' Of course, one person can't help the homeless people, but maybe as a nation we can. And maybe as a nation we can help solve the environmental problems we face today." ▲

Steve Lerner is research director of Commonweal, a nonprofit organization that focuses on environmental and health issues. This article is adapted from a chapter in his book, Eco-Pioneers: Practical Visionaries Solving Today's Environmental Problems. Copyright © 1997 Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

SUSTAINABLE LINING

Take one community, add a dash of enthusiasm, a pinch of political activism, and an assortment of home-cooked food. Shake things up, then share

Starting with Food

bout two years ago, I started thinking about the political involvement of people like myself. I was once very involved in peace/no nukes activism, but after settling into a career and starting a family, I didn't have a lot of extra time in my life. My political activity became limited to sending checks to organizations, voting, writing the occasional letter, or getting involved in a neighborhood issue that directly affected me.

It wasn't satisfying. The vitality, passion, and direct involvement I had known before were missing. So I asked myself how I could help people, including myself, to become meaningfully involved with political action?

The answer started with food: a meal exchange. If you get nothing more out of this article, a meal exchange is an idea that will change your life.

It works like this. A small number of families four in our case - agrees to participate. On Sunday, each family makes four family-sized portions of a main dish. The family keeps one of the portions for

by Stuart Stotts

itself, and gives the other three away to the three other families. So each family has four meals for the week.

We're a vegetarian meal exchange. We all live within two blocks of each other. The biggest problem so far has been keeping the containers and dishes straight.

I can't recommend this idea enough. It's a small

remedy for so much that's wrong with our society: fast food, isolation, consumerism, excess spending, lack of family time. But it also formed a foundation for a related experiment.

I wrote a letter to others in my neighborhood, including the families in the meal exchange, asking them to join me once a month for two hours to work on political issues.

This proposal to form an affinity group aroused a lot of interest. Eventually, after much coordinating of schedules, 12 people committed to the group for a year. All of the meal exchange families participated; I believe that the link we established through food helped us to take this next step together.

Over the course of the year, we have organized a march for tolerance as a counterweight to a rally against homosexuality. Over 150 people marched with us, and we held a follow-up discussion at a community center. We held a potluck for Madison's local currency project. We organized a neighborhood "Get Out the Vote" campaign and a potluck on the issue of pornography. We've had some fun meetings and some boring ones.

We've accomplished many things that we wouldn't have individually. We've come to see ourselves as more capable and powerful at political action. And we've gotten closer to each other, and to people and resources in our community.

We've also learned some important things about how to organize such a group. Our monthly meetings combine group-building activities, organizing strategies, and actions. We discuss and plan one month and act the next. For example, at a January

meeting, we might spend half an hour getting details on February's action on hunger and food pantries which had been planned by a small committee of volunteers. The action might consist of working at the food pantry, contacting local media with information on hunger in the area, and offering a larger political analysis of hunger in America.

Since we make initial plans three months in advance, we would also decide what issues to address in April. While the large group might brainstorm for five minutes, the small group would form the plans and decisions.

The rest of the time in the January meeting is spent on group-building activities and whatever the meeting facilitator had set up. Sharing food is always one important activity.

In February, we would meet to carry out the action on hunger. In March, we would analyze February's action, receive details on April's action from the small group, brainstorm June's focus and delegate volunteers to form an action plan, and use the rest of our time for group process work or political discussion.

That's the outline. Sometimes, of course, it's smoother than other times. But, it has at its core several important points:

• As much planning as possible is done by small groups. The energy of the large group can then be focused on action, not dissipated by details and discussion.

• Well-run meetings are a must. One person takes responsibility for setting the agenda, writing it all on big pieces of paper.

• Share tasks as much as possible. The facilitator role rotates for each meeting. Different people take the lead for different parts of the meeting. The more people who have something to do, the more connected people feel.

• Tackle many and diverse issues. Our group had originally intended to choose one issue to focus on throughout the year. After a while, it seems that one action or focus leads to a related one, and the interests of the group can build organically.

• Make meetings fun. We do group building exercises, introductory topics, and games to get us thinking in new ways.

• Child care needs to be available. We can't do this kind of work and attend to our children as well.

Action is important. This isn't a salon or discussion group; the goal is to get out and do things in the world.
Join with a larger group or a larger event when

necessary. It saves organizing energy, but the affinity group isn't absorbed into the group. It's just there to help.

• Make sure members live close by. Connections are built up through casual neighborhood contact, and common interests are more easily found.

• Take on tasks out of interest, not guilt. If no one wants to do something, then it won't get done. We are trying to become involved

and informed citizens, not fulltime activists.

An affinity group isn't about striving for diversity for diversity's sake. It's more important for people to feel connection and enthusiasm for each other, an affinity, so they can work together well. There needs to be a commitment from members to keep going when group dynamics are frustrating, and to work as lovingly and honestly as possible to resolve issues.

A healthy future

It may be difficult to face the enormity of the challenges in our society as well as our own feelings of frustration, despair, and powerlessness. An affinity group can provide a safe forum for people to do some of this inner work.

Jean Houston, a writer and consultant on human and cultural development, said that one aspect of a possible healthy future is the development of small learning communities that explore common interests in an environment of learning and personal growth. We can move beyond powerlessness and isolation together, learning through becoming involved and processing our experience. It requires courage, but I have found it a worthwhile and stimulating endeavor.

Stuart Stotts is a songwriter and storyteller. He invites anyone interested in more details or in sharing stories about community organizing to write to him at 169 Ohio Avenue, Madison, WI 53704.

INREVIEW

LIVING DOWNSTREAM

LIVING DOWNSTREAM: An Ecologist Looks at Cancer and the Environment by Sandra Steingraber

Addison-Wesley, 1997 Reading, ME 357 pages, \$24 hardcover

n the US, the cancer epidemic has been progressing steadily. In 1950, 25 percent of adults in the US could expect to get cancer during their lifetimes; today about 40 percent of us (38.3 percent of women, 48.2 percent of men) can expect to get cancer.

Among Americans age 35 to 64, cancer is the number one killer. Because of this fact alone, one might expect that the nation would welcome a book by a qualified sci-

The lifestyles of children have not changed much in 50 years, yet childhood cancers are steadily rising

> entist who examines all the lines of evidence linking cancer to chemical contamination of the environment and offers solutions.

> But one would be disappointed in that expectation. Sandra Steingraber's new book, *Living Downstream: An Ecologist*

Looks at Cancer and the Environment, has been greeted with nearly total silence.

At age 38, the author is an accomplished researcher, writer, and teacher with a PhD in biology from the University of Michigan. She obviously spent years preparing the manuscript, visiting special libraries, interviewing cancer researchers, and applying her scientific training to the diverse evidence linking cancer to environmental contamination.

Furthermore, the book is beautifully written. Steingraber (who has previously published a volume of poetry, *Post-Diagnosis*) has the gift of combining poignant, lyrical prose with scientific exactitude and clarity. She is among the rarest of scientists – those who can write so well that their readers are transported effortlessly through the complexities of an arcane topic like cancer cell biology. '

Simultaneously, she is careful to note the limitations of scientific knowledge. She never oversteps the bounds of what is really known, what is suspected but unproven, and what is merely informed speculation.

The book is, first, a detective story. Steingraber investigates Tazewell County, Illinois, where she grew up, looking for clues to the rare bladder cancer that she herself contracted at age 20. It is also a thorough scientific treatise on the relationship of cancer-causing chemicals to human and animal health.

Steingraber cites the following evidence as indications that certain chemicals (and radiation) can cause cancer:

• Immigrants soon exhibit the cancer rates of their adopted countries, rather than the cancer rates of the place where they were born.

• Maps show more cancers in urban than rural areas.

• Maps show more cancers in rural counties with heavy pesticide use than in those with low pesticide use.

• Individual studies reveal cancer clusters near chemical factories and near particularly polluted rivers, valleys, and dumps.

• Rates of childhood cancers are rising. The lifestyles of children have not changed much in 50 years; they do not smoke, drink alcohol, or hold stressful jobs. Yet childhood cancers are steadily rising.

• Fish and shellfish living in polluted water have increased cancer rates. In North America there are now liver tumor epizootics (the wildlife equivalent of epidemics) in 16 species of fish in at least 25 different fresh- and salt-water locations, each of which is chemically polluted. In contrast, liver cancer among members of the same species who inhabit nonpolluted waters is virtually nonexistent.

• Studies show that chemicals can damage the immune system and the endocrine system, promoting cancers.

Yet, despite the abundance of evidence, science has never proven beyond all doubt that the use of chemicals by the human economy is responsible for a substantial fraction of the cancer epidemic. As Steingraber puts it, "Like the assembling of a prehistoric animal's skeleton, this careful piecing together of evidence can never furnish final or absolute answers. There will always be a few missing parts."

However, the limitations of science do not render us helpless. Steingraber notes that as she was writing the last pieces of the book in late 1996, the news broke that scientists had finally found the agent in cigarette smoke that causes lung cancer. Yet, she points out, she herself grew up protected from cigarette smoke by her parents and teachers, and by public policies that kept cigarette smoke out of restaurants, hospitals, and many other public spaces – actions taken and public policies created by people "who had the courage to act on partial evidence."

This is a key concept. It underlies the principle of precautionary action. Yet many scientists and policy makers exhibit a hushed complicity, afraid to speak out about what they themselves believe to be true: that cancer is caused by exposure to carcinogens and that enormous suffering could be avoided if we would reduce our exposures to cancercausing chemicals in air, water, and food.

Steingraber says we will have to adopt a new way of thinking about chemicals. "This requires a human rights approach," she says. "Such an approach recognizes that the current system of regulating the use, release, and disposal of known and suspected carcinogens – rather than preventing their generation in the first place – is intolerable." Such a practice shows "reckless disregard for human life."

And: "When carcinogens are deliberately or accidentally introduced into the environment, some number of vulnerable persons are consigned to death. The impossibility of tabulating an exact body count does not alter this fact."

By any measure, *Living Down*stream is an extraordinary work – extraordinarily easy (even pleasurable) to read, extraordinarily thoughtful and even-handed in its treatment of a politicallycharged topic, and extraordinarily informative, thought-provoking, and useful.

Reviewed by **Peter Montague**, editor of the excellent Rachel's Environment & Health Weekly, which is published by the Environmental Research Foundation. To subscribe to this free publication, call 1-888-2RACHEL, or send e-mail to INFO@rachel.clark.net with the single word HELP in the message. http://www.monitor.net/rachel

HERETIC'S HEART: A Journey Through Spirit and Revolution by Margot Adler Beacon Press, 1997

Boston, MA 318 pages, \$24 hardcover

Too often, the 1960s are stereotyped as a decade of sex, drugs, and rock and roll. In her new book, *Heretic's Heart: A Journey Through Spirit and Revolution*, Margot Adler turns that stereotype on its head as she reveals a time that was, for her, one of spiritual growth and cultural transformation.

Adler is New York bureau chieffor National Public Radio and an authority on paganism and feminist spirituality.

Drawing upon her journals and personal correspondence, Adler captures the passion and motivation behind her involve-



ment in the many movements of that era: the Berkeley Free Speech movement, the voter registration efforts in Mississippi, the Venceremos Brigade in Cuba, the anti-Vietnam War movement.

The daughter of communistsympathizing parents, Adler naturally developed ideological sense at a young age. She demonstrated for the integration of Woolworth stores at age 13 and protested against civil defense drills in high school.

Her rite of passage involved leaving the comfort of school and journeying to the heart of the civil rights conflict in the South, while knowing a return to the protection of middle class comfort was inevitable. Writing of her efforts to register southern blacks to vote, she says, "I certainly believed in civil rights and had been taught from an early age to respect people of all races and nations. But beliefs Margot Adler is the New York bureau chief for National Public Radio alone would not have brought me to the Mississippi Delta. I felt a call to adventure, a need to throw myself into a new and different world and learn its lessons, to undergo a test of fire."

The 30 years since have done much to hone her ability to reflect upon her politicized youth. She now describes those times of outrage and direct action as "jubilant," "electric," and "luminous," conveying a sense of wonder at the history that was so rapidly unfolding.

Her own evolution led her to embrace the myth, ceremony, and song of Earth and Pagan traditions. She writes, "The journey of this barefoot minstrel starts in the place where nature and music and mystery flourish. Then, as in all journeys, there is the exposure to fears and trials, and teachers good and bad; there is the great toll that society and culture always extracts. The long time when dreams and talents and desires are submerged, and the ensuing struggle for freedom and values. At the end of my own journey, there is a return to ritual and song."

Adler's book is exceptional among the many that have been written on the '60s – most of which were authored by men. Her

"I felt a need to throw myself into a new and different world, to undergo a test of fire"

recollection of and letters home during the Free Speech Movement at UC Berkeley weaves her experience of moral outrage together with her own personal struggles. She writes of women's roles in that movement and the sexism she encountered both in Cuba and while working for other causes.

Heretic's Heart sweeps you up

in the movements that set the stage for much of what is happening today, casting away the myth that the 60s was strictly about rebellion and hedonism. Adler writes with considerable skill of this period of history when justice and racial rights were concrete goals – not unreachable ideals – and activism brought lasting change. Her book is also a poignant, personal, and revealing 60s memoir from someone who was at the epicenter of social change.

Reviewed by **David Kupfer**, a freelance writer, environmental analyst, and consultant to various businesses, organizations, and film studios.

A WORLD THAT WORKS: Building Blocks for a Just and Sustainable Society *Trent Schroyer, editor*

The Bootstrap Press, 1997 New York, NY 355 pages, \$19.50 paperback

This compilation of alternative economic thought and practice from India to Indiana is a reviving book for anyone struggling to get a breath of common sense

on the Good Ship Global Growth. More than two dozen useful and sometimes acerbic essays take the hot air out of western industrial myths and bring economic development back down to

Earth, where healthy ecosystems and human communities meet.

A World That Works: Building Blocks for a Just and Sustainable Society is a product of The Other Economic Summit (TOES), a loose international network of independent but cooperating individuals and groups. Since 1984, TOES has held its own policy conferences at the same times and places as the annual economic summits of the G-7 leading industrialized nations. TOES brings together all those not invited to the G-7's power lunches. So does this book.

Ghandian economist Romesh Diwan shares stories of how some Indian communities have regained their rights to common land and built sustainable economic and social wealth by honoring "Enoughness." Mahatma Ghandi explained "Enoughness" as the truth that "nature is compassionate and provides enough for the needs of all, but not for the greed of even one."

Richard Grossman, of the Program on Corporations, Law, and Democracy, explains how US citizens gave up their sovereignty over corporations as courts turned artificial entities into "natural persons." He suggests that it's time for people to be accountable to future generations and take back their sovereignty.

Other essays describe how and why local currencies and microcredit can build community and self-reliance; how global agreements – from GATT to climate treaties – end up undercutting local health and welfare; and how people are fending creatively for themselves, like the street-children who run a radio station in Port Au Prince.

The diversity of subjects and writers makes this book a good overview of the breadth and depth of practical alternatives and contra-corporate thought in the world. With a little patience for the occasional yawn over a few academic and activist-insider phrasings, readers will enjoy this shot of commonsense economics.

Reviewed by **Patty Cantreli**, an independent journalist and alternative economist based in Ava, Missouri.

NATURE'S SERVICES: Societal Dependence on Natural Ecosystems

by Gretchen C. Daily Island Press, 1997 Washington, DC 416 pages, \$49.95 hardcover

What is nature worth? How do we determine its value? What is the exchange rate of a sunset? More to the point: What price can we place on the ecosystem services we have lost and those we are poised to lose?

Nature's Services: Societal Dependence on Natural Ecosystems, an important new book by Gretchen C. Daily, considers human society's dependence on the health of natural ecosystems.

Natural ecosystems produce a wide range of "ecosystem goods" - seafood, fodder, fuelwood, timber, and pharmaceutical products. And they provide indispensible, life-supporting services - purification of air and water, detoxification and decomposition of wastes, climate regulation, and soil fertility regeneration. They are the fountain of biodiversity, essential to agriculture, the pharmaceutical industry, industrial enterprises - and life itself. Yet when does this value ever figure into a company's or a nation's chart of accounts?

Nature's Services is probably the first systematic attempt to chronicle and value this cornucopia. More than 30 eminent scientists and economists have contributed chapters that document ecosystem products and services, explore both philosophical and economic issues of valuation, offer case studies of selected ecosystem products and services, and discuss the policy implications of these findings.

Consider: One third of human food comes from plants that are dependent on wild pollinators, such as birds, bees, flies, and bats. Without the services provided by these animals, many plant species could face extinction and many crops would cease to exist economically. Yet many pollinator species are threatened by human activity. Who pays?

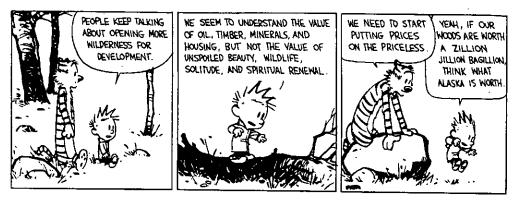
Consider: Human agriculture is based on such foundations of agriculture as soil formation and natural pest control, seed dispersal, flood control, water purification, production of oxygen, mediation of both global and local climate, and the design intelligence of 3.8 billion years of R&D. Who pays?

It's an obvious management precept that what gets measured gets managed, and what gets measured gets valued. Is it any surprise that the invisible bank account of natural capital is being squandered?

Fortunately, nature's services are now starting to come into focus. "Just as one cannot capture the full value of a human life in economic half that amount.

But today we are locked in a conundrum. Even those companies that recognize their economic dependence on the goods and services provided by ecosystems must operate within a market system that too often does not. As Garrett Hardin observed in *The Tragedy of the Commons*, our capitalist economic system provides incentives to those who pursue private advantage and disincentives to those who would nurture common resources.

Daily argues that we face a dual challenge. First, we must rewrite the "rules" of economics, and the generally accepted principles and practices of accounting, so that ecosystem goods and services actually show up on budgets, balance sheets and profit and loss statements where decision makers can see them. Second, management must design and implement business strategies that treat natural capital with as much respect as



terms, it would be absurd to try to estimate the value of nature in strictly economic terms," Daily writes. "But estimates of the lowerbound, marginal value of nature's goods and services in the trillions of dollars are critical to informing decision makers."

The estimates are still rough, but Daily pegs them at about 33 trillion dollars. This sounds like a lot of money, and it is. The total value of the worldwide monetary economy is a bit more than economic capital and that still deliver profit to shareholders. It's no small challenge. But fortunately, as *Nature's Services* demonstrates, these innovations are underway.

Reviewed by **Gil Friend**, president of Gil Friend and Associates. GFA helps companies and communities prosper by embedding the laws of nature at the heart of enterprise.

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BIOMIMICRY: Innovation Inspired by Nature

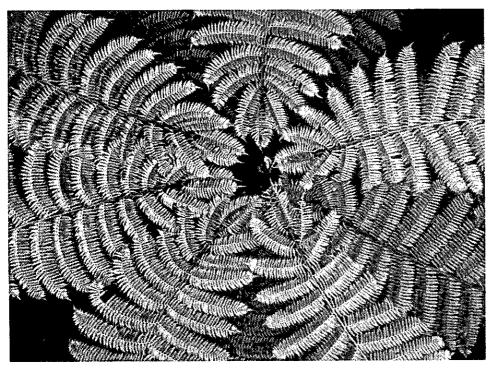
by Janine M. Benyus William Morrow and Company 1997, New York, NY 308 pages, \$25 hardcover

From looking at the cover, I assumed this was a book about such biological mysteries as how insects have evolved the capacity achieve such a world, Janine Benyus credibly explains, we have only to respect, study, and emulate nature.

Benyus (re)defines biomimicry as "a new science that studies nature's models and then imitates or takes inspiration from these designs and processes to solve human problems." And Benyus shows that this is a science that already has some very creative practitioners.

Biomimicry brings us portraits of cutting-edge research into growing food like a prairie, gathering energy like a leaf, weaving fibers like a spider, computing like a cell, running a business like a redwood forest.

Are you a hi-tech farmer in



to camouflage themselves to look like the leaves they hide among. I discovered *Biomimicry: Innovation Inspired by Nature* really is about how humans could have a fantastically high-tech and still sustainable civilization that could blend seamlessly into the Earth. That's right – no contradiction between hi-tech living and sustainability. To hock over your ears to seed, fertilizer, and pesticide companies and stuck with obsolete equipment? Check out the vision of a practical nature-based agriculture as detailed by Wes Jackson, who shows how a prairie-based, chemical-free form of agriculture will benefit farmers and their ecosystems – as well as all of us who eat. Are you a graduate student envisioning a career at the forefront of computing, while repressing terror at the poor prospects of the human future? Imagine the excitement of biocomputing research using protein molecules that recognize patterns and find solutions to problems unimaginably faster and more efficiently than the most sophisticated silicon chips of today.

We have, of course, always copied nature in our technology: our looms were inspired by spiders, our aircraft by birds, our "chunnelers" by moles, our computers by our own brains, and so on. But we did things mechanically, often paying little attention to nature's style.

Today, much of this century's infrastructure is in need of replacement - including outmoded highways, energy and communications networks, water treatment facilities, factories, and even economic models. Nature's blueprints could provide a foundation for their replacements. As Benyus tells us, there is no reason why we cannot develop a technology with far greater complexity and sophistication than anything we have yet invented that also supports a healthier, happier future for both humans and nature.

"For too long we have judged our innovations by whether they are good for us, which has increasingly come to mean whether they are profitable," Benyus says. "Now we have to put what is good for life first, and trust that it will also be good for us."

Reviewed by Elisabet Sahtouris,

evolutionary biologist, eco-philosopher, and futurist. She is the author of EarthDance: Living Systems in Evolution and co-author with Willis Harman of the forthcoming Biology Revisioned.

READERS' FORUM

Timber in impoverishing the land and the people.

"Purity of Purpose" for environmentalists is part of surviving the vertical playing field where corporate power terminated whole ecosystems and the small communities dependent on those ecosystems. Until these small communities can heal their denial of the hard truth that Big Timber is the proximate cause of their pain and join with the environmentalists, there can be nothing more than ongoing scapegoating of the environmentalists.

We agree, rebuilding local communities is the only way out. But how do you do that when all their wealth - monetary and natural – has been extracted? A first step is to join forces with the people who have fought valiantly to stop that extraction, instead of blaming them for job loss.

Every small community which benefitted from the unsustainable logging's plunder must now pay the piper; no amount of scapegoating will suffice to ease the changes to new kinds of jobs which are necessary. Reach out to the folks who fought to preserve the forests. Many of them are jobless, too, precisely because of that commitment.

ART&CINDY STRAUSS Columbus, Ohio

Gifford Pinchot III responds

Thank you for your letter identifying the role of "Big Timber" in the destruction of community in forest country. I understand your concerns but think you are too hard on YES!

YES! is devoted to finding positive solutions to the environmental crises of our times and clearly shares the environmental agenda of those

who would protect the forests. YES! does not believe that the solution lies in finding out who to blame, but rather in changing the system so sustainable solutions emerge. This may soften the tone of criticism, but please do not mistake this for lack of commitment to increasing biodiversity or protecting communities.

If we were to blame, should the blame be placed:

On the individual with the chain saw? How could they not see the damage?

On the divisional director within the corporation who orders the cut?

On the corporation as a whole? On the US government for not making better regulations?

On the market economy for ignoring long-term environmental concerns?

On the human race for its shortsightedness?

On Gaia for tolerating the human species?

On God for allowing humanity to evolve?

There is no clear stopping point in this expanding circle of blame. You have chosen corporations, but other entities clearly are also involved.

Will finding the real culprit stop the destruction, or must we show people alternatives to this way of living? My belief is that both approaches are needed – that holding Charles Hurwitz and his more corporate kin up to scorn with active protest is good and that YES!'s approach is also good. Both approaches together accomplish more than either alone. Perhaps we should spend less energy criticising one another and more on stopping those who don't understand the value of a standing forest to those in and around it.

GIFFORD PINCHOTIII Board member, Positive Futures Network Bainbridge Island, WA

Censorship?

You are doing a great job, but any journal which publishes readers' letters and fails to include their full addresses engages in a needless form of censorship, helps promote the anonimity and powerlessness which is a major curse of mass society, and frustrates the endless possibilities of networking.

continues from page 5

Readers'

Forum

JOHN PAPWORTH Fourth World Review 24 Abercorn Place London NW8 9XP

Editor's Note: While we feel a strong obligation to protect the privacy of those who write to us, we welcome readers who wish us to print their full addresses to let us know in their letters.

Real progress

Someone recently sent me a copy of your Fall 1997 issue. What a pleasure to read something positive!

For the past four years, I've been collecting the history of the timber industry for Cook County, Oregon, and the deeper I dig, the more I realize that there's been a war going on. I try to be objective, but I'm disillusioned since the war over the environment causes more casualties than anything else. It is reassuring to see that real progress is being made.

I'm passing several copies of the issue along to friends. Thank you for this excellent publication.

> MARTIN MORISETTE Prineville (Post), Oregon

Scratch and sniff

I adore the Northwest issue and its whiff of farmlands, woods, and fields. Thanks so much!

> FOREST San Francisco, California

PF NETWORK NEWS

Saying YES! to the Millennium



Positive Futures Network News

continues from inside front cover disarmament and green plans for various industrial sectors. Leadership is also coming from moms and dads who want safe and sustaining communities, from people of all colors and ages, and from all sectors in a creative, chaotic outpouring of innovation.

Why don't we hear more about this? The mainstream media is the most powerful creator of our cultural self-image, and it is solidly locked into the old definition of leadership (and increasbv ingly owned large corporations). The most trivial statements and actions by government officials are reported in detail. But the people creating new ways of meeting human needs, building community, and sustaining the environment get a mention in the "lifestyle" section of the paper if at all. They are treated as oddities, not recognized as part of a citizen-led movement to build a sustainable world.

One day, perhaps, these stories will be in the daily paper – not as amusing human-interest stories but as an essential inquiry into the next stages of human civilization. The partisan bickering in Washington will be seen as the poignant side-story that it is – evidence of a declining style of leadership with little to contribute to real problem solving.

Until then, much of the real leadership will go unrecognized - at least in the mass media. But this is yet another way we as ordinary citizens can provide leadership - by recognizing those qualities in each other and acknowledging the critical contribution each one of us is making.

So, as one small acknowledgment, let me say to each one of you, "Thanks for all you do!"

SARAH VAN GELDER

Giving YES!

If you haven't already, you will soon be getting a letter from us suggesting you give YES! subscriptions to friends and family. You can get three or more subscriptions for just \$16 each – and that can include gifts for loved ones, a renewal for yourself, and gifts for strangers through our scholarship and leader education funds. Use the form enclosed with this issue, or call toll free, 9 am -5 pm (Pacific time) Monday through Friday: 1-800/937-4451.

You can also use that toll-free number to call Sarah to discuss joining our Founding Circle of Donors – those who are helping to launch Positive Futures Network through tax-deductible pledges of cash or stock.

Web site

If you haven't looked at our web site, look now! Volunteers Sylvia Stauffer, Susan Schmickle, and Andy Markley have created a Positive Futures web site featuring issues of *YES!*, information on how to subscribe, and selected articles from back issues.

The web address is http:// www. futurenet.org

Good-bye Jane

This summer we said a sad "goodbye" to Jane Engel, who has moved to New Mexico for the warmer, sunnier climes and to be nearer to her son.

Jane was on the founding staff of YES! and Positive Futures Network and before that with In Context for four years. She was a invaluable part of the team and will be sorely missed here on Bainbridge – although we expect she will remain an active part of Positive Futures Network as an area representative.

Hello Tracy

Tracy Rysavy, who joined us as an intern last summer, so impressed us with the quality of her work that we asked her to join the staff. Tracy is now associate editor. She wrote articles for both this and the fall issues, and she researched and helped develop many of the other stories you'll find in this issue.

Tracy previously taught at-risk kids through the AmeriCorps Teach for America program and has organized and spoken at various events on women's issues. She has a masters degree in English Literature from Boston College, and a BA in English from St. Mary's University.

Tracy also helps to connect us

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YES! subscriptions: 1-800/937-4451 with our neighbors to the south. Her mother is from Honduras, and she visits relatives in Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, and El Corpus from time to time. Welcome to the staff, Tracy!

Controversy

You may have noticed letters in Readers' Forum that take exception to some articles printed in the fall issue. We see these letters as welcome indicators that YES! is beginning to fulfill one of our goals – to help facilitate debate on some of the controversies among those who share the goals of a sustainable, just, and compassionate world.

We welcome your responses to articles – whether you agree with them or not – and your ideas on how to further respectful dialogue.

Welcome Tranet readers

After 20 years of tracking international developments in the many diverse areas aimed at creating "a Sustainable, Humane, and Ecological (SHE) future," the *Tranet* newsletter has ceased publication. Bill Ellis has asked YES! to fulfill outstanding subscriptions to *Tranet* members.

Tranet will concentrate on local activities, including a nonprofit youth theater and cyber café. We will miss the *Tranet* newsletter, but we look forward to the book Bill and his wife Margaret are writing. And we are pleased to welcome *Tranet* members to Positive Futures Network and YES!

A post-corporate world

David Korten, chair of the Positive Futures Network board and author of *When Corporations Rule the World*, has been staying home more than usual in the last few months.

David did make a keynote speech at the annual conference of the Organizational Development Network in Phoenix (sustainer Sherwin Berger was there to sell magazines and subscriptions – thanks Sherwin!).

David and his wife Fran (who is our executive director designee) were on Bainbridge Island for our September board meeting and to finalize the purchase of the house where they will be living beginning in April. But David has been declining most invitations in the last few months.

The reason? David is writing a book that takes up where his last book leaves off. Tentatively titled, *Envisioning a Post-Corporate World*, the book will explore the institutional implications of a shift in world views from one founded on the assumption that the universe is dead and life an accidental aberration, to one founded on the precept that life is integral to the process of creation. Look for it in January 1999.

Thank you, Lynne Twist!

Lynne Twist, who speaks and writes about the soul of money (see the fall '97 issue of YES!) and has raised \$100 million for the Hunger Project, provided the Positive Futures Network board with an inspirational workshop on fundraising at our September meeting.

Lynne gave us far more than techniques – she helped us understand the central role of fundraising in the sustenance of nonprofits and helped us see how we can raise money with integrity and joy.

We were so fired up that each of us on the board made a personal pledge, and so did Lynne! In that act we experienced the truth of Lynne's observation – that giving generously to advance a cause in which we deeply believe can be exhilarating!

Thank you Lynne!

Special thanks

We got some extra help with ideas and leads for this issue from Fran Korten, Margaret Hempel, Marjorie Muecke, Reena Marcelo, and Raquel Mazon Jeffers of the Ford Foundation, Richard Heinberg, creator of the *MuseLetter*, and Charles Johnston, from the Institute for Creative Development.

The new millennium

The next issue of YES! will offer ideas and opportunities for celebrating the coming turn of the millennium.

This time represents a oncein-a-thousand-year opportunity to reflect together on what we should leave behind as we pass through this symbolic threshold and on what we want to create that will sustain us, our children, and their children into the future.

The danger is that the millennium will be used by a few world leaders to make proclamations, and by a few businesses to create commercial extravaganza. Worse yet, for some it will be an occasion to play out their fears that

Why sustain the forests or the air sheds if Armageddon is just around the corner?

"the end is near" in ways that help make that a self-fulfilling prophecy. Why sustain the forests or the air sheds if Armageddon is just around the corner?

The next issue of YES will be about making the millennium a threshold to a positive future for everyone. If you know of millennium plans or have some ideas, write to us!

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