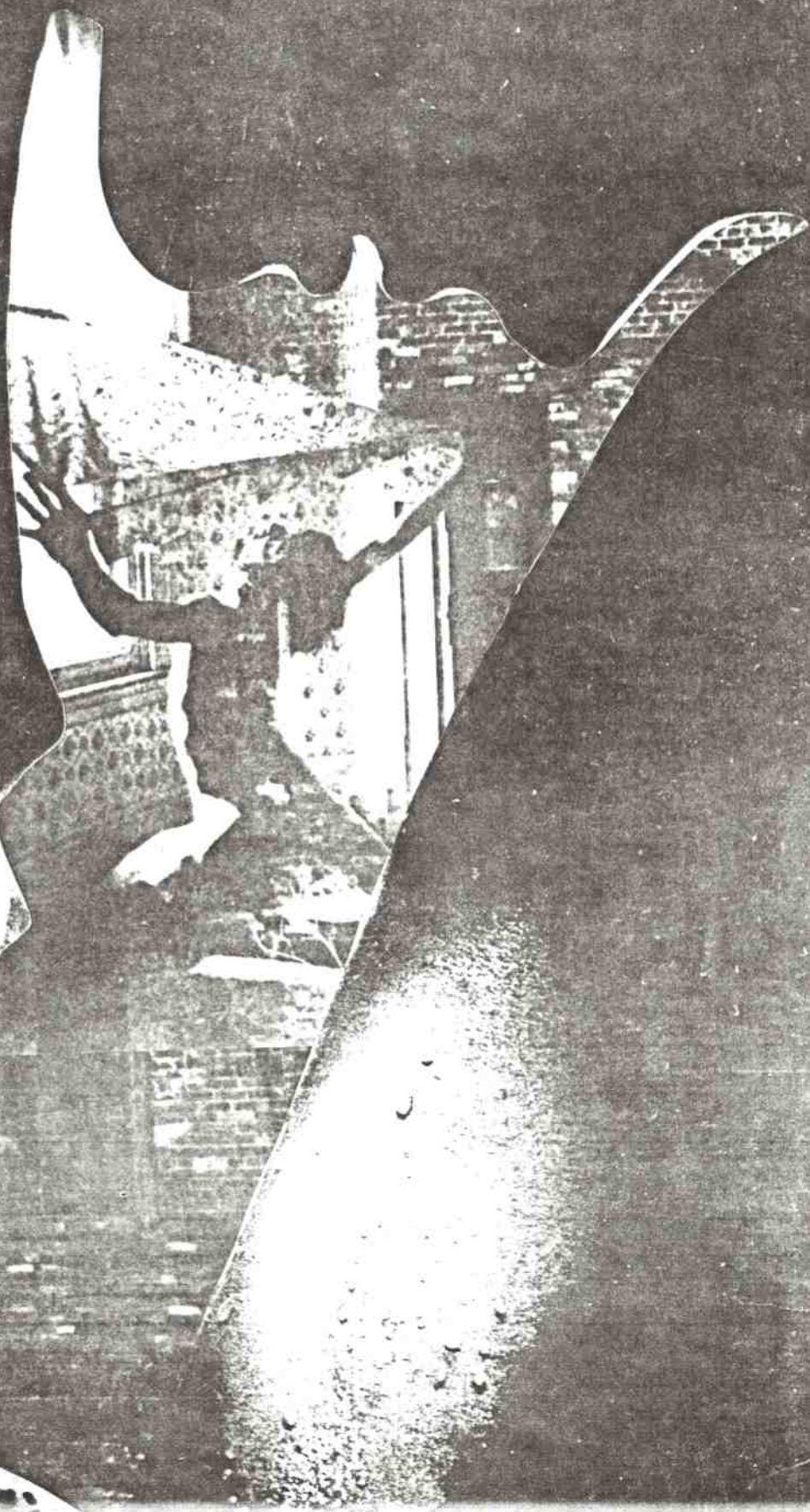


COMMUNITIES

journal of
cooperative
living

**Family, Sex
& Marriage**

No.17 \$1.25





Family, Marriage & Sex in Community

Once again the experiences of editing this magazine are painfully appropriate to the theme of the issue. In the interim between issues—after nearly 3 years of a mostly happy relationship—Communities West (now consisting of 3 men) left LimeSaddle (Now consisting primarily of women) for reasons relating to the topics discussed in these pages. So we might have added 'divorce' to this issue's themes of Family, Sex, and Marriage. Might have, but didn't, partly because it would have been too hard to be fair to all concerned, and partly because, after months of energy-draining tension... well, we just couldn't get it up.

The result for this issue is that

production has been a little half-hearted, as well as being disrupted by the practical necessities of putting together a new home. Also, we've been operating under a feeling of strangeness that, given our current situation, we should be bearing half the responsibility for a magazine with the focus this one has. We're re-evaluating our position and the magazine itself, and some changes are likely, though these won't be evident for awhile, since the next 3 issues are committed to guest editors.

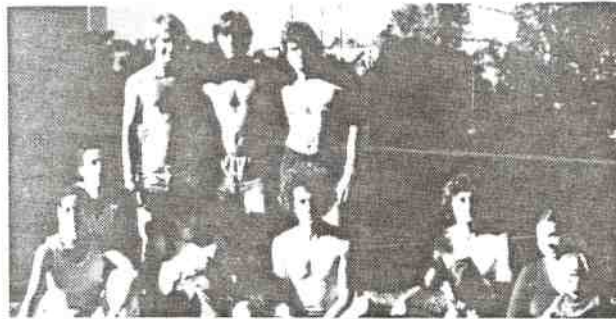
We miss living in a larger community—the excitement of lots of people, the presence of women, the quiet of the country, the sense of strength in

numbers, and all the rest. Well, most of the rest. Because of those missing elements, even our little group is unstable. We hope to be back in community soon—we've been loving it too long to stop now—though at the moment we don't know how or when or where that can happen.

On the other hand, it's nice not to have to feel grumpy and defensive—feelings that have shown up in our work as well as in daily relating—to feel that our energies are freed to move us in directions that we believe in, and to be able to give and receive support within the family.

GR

The Human Dancing Company, in renouncing their individual sexual identities, have chosen a larger identity. They are simply people now—androgynous. They express their lives in a physical movement, dance, which often transcends, for them, other levels of being. I've not seen them perform, but have heard



Humans

communes. We separate to come together (as at Blue Mountain). We try very hard to turn ourselves inside out.

Well—what else would y'all expect—all of this is love—and we were silly enough to try & say something about it.

BB



Nalini

that their performances are more than performances...

The gay relationship is described in very new terms, new at least to me, in comparison to some of the rhetoric of the past. David of Hop Brook interviews the mysterious 'Sri', and the conversation that ensues is long and like a mandala—it goes round & round, from "coming out" to surrender. Nalini of Ananda explores the concept of 'spiritual marriage', and Bubba Free John offers his teaching on the subject of child rearing. Two German communes relate family life to politics and...there's a lot more to choose from.

Whether gay or straight or neo-farmer or new-age child, there is a sharing going down here. And in that sharing we form families and



Bubba

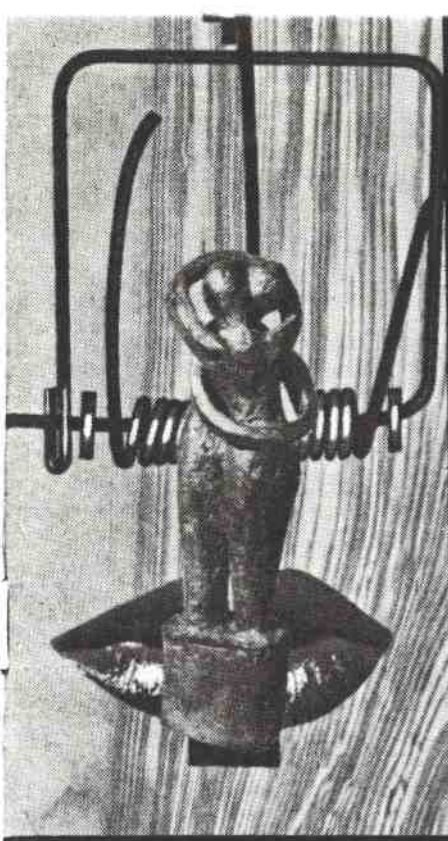
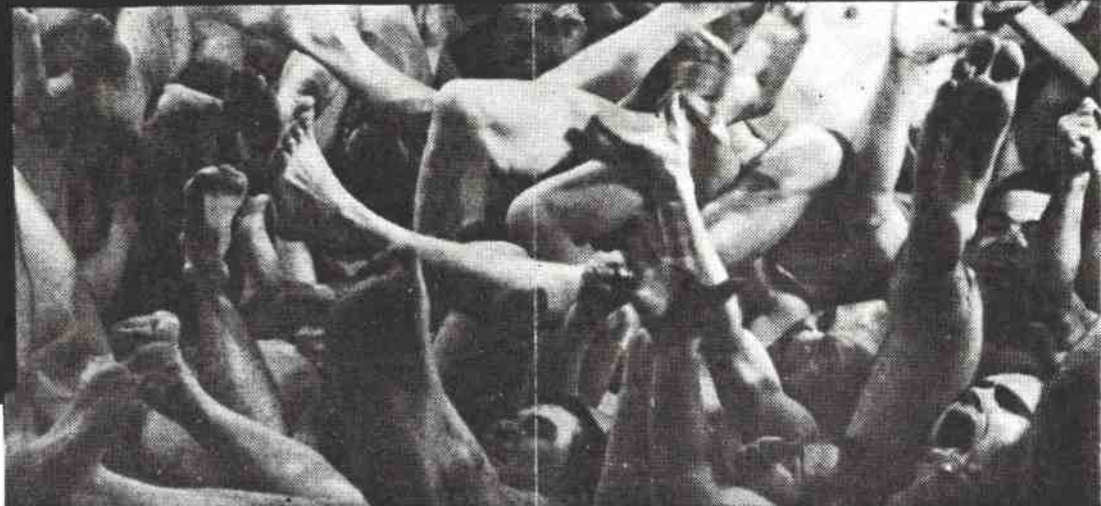


photo credit: Michael Gray—"Spiritual Marriage, pages 38-41
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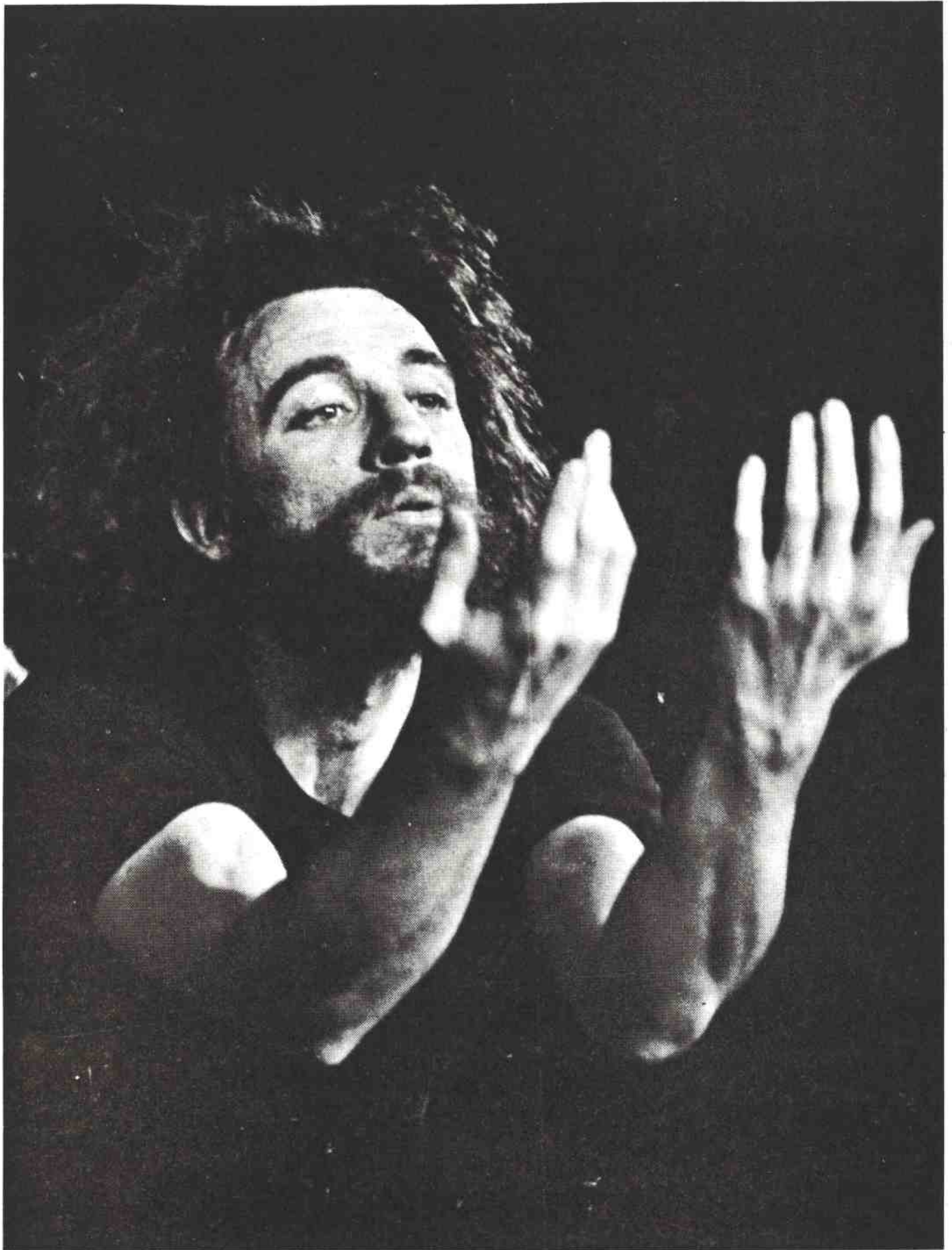
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• 'co=he or him/her; cos=his/hers.
(*Twin Oaks, circa 1972*) The perceptive reader will notice at least four different ways of treating the generalized first person singular in this issue.

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Human Dancing Company

ANDRE CARPENTER

Communities asked us to write about our attitudes in relation to family, marriage and sex. It's an interesting but maybe impossible challenge to try to convey what we feel, think, hope and live about these subjects because we're constantly searching, testing, discovering, and we talk a lot about all this among ourselves. We have been and are very concerned to find conducive attitudes somehow which will not create dead ends and vicious circles. In order to do this we realize that we first have to free ourselves from cultural conditioning, compulsive habits, unquestioned assumptions and selfish impulses; and then we have to be open-minded about discovering avenues which might be considered ultra radical as well as old-fashioned-conservative: the social pressure is great, people are easily influenced to imitate the norm of their neighborhood, and never give themselves much chance to discover what they *individually* need. . .

Essentially, all the members of the company are individually oriented towards 'androgynous consciousness'. We don't know what is really the difference between males and females—if it's biological or cultural or both—or maybe the difference is so slight, actually, that it isn't even worth thinking about, and therefore shouldn't affect sexual behavior. Most of us find it almost insulting or simply boring to be liked or disliked simply because of having a male or female body. We've also observed that sexual attraction based on gender tends to perpetuate the alienation and misunderstanding between the genders and therefore within ourselves.

'Family,' as the meaning of the word has been extended to communes, is not in our line of thinking.

Our views on family, marriage and sex: *Family*, meaning father-mother-child, seems to be a necessity for the first two 7-year cycles of an individual's life; but it doesn't necessarily have to be the actual mother and father: a child needs the incarnated vibrations of motherhood and fatherhood (the consoling, gentle, unconditional love and the guiding, firm, challenging wisdom) which might both come through one person. After the age of 14 ideally the adolescent should be free from 'having parents' and start to choose his/her own friends and teachers (which might be his/her ex-parents, but no longer *as* parents). Otherwise the 'family', as the meaning of the word has been extended to communes, is not in our line of thinking. ("Familiarity breeds contempt"). As a group, we are mostly helping each other to stand alone, to grow towards being complete individuals: the mother, the father, the brother, the sister, the son, the daughter, the man and the woman, *all as one within*. . . We all generally take care of our personal needs on our own. Collective involvements happen mostly in rehearsals and various types of meetings, where there is no privacy of consciousness about our personal lives. We also hold weekly meetings with friends of the Company, which are sometimes discussions about whatever is relevant to our growth, sometimes encountering confrontations, sometimes spiritual teachings from various sources, etc. Incidentally, the subjects of family, marriage and sex have been brought up quite often, and this article is pretty much the outcome of these discussions.

Marriage: Legal marriage is basically a business contract and has hardly anything to do with love and sex. It can be relatively convenient or not, depending on the situation. Marriage in the sense of coupling, whatever the purpose, is a very tricky affair. The biggest trap is to confuse falling in love with a personality cult, which couples so often do, and in this process they tend to separate themselves from the rest of humanity, creating a sort of ivory tower, weakening them as individuals, and perpetuating things like jealousy, envy, lack of confidence and, worst of all, the pride of normalcy. In our past experience couples have been one of the major sources of problems as a dividing force within a group.

Sex: A college class on human sexuality invited us to present a show which we entitled "The War of the Sexes" or "Sex Means Split", which was presented as a full concert in various places. Talking a bit about this show will give some clues about our attitudes on this subject. The show was based on the etymology of the word 'sex', which comes from the Latin word 'sexus', meaning division, split. The program started with a short humorous piece called "In the Beginning—before gender identity", where Abbie, 7 months pregnant, was lifted in the air, in profile, her bare belly rising like the sun from behind a mountain of human bodies, on the music "Thus Spake Zarathustra" (2001). Then a mad chachacha with everybody dressed as doctors and nurses was danced with Andre singing an absurd song about parents desperately anxious to have a girl, and disappointedly finding they have a boy, and vice versa. This was called "In the Delivery Room—where we start to see double". Then three

People seek pleasure and comfort as goals; Humans experience pleasure and comfort as by-products, as unexpected gifts.



People are concerned with sex, either as sin or as the most sought-after pleasure to do as much as possible. In other words: People are frigid or nymphomaniac; Humans are concerned with love, which sometimes happens to take sexual forms.

dancers wearing masks of a black man, a white man and a half-black-half-white woman danced on a montage of music by Tchaikovsky and Louis Armstrong, called "Commentaries on Racism and Sexism" where the white man and the woman would dance a ballet pas-de-deux, and suddenly the black man would steal the woman and jitterbug; but eventually the dance was stopped, the dancers would take off their masks and argue that it was not their turn to play that role; so they'd exchange masks and continue to dance in the new roles until everybody had danced a bit of each role. Then came an acted sketch entitled "The Legend of the Divided Whole", where Abbie and Morgan were trying, unsuccessfully, to become one, approaching and re-approaching each other with different attitudes, and ending the whole thing by thanking each other for the failures which made them realize that they were already whole in the first place. Then came a dance about Shiva, with a double male and female body, called "Innocence Lost", on the theme of transformation, death and rebirth. Next was an elaborated pas-de-deux on Brahms music, inspired by Ingmar Bergman's "Scenes from a Marriage" and entitled "When Marriage Becomes Friendship". "Two Men" was a mime number with two males going through all the forms of male fighting culminating in wrestling on the floor, wrestling which turned into sensual tenderness. The last dance, called "The Historical and Unfortunate Tale of the War of the Sexes", with three males and three females is a complex choreography inspired from the history of the Western world, which ended with the dancers dropping their male and female identities as the only way to stop the war.

People control, condition, or let loose, their 'animal'; *Humans* tame their 'animal' as a willing friend.



A *people* is nobody trying to be somebody; A *human* is somebody trying to be nobody. When they succeed, the *people* is still nobody but with a lot of pretensions and the *human* is still somebody but more naked.

This is an important subject for the comprehension of our philosophy. Dualities are opposites, standing against each other, equally repelled and attracted, with no resolution. A dualistic mentality tends to identify with one side against the other. A paradox, on the other hand, is a different way of looking at opposites, a way of encompassing both halves in a third process, which transcends the opposition.

A basic example of opposites is inhaling and exhaling. If either side is preferred at the expense of the other, the result is death. If both sides are encompassed without preference, then we have something called breathing—life.

The same process occurs with any pair of opposites. Duality-consciousness leads to death, and paradox-consciousness leads to life. To take this one step further, let's consider death and life as opposites: death without life is just death, and life without death is life motivated by fear of death, which is deadening. The third way, which has no name in our language, [and that's the case for most pairs of opposites—which says a lot about our culture] is life renewing itself by dying to itself.

A few more examples of opposites:

Creativity and receptivity: creativity without receptivity is actually aggression; receptivity without creativity is actually passiveness leading to apathy.

The third way is active receptivity, responsive action.

Maleness and femaleness: (within one person, regardless of physical gender): maleness without femaleness is hard, callous, and naive; femaleness without maleness is smothering

We call the third way 'androgynous consciousness' (androgynous: Greek; 'andros' means 'man', 'gynos' means 'women')

Perception and compassion: perception without compassion leads to dry, pretentious, intellectualism, and to isolation, if not schizophrenia and paranoia;

compassion without perception leads to mediocrity, conformism, if not hysteria and violence.

The third way is called 'wisdom'.

Humbleness and exaltation: to be humble while denying exaltation leads to oblivion, limbo; to be exalted while denying humbleness leads to obnoxious self-centeredness.

The third way is the whole challenging and rewarding adventure of responsive living.

Gentleness and firmness: gentleness without firmness is wishy-washy; firmness without gentleness is rape.

It seems that the third way would be to be firmly gentle and gently firm in all situations.

Pain and joy: pain without joy is melodrama;

joy without pain is sentimentality.

The third way is feeling.

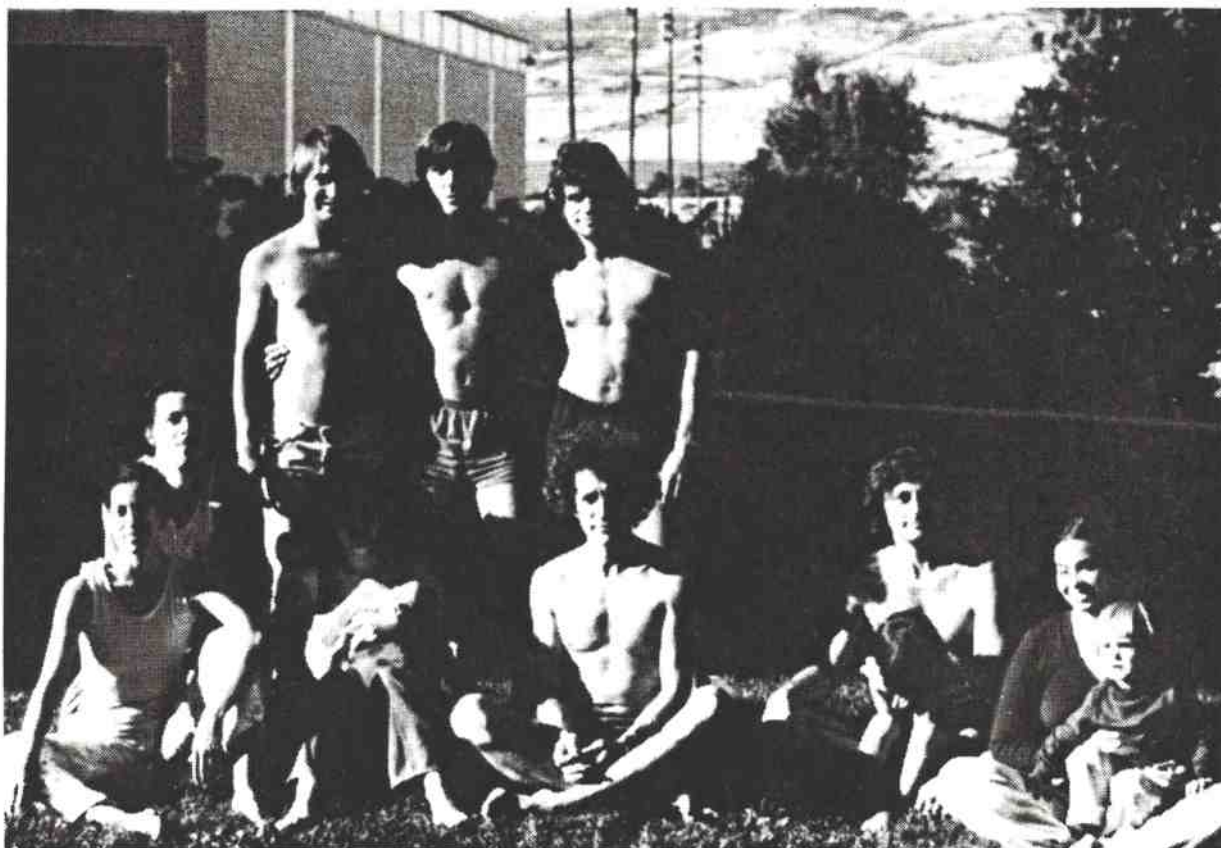
Seriousness and humor: seriousness without humor is heavy, pedantic; humor without seriousness is flippant, even insolent.

We cannot find words for the third way...we're open to suggestions, or rather the direct expression of it...

Being and doing: being without doing is a kind of aloofness which tends to deny the animal body as a part of the cosmos, refusing the adventure of incarnating, of taking risks, of making a fool of oneself (the lesson of humor); doing without being is just plain absurd, like a dog chasing its tail; it's being busy for the sake of being busy, to avoid boredom, by fear of death; it's acting as a programmed robot, traditionally, mechanically, superficially; it's believing oneself to be only incarnation without spirit, without awareness of oneself, of the silent creative source, of the invisible; it's making a fool of oneself but being ignorant or proud of it (humorless); it's perpetuating a world "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

The third way is silence becoming music; it's what one really is, taking form.

Humans can only be perceived by the intuition and the heart, and elude the efforts of the *people-mind* to label them. The presence of a *human* often makes *people* uncomfortable (or liberatingly 'high') because instead of an assumed identity it is a vibration which resonates with and stirs the sleeping human within. Their functions and actions evolve towards transcendence of themselves, creating new patterns instead of repetitive routines. Their attitude of moment-by-moment discovery gives them the urge to reach out towards the "opposite," the "other," to merge with it and integrate it, like the yang and the yin, to make a third thing which is a *relationship*, greater than the sum of its parts.



A human is someone who knows himself to be the human *being* (the actor) and manifests *as such* through the personality (the mask).

A people is someone who believes himself to be the personality (the mask) and is unconscious of the human being (the actor) behind.

For a human, the purpose in expressing is to transcend the personality. For a people, the purpose in expressing is to reinforce the personality.

The result is that

a human's personality becomes more and more flexible and transparent; a people's personality becomes more and more rigid and opaque.



THE STAGE FOR ME IS LIKE HOME, AN ENCOMPASSING INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN MY INNER AND OUTER LIFE, BETWEEN CONSCIOUSNESS AND ANIMAL ENERGIES, BETWEEN THE OMNIPOTENT SILENCE OF god AND THE TURMOIL AND CONFUSIONS OF THE WORLD.

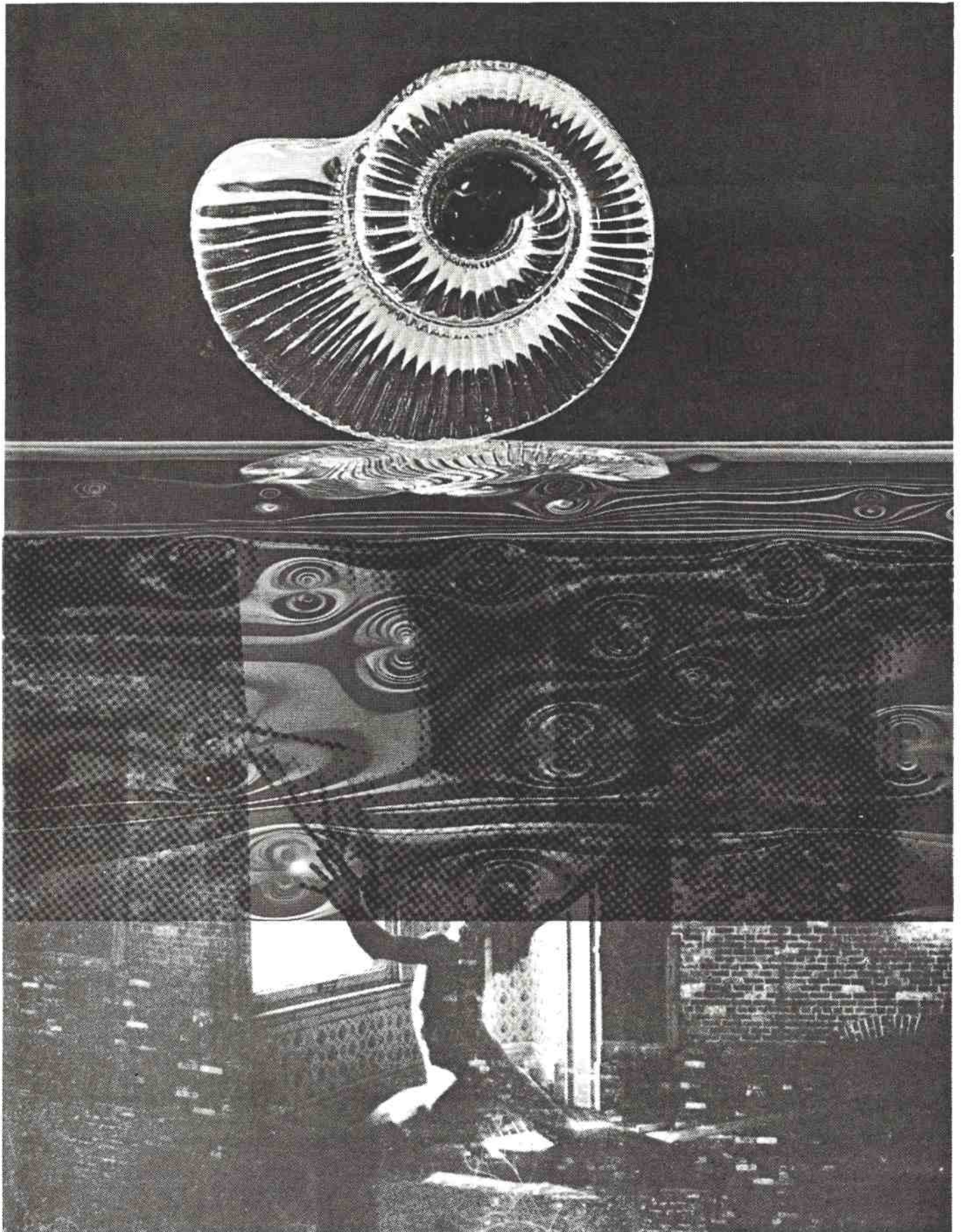
SOMETIMES I WATCH AMAZED AS MY BODY BECOMES ONE WITH THE MUSIC, ALMOST AS IF MY MOVEMENTS ARE CREATING THE SOUNDS, OR THE SOUNDS ARE CREATING MY MOVEMENTS, AND I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT.

People establish rules of behavior to prevent chaos, or promote chaos when they find order oppressive; *Humans* search for harmony, which is a delicate balance of order and chaos.

It is sometimes hard to be human in a society of people. *People* have the advantages of a privileged class, ignorant of the fascism they impose; *Humans* are the most oppressed "minority" (or are they a majority?).

The Human Dancing Company is a non-profit tax-exempt organization. The company of eight performers is presently touring the West Coast with a concert called "Becoming Human", and giving workshops in centering and expressive movement. The Company also owns some land in the Cascades. They publish a booklet, For Humans Only, an extensive description of their purposes, which can be purchased for 50 cents [for postage and printing expenses] at The Human Dancing Company, 31 South Second Street, Ashland, Oregon, 97520. Tel: [503] 482-2460. ○





GAY RELATIONSHIP

DAVID

David: Why do you think "gay" is so often not gay?

Sri: For the same reason most person to person relationships are seldom gay. The misery of relationships falling apart is not peculiar to either the homosexual or the heterosexual. We don't know how to be related to one another. Our cultures are still at a caveman level in regard to awareness of who is "me" and who is "you" and what is relationship between us.

David: But hasn't gay liberation moved us out of the cave? I am certainly not as socially oppressed as I was a few years ago. I think I have the insight to see what was wrong with the nuclear family that I grew up in and what was wrong with most homosexual relationships in the generation before mine.

Sri: A gay man or woman who has "achieved" gay liberation has only taken the first step; the next step is to be aware of human liberation. He or she not only has to be aware of what it means to be gay but must also find out—really find out what it means in pretending to be a "person".

David: How does one take that step?

Sri: By seeing that the simple stipulation or assertion that "I am gay" can be in itself the greatest barrier toward liberation. A self definition is the most oppressive act one can perform. A definition has a center; a center creates a restricting circumference; a definition brings into being an opposite with an opposing and antagonistic center; a definition gives birth to oppressive duality.

David: But I am gay. That is an honest statement. What can be more liberating than the truth?

Sri: Who is the "I"? Who or what is the entity that says he is gay or yellow or of a gender or orientation or religion or whatever?

David: The entity is my identity. I am

me. I've struggled to find my identity. To emerge from an identity crisis and to discover one's identity is the greatest thing. I have a gay identity and I know it and I can fulfill myself. I am liberated.

Sri: We shall see. Is self fulfillment liberation? Liberation from what? Might it be that we need liberation from that very "self"?

David: What is the self?

Sri: The self is an image. It is an inadvertent invention that children make in the process of growing into an unhealthy society. The me is only an invention. Have you forgotten that you invented the "self"? The real human being has forgotten who he is because he invented an identity, a personality, an ego, a self and the continuance of that personality depends upon its defense of its secret and its defense to survive separate, inviolable and locked into the double bind of duality.

David: How could I have invented myself? I am. I exist. Something created me.

Sri: You are a human being, a perceptive human being, but you invented your identity, your conceptive identity. You invented it by coming to conclusions and by stipulating and asserting that "I" am a good mathematician, a bad public speaker, a clever boy, a good person, "I" am a "little boy" and she (one-to-one) is "my" mother, I am this and not that. The eyes of the organism may be blue or brown. The ego identifies with the color. How ridiculous is an ego with blue or brown eyes. "I am gay" is only one more definition in the process of building a conceptive identity and an identity is not a human being no matter how we might fool ourselves.

David: What is so miserable about being a human being with a personality? Especially if it is a good

*The assertion that
'I am Gay'
can be the greatest
barrier to liberation.*

personality, a strong one?

Sri: There are "good" septic tanks and "bad" cesspools but they are both sewers. Can there be a "good" personality? A personality is an artifact, it is not real. Why should a real, beautiful human being parade about hidden by an artificial invention that can never be real and is oppressive to him? Why do we pretend that an unreality is a reality?

David: But everyone has a personality.

Sri: Yes, that's just it. And we relate to one another as one personality relating to another personality, an image relating to an image, not as a real human being relating to another real human being.

David: How can I be real according to what you say is real?

Sri: Simply by being aware that the self is dualistic, unreal and thereby negating it. That is all that is meant by human liberation.

When one sees the falseness of any duality then both points of the duality disappear leaving pure energy without a center, the user of that energy. When this happens energy finds its own action, without motive, which is love, which is intelligence.

David: Isn't the ego essential for survival?

Sri: Absolutely not. The ego, the self, the center is actually what is killing us. We must remember that the organism invented the self, the identity and then surrendered its birthright of infinite potentiality to its petty invention, its identity. The adult person has almost lost the capacity to see that the organism owns the identity and not the identity owning the organism. The identity, the self has literally usurped the life of the organism. Survival mechanisms (maintenance, defense, growth) are essential to the organism. The self acting in the place of the organism which it holds oppressed (like no other imaginable parasite-host relationship) dazzles the instincts of the organism and applies all the biological survival operations to its own false existence. so when we speak of the need *for* an ego to exist, what we really mean is the need *of* the ego for survival of its pretense. The organism doesn't need it.

David: Then perhaps it isn't just cynical to say that most of us are living a practical joke.

Sri: The queen of practical jokes is the duality which is the self. It continually fires back for that is its nature: equal and opposite false existences: the me and the not me—reality split in half and locked in a double bind.

The more security the self seeks the more insecure it becomes. The more it acquires the more it must defend what it has acquired. The sharper the line between "inside" (me) and "outside" (others) the more the waste of energy in maintaining the fiction. The more it craves continuity the more it fears death. The organism doesn't fear death, the ego does. And don't be fooled by the dualistic pair of sincerity-cynicism; reality is neither for it is a state of non-dualistic innocence—innocence which is not the opposite of anything.

David: I have had a quarrel with my lover. It has been a beautiful relationship. We have been intimate and fulfilled. It was real. Our personalities meshed.

Sri: Now you probably hate each other, are defensive and resentful.

David: The hurt has left an unhealing scar.

Sri: So something must be wrong with the kind of relationship that you have. You can see that.

David: He suppresses his feelings and does not deal with them openly. His jealousies and his resentments of my jealousies are concealed, buried in his mind where they lie dormant waiting release through some opportune projection in an act of disciplined, quiet cruelty. He cheats inwardly. I show my insecurities openly, he represses the expression of his, lets them smolder and after weeks they finally overflow in destructive resentments and stubborn justifications (signaled on by the very same emotions which he denies open expression in himself).

Sri: Personalities have only emotions, humans have feelings more than emotions; personalities operate from the mind, conceptually; humans operate from the brain-heart, perceptually. Note that there is a world of difference between mind and

brain-heart. An emotion is a conceptualized feeling. What we call love is usually only a conception, not a perception. Perception deals with what is real, actualities while conception deals with what isn't real: abstractions, inventions, parts. Perception is in itself love.

David: You are negating my experience.

Sri: Not at all. But right now you are not gay and you asked why do I think "gay" is so often not gay. Perceptions get turned into conceptions. Factual perception from moment to moment, and the storehouse of memory of factual perception (which is biological survival) is real and essential. Psychological conception and its graveyard of fears and cravings (which is personality) is unreal and unessential. Confusion of factual chronological time and "psychological time" (becoming; which figment) twists and tortures our being, causes one's inhumanity to another and is the root cause of environmental abuse.

David: Then how can gay be gay?

Sri: By being real and not by being unreal. By relating as human to human rather than as image to image.

David: Explain.

Sri: I might explain but the explanation is never the explained. The word is never the thing. The menu is never the food. One has to come in direct contact with it himself. Nobody can tell you or do it for you.

David: But I want to listen to what you have to say. If I am so heavily conditioned, how can I tell when I am real and when I am unreal in relationship?

Sri: One is attentive when one is in the state of the mind that is asking (non-verbally): "Who (or what) is the referent in this action?" Just to see it is enough—if it is seen without judgement, comparison or identification. When you are attentive to the fact that you are inattentive, then you are attentive. I don't know if you have ever noticed that we ordinarily meet one another as personalities, either as a meeting between positives, or between passives, or between positives and passives. We seldom meet one another as negatives or as posi-

tives meeting negatives for these two possibilities exist only in the absence of personality.

David: That's pretty confusing to me. What do you mean by positive and passive and negative?

Sri: The opposite of positive is passive, not negative.

Negative has no opposite. It is not part of a dualistic pair.

When two positive consciousnesses meet there is just a contact, but no relationship.

When positive and passive meet there is a relationship of usage. This is what in our cultures, East and West, we erroneously call love.

We will talk about negative consciousness later. Let's talk about the positive.

David: What is an example of a positive meeting a positive?

Sri: First, let's find out what is meant by a positive consciousness. This means a consciousness that is aggressive, self-opinionated and heavily loaded with its own conclusions. Naturally when two conclusions meet there is a collision not a relationship. A positive has a center. A "self" is a positive with a permanent center continuous in psychological time. (Actually the self invents psychological time so that it might continue.)

David: And you say the opposite of positive consciousness is passive and not negative. How is that?

Sri: The human mind is dualistic; it knows only pleasure and its opposite pain. The mind (not the brain-heart) is intellectual and reactionary. Its got to be either this or the opposite. The mind knows only two states in contrast to one another, pain or pleasure, good or bad, right or wrong, like or dislike, for or against. The mind must be either in a state of interference (with what is) which is "positive" or in a state of indifference, a blankness (to what is) which is "passive". The negative is something utterly else.

David: Obviously two people in a state of passivity aren't related.

Sri: Of course, and what about a meeting between positive consciousness and a passive consciousness: the strong uses the submissive and/or the submissive uses the strong (or in subtle ways the strong feigns submissiveness or the submissive feigns

strength) for the fulfillment of its own ends; a relationship of usage.

David: And now I am ready for the negatives.

Sri: Let's talk a bit about Communion and Communication.

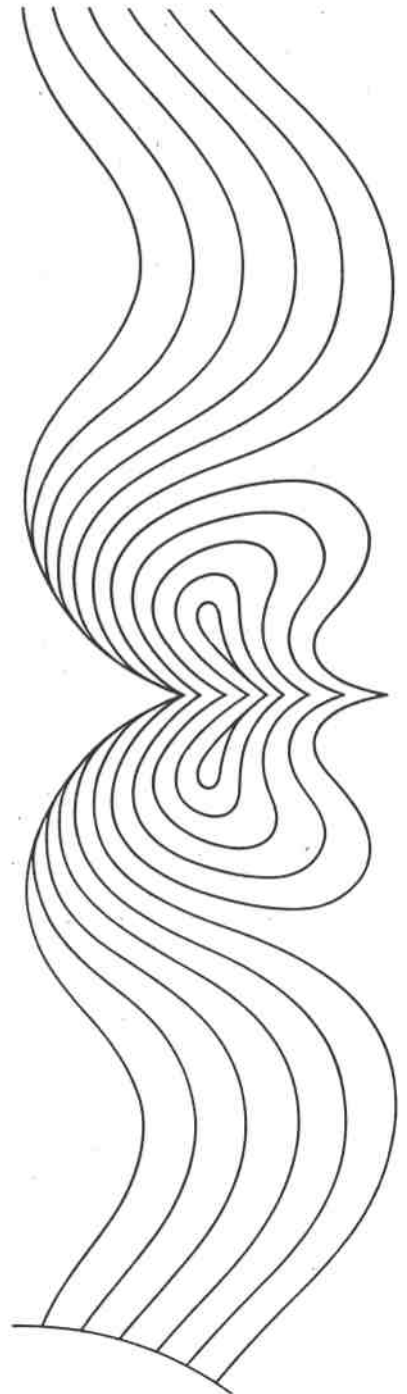
David: What's the difference?

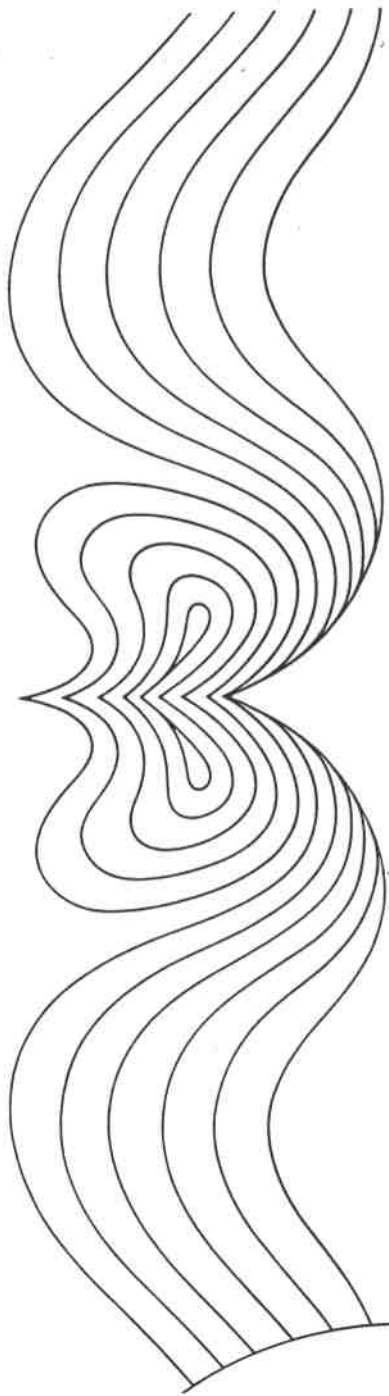
Sri: The difference between positive and negative. Communication is positive. We must communicate by forming conceptions and asserting them, thus communication is a function of the mind. Communication is a necessary and necessarily dualistic activity. But communication is meaningless unless it emerges naturally and rhythmically from the ground of communion. Communion is negative consciousness. It is a state of the mind in receptive emptiness (not indifferent blankness with a permanent center which is passivity). It is a state of pure perception where there is neither the perceiver nor the Perceived. It is not dualistic. It is empty. It has no center. Passivity on the other hand is dualistic, centered blankness while negativity is non-dualistic emptiness waiting to be filled.

David: I guess the reason this is so hard to understand is that the word "negative" has a "bad" connotation in my culture while the way you use the word it means a condition of "rightness".

Sri: It is difficult for the Western mind to understand that positivism is the root cause of all miseries and falseness on the psychological level, the social level and the ecological level. Positivism is violent, dualistic, egoic, having a permanent center. Unreal. A delusion. Positivism is always exploitation—exploitation is always for the protection, maintenance or expansion of the always self-ish self. The negative on the other hand is not dualistic, it has no opposite, it can oppose nothing, it can only receive. It can receive the positive. The negative state characterizes a condition of pure space. In the space of the negative the entry of the positive is complete.

David: So now we have arrived at a negative consciousness meeting a positive consciousness. That appears as a duality to me in spite of the fact that you say that the dual pair is al-





ways positive-passive, never positive-negative. What is the nature of duality?

Sri: Dualities are opposing forces that can never get together because one defines the other. The definition of one creates the other. Interference implies its opposite, indifference. The positive implies the existence of a passive. The negative on the other hand is non-dualistic, is a space without a center, non-definable and therefore implying no opposing opposite. Negative means the absence of the self, the absence of a center. It can accommodate anything. It can accommodate the positive no matter what form or magnitude the positive may take. It is total receptivity. It is what is left when the positive vacates. When in one Being it receives the positive of the Other it becomes the positive; and when the positive thus received has left the first Being, a field of negativity results in the first Being ready to receive back whatever positive the Second then has to offer. Total compatibility. The passive on the other hand has a center, a self which is really there but is asleep like a possum, simply inactive and indifferent—and can accommodate not a thing. The passive cannot receive the positive; it is antagonistically null to it, not-receptive, incompatible. The passive is the ego asleep, repressed, but in its sleep guarded with a line of defense. The negative however is egoless, awake, and is totally vulnerable to the positive.

A negative consciousness being without self, ego, identity, personality, center is the state of creative emptiness which is the ground of communion where there is neither perceiver nor perceived. The positive merges with the negative; there is complete engulfment. This is possible only when the positive meets the negative—where the negative becomes the field in which the positive operates. The meeting of the lover and the beloved is the meeting of the positive and the negative.

David: So your solution to the lack of gayness in gay life is to make better matches, positive personalities and egoless mates?

Sri: Absolutely not! We can approach this best by considering the nature of

communion and communication, their negative and positive characteristics. The positives have either permanent centers or temporary centers; the negative has no center. The self is a positive with a permanent center. The self can express itself—can attempt to communicate but fails for communication must be born out of communion. Yet one cannot communicate without a center. Communication effectively takes place from centers which are *not* permanent, centers which dissolve themselves after completing their task of communication thus enabling a new experience of communion to come into being. This is the natural rhythm of communion and communication, negative then positive alternating between two people.

David: And this is what is right relationship?

Sri: When the lover is positive, communicating from a temporary center, the beloved is negative, communing. Then the lover's center dissolves, he enters communion and a temporary center of communication is born in the beloved out of his former centerless communion. This is the rhythm of relationship which is love. The tangible has its origin in the ground of the intangible. Love is intangible. Relationship is tangible. From out of the void comes creation and then returns the void.

David: Then it's not a question of a dominant personality and a submissive personality; it's a matter of no permanent centers.

Sri: Without "fulfillment" of permanent centers of selves.

David: Self-fulfillment is not the goal of relationship?

Sri: Only the false-entity, the self, has goals (psychological time), goals of its own false continuity. There is no goal in love. Self-fulfillment and self-expression mean only that the self is trying to strengthen its own false existence. And "self-improvement" is a fundamental delusion. Each and every one of us is necessarily alone *and* necessarily related. The outside of the inside is the inside of the outside. Alone and related are not dualistic opposites. We mistakenly treat them as if they were a dualistic pair and try to be related in order not

to be alone, or we make of our aloneness justification for relationships of usage. To be alone is not to be separate. Separate is a member of a dualistic pair and I will leave it to you to name its opposite.

And we have the potentially tragic paradox, that our relatedness to others is an essential part of our being, as is our aloneness *but* consummation with any particular other person is not a necessary part of our being—though the self in its ceaseless search for security engulfs others as alter-selves and these can be extricated only through the most painful exorcism.

Love is not devotion, loyalty or identification.

Love is not an idolatrous projection of my center.

Love is not the flattering of my center by those who project or extend their centers to me.

Love is not the action of my ideal image of my center.

Love is not the action of a divine image onto which my center is projected.

Love is not an armistice toward the universe (all that is not me) due to momentary satiation and affirmation of my center.

These are all apparent as love but one sees the delusion (in Benotian terms).

They are all simply craving:—craving for the affirmation of the existence of my Self in opposition to my Not-Self; craving for the defeat of the existence of my Not-Self in opposition to my Self.

Love is the same as energy or intelligence; intelligence has neither space nor time. It is constant and everywhere.

David: Promiscuity is natural?

Sri: The perfume of love can be absorbed by the one or by the many. Communion and communication can take place only between people who meet one another at the same time on the same level and with the same intensity. But in our society "love" is usually dualistic, is a function of the self and is not love at all. Dualistic love of the many or of the one is merely sexual exploitation, only self-fulfillment, self-expression, indulgence, self-expansion. The manyness

or oneness is neither right nor wrong, good nor bad; it is simply false if it is dualistic.

The prison of the self and its activities and decorations can never be real. A "liberated" self is nonexistent; there can only be liberation when the self comes to an end—when duality is seen as duality. A sub-culture based on mutual exploitation of either the one or the many is not a liberated new culture.

Some of us have become incapable (through conditioning) of knowing the difference between thrill and joy. Thrill (which is dualistic) is self-fulfillment. It is the emotion of the sportsman, or soldier, or businessman, or cruiser, or undertaker when he makes a "kill" in the politics of the self. Gay unfortunately inadvertently becomes associated with thrill. Joy (which is not dualistic) comes in the absence of self. It is the feeling of human gaiety radiating (but not projecting) *life* and absorbing (but not capturing) *beauty* from and to ephemeral centers, constantly but not continuously. Joy is love.

David: In being a part of the gay movement I see the "coming out" of "innocent" people and I see them search for the norm of behavior in the gay sub-culture. It is true that what they usually find and select and justify is the way of thrill. We so often call it experience, and growth, and change.

Sri: And it is growth of the self but not the unfolding of the flower which is the human. The greatest tragedy is that our precious "selves" forbid us from forming intelligence as to the realities of relationship. We move from one "relationship" to another in search of self-fulfillment. The self can never be fulfilled for if it were it would come to the end of its "continuity" in "psychological time"—an impossibility. We try a positive to positive relationship and it inevitably collapses; we rush to another, or worse, to a positive-passive relationship which is also doomed from usage. Then we adopt false patterns of liberation in which we substitute many superficial relationships of usage in the place of the former single relationship of usage. This is usually rationalized into some delu-

sive conception of free universal love. Such practice indicates an effort to abolish the circumference but keeping the center intact. So long as the center of positive or passive consciousness functions the circumference must come back into existence. Love has no center therefore no circumference. Next we go through the cycle again, hoping that luck will be with us this time. We never stop to see that the solution to the problem is within the problem, not outside it. Image to image isn't the way of love. To love from the self is not to love at all. Selfish means self-ish.

It is a shame that two humans who have suffered through the finding of truth—give it up—separate to do it all over again elsewhere even when they had arrived at the very threshold of human love, the brink of a deep relationship. They could take off the masks of personality and discover the pulsation of positive communication and negative communion with temporary centers burning and dissolving, phasing on and off to let the other in. It is never too late to let the other in.

Krishnamurti in *This Matter of Culture* says: "Do you know what gaiety is? It is just to laugh, to take delight in anything or nothing, to know the joy of living, smiling, looking straight into the face of another without any sense of fear.

This is an imaginary interview between myself and the author of a book I recently read called The Nameless Experience by Rohit Mehta [Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1974].

—David, Hop Brook Commune,
New Salem, Mass.





Babys' Born Smiling is the title of an article in the Los Angeles Star, National Edition no. 29. Dr. LeBoyer, a Parisian obstetrician, has a new technique for delivering babies whereby the baby comes into the world smiling, dimpling and reaching out to the doctor by holding hands with him. The secret of a smiling delivery is that Dr. LeBoyer holds the baby and lets love pour forth from him to the baby. Seems simple enough.

The usually painful and anguished cries of the enfant are absent in Dr. LeBoyers' delivery environment. Lights are subdued, there are no mechanical noises, the doctor and his assistants remain silent or voices are subdued. The doctor listens to the baby and picks up cos rythm. Co is caressed from the mother's womb and placed immediately upon delivery on the mother's body unseparated from the mother until activity and movement are calm and regular. Some babies crawl spontaneously from the mother's abdomen to her breast and begin nursing. The baby decides the action and the doctor goes along. The umbilical cord beats and the baby still uses oxygen from the mother. The cord is cut only after it stops beating, indicating the baby is using cos own lungs fully for oxygen. This may take a minute or much longer.

After the baby calms to the new environment co has a bath in body temperature water, which is a delight to the new baby who has been living in a warm liquid [the amniotic fluid or bag of waters] within the mother's womb for 9 months. The baby explores cos own face, mouth, body and legs.

Follow up study of more than 100 children delivered by Dr. LeBoyer, some eight or nine years old, finds that every one of the children are ambidextrous. In all human beings the right cerebral hemisphere controls the left hand. In the children Dr. LeBoyer has delivered, the left and right hemispheres operate equally, in balance and integrated in their control of the body. Other simply and profoundly different behavior characteristics are observed in the LeBoyer children. They are not passive about their play and are open. A book Birth Without Trauma, by Jim Miller, will soon be published about Dr. LeBoyer's method and the astoundingly different behavior characteristics of children born with love coming forth from the doctor to the child.

Art Janov, director of the Primal Institute, shares Dr. LeBoyer's view on childbirth. He found that an overworked lopsided brain function indicates an overload of pain at birth and in early years when the body is not mature enough to integrate a great deal of pain. The left hemisphere begins to overwork when it becomes necessary to the infant's survival to blot out the feeling and memory of a painful event. Hence the more early the trauma the more overworked the left hemisphere. As trauma may occur successively in early years the left brain may be more and more overworked. Dr. LeBoyer and Janov feel that if one has a good birth one half of life's problems are licked.

There is another book—Biography of the Unborn by Margaret Shea Gilbert that was along this same line of thinking on this subject of birth trauma and its disastrous consequences. It was first published in 1938 and reprinted in 1948.

There was also an article about Dr. LeBoyer and his method of delivering babies in Sexology for March 1975 which concluded by stating that Dr. LeBoyer's method is vehemently questioned by American doctors and one medical critic states that the technique is absolutely contrary to everything doctors know. Of Course!

There was still another article about Dr. LeBoyer, his childbirth method and his book Birth Without Violence, in the Los Angeles Times of April 21, 1975, part IV, View, entitled "Back-To-Nature Approach to Childbirth" with photographs of agonized and howling infants.

KOMMUNE 2

A BERLIN COMMUNE

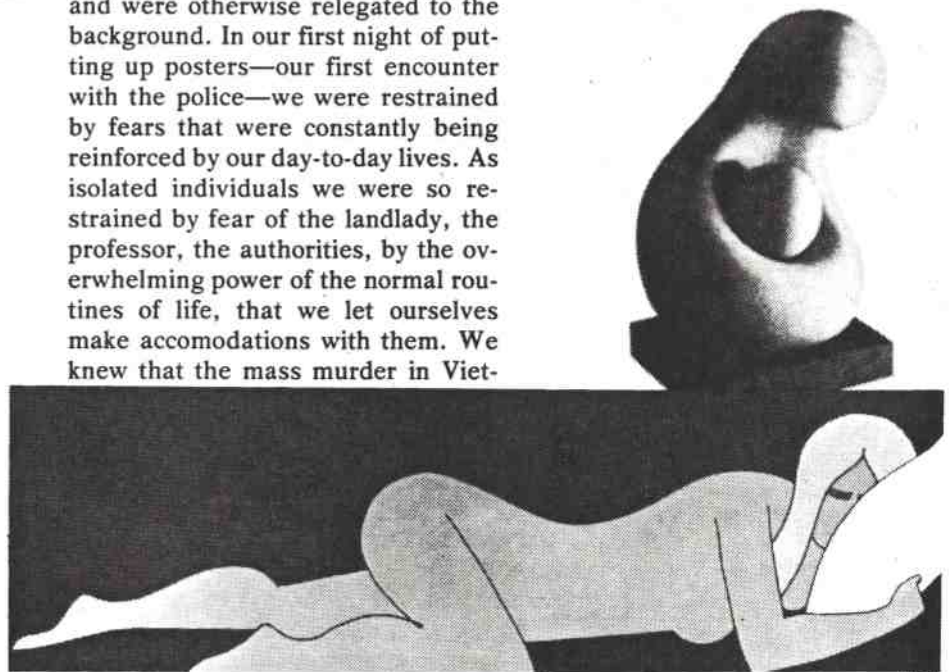
from *Communes Europe*

The women provided a decorative framework to the men's political discussions.



When we started the commune at the beginning of 1967, we understood it as a political collective. We proposed to follow through on the political implications of the experience of (the German) SDS in the preceding months. The commune grew out of a group of about thirty comrades, predominantly SDS members, who had taken leading roles in the first provocative actions in West Berlin. With the struggle for colonial emancipation before our eyes, we no longer wanted to carry on merely a theoretical critique of the prevailing conditions, but to go over to the actual revolution. While we dreamed of a free society and romantically identified with the guerillas in Latin America, the norms and constraints of everyday life exerted almost constant control over our lives. That was clear in the situation of the women in SDS, who provided a decorative framework for the men's political discussions

and were otherwise relegated to the background. In our first night of putting up posters—our first encounter with the police—we were restrained by fears that were constantly being reinforced by our day-to-day lives. As isolated individuals we were so restrained by fear of the landlady, the professor, the authorities, by the overwhelming power of the normal routines of life, that we let ourselves make accommodations with them. We knew that the mass murder in Viet-





nam was part of the routine. Yet when we tried to break through this everyday normality at isolated points the rigid, workaday, automatic mechanisms held us back. Out of our theoretical radicalism—and the necessity to create our own necessary milieu in order to make ourselves psychologically more capable of rebellion, the idea formed of banding together into a collective.

In February 1967 seven adults and two children formed a household in the SDS center in Berlin. We wanted to work together politically, but as soon as we move in "personal" problems began to dominate our life together. We could no longer overlook the fact that the women cooked in the kitchen while the men discussed politics. Nor would an unhappy relationship be buried in a carefully sealed private area any longer, since we were living together all day. If we had thought at first that working together on political problems would open the way to collective treatment of our personal difficulties, we found out quickly enough that first we had to get hold of the personal problems (inability to build love relationships, deteriorating marriages, etc.) that had been ignored for years, before we would be able to work together productively. Because we were concentrating on ourselves, the political claims that the SDS comrades had on us bothered us. In August 1967 we left the SDS center.

In the new house there were four men (three of them students), three women and two children, three and four years old at the time. The girl's mother and the boy's father lived in the commune.

An important improvement made possible by the collective form was the attempt to work on conflicts systematically. In the beginning we met almost every evening to discuss the day's resentments, mutual aggressions, or individual quirks. We felt the need to share with the others, problems we had until then dealt with by ourselves, individually. Wilhelm Reich describes this suppression as "character armor". In a society in which each person is a competitor with every other, no one may show her/his inner weakness (fear, sadness, the desire for tenderness and love, etc.) except in the rare intimacy of a lover relationship. The pressure of having to stay in competition—which we had experienced even in the SDS political discussions as "the duty to produce"—causes a continually renewed rigidity in people concerning their own desires and leads them to the most malicious attacks on other people's desires.

In the commune we gradually learned to recognize our own suppressed needs in others' needs. This new possibility of being able to talk about our fears, of being able to experience each other as weak, resulted in a direct psychological release, which we often noticed after our group discussions. But we quickly reached a limit in our new experiences. We discovered that we could express our emotions only in abstract ideas, not spontaneously. Specific constellations of conflicts kept coming up; we had not yet come to the real sources of these conflicts.

A typical conflict lay in the difficulties which continually cropped up when a new relationship between two people developed within the commune. Terrifically aggressive discussions involving the whole group exploded out of trivial events. But heated actions, such as slamming doors and yelling at each other, led not to a resolution of the problem for either of the two, but to depression for the woman. And sexual difficulties still weren't eliminated by identifying these conflicts correctly and by talking about them with others.

We were forced at this point to uncover the early childhood sources of these problems, and we tried to

develop a group therapy procedure. Despite some theoretical misgivings, we had to do without a trained analyst. Instead, by turns, each member of the group analyzed every other member. The group was present and acted as a control over the proceedings. The one doing the analyzing tried to become intuitively involved with the desires of the one being analyzed, so as to make possible alternative reactions to childhood fears. Through this method we succeeded in releasing emotions and repressions, and immediately experienced a greater spontaneity and tenderness in the group. We had to quit the analysis after three months because the dynamics of the freed wishes, fantasies, and infantile claims threatened to overwhelm our sense of reality. Since everyone was taking part at the same time in this process, there was no one who could act as a control on the outbreak of these tendencies.

A collective such as ours, in which no one is forced to work regularly, is in danger of gradually losing relevance to social reality. The loss of reality and creation of a utopian fantasy world can be observed now in many West German sub-cultural groups, especially in those that take hallucinogens and opiates regularly. We were repeatedly tempted (especially during the time of analysis) to give way to the desire for a total regression into an infantile dream world. We visualized a situation in which all external organization was abolished. Each could sleep as long as (s)he pleased, then eat when (s)he was hungry. No one was supposed to clean up or wash dishes or buy food unless (s)he felt moved to do so. We wanted to set up a common bedroom, to listen and dance to music, and in general do nothing, but play with each other like children. But, in contrast to other groups, we question whether this form of collective regression has any therapeutic benefit if in the long run the collective doesn't display any other concerted activity. The lack of something that represents a sense of outside reality (which the parents represent for the children) seems typically to lead to a progressive disintegration of the psychic structure rather than to help it become more resistant to social manipulation and develop more individual autonomy.

We could yield only partially to our regressive desires, but never as a whole collective or for an extended period of time, because of the

objective reality of our political intentions and because of the children.

When the children, who had lived in Kommune 1 until September 1967, came to us, they were both suffering from traumatic experiences: for Nessim, a four-year-old boy, the separation of his parents and the departure of his mother; for Grischa, a three-year-old girl, the recurrent separation from her self-supporting mother. Nessim's father and Grischa's mother now lived in the commune.

Not everyone agreed to the children's coming. K. and Jan felt the children would disturb our common life and concentration on school work. Eike, Nessim's father, expressed fear of undertaking the boy's upbringing by himself. At the time Nessim was extremely attached to his father. When we all took a walk, Nessim would hardly let go of his hand. Because of the loss of his mother, Nessim had developed a strongly passive, "feminine" attitude toward his father, which was expressed in his avoidance of any conflict situation with Eike. For example, when he tried to climb a tree and Eike then climbed up too, Nessim immediately quit trying and said in a whining, woeful voice, "I can't." Eike felt himself very much weighed down and hindered by Nessim's excessive demands on him. On that account he wanted the group to take on Nessim's upbringing collectively. Marion, Grischa's mother, wanted the same thing. The others were looking forward to the new experience with the children and agreed to try collectively to care for and rear them.

However, all the adults wanted to give the two children only a limited place in their lives, so we reserved two places for them in a public kindergarten. Although the kindergarten was already over-enrolled, the commune's children were immediately admitted. The school authorities seemed to be immensely relieved that of our own free will we wanted to submit our children to state control, so they weren't forced "for the good of the children" to enter that hell of violent anarchists.

In order to keep the children from getting too attached to their parents again, the care of the children was organized like the rest of our daily schedule. By turns one person got up in the morning to help them dress,



"The children's room stuffed with toys is the correlative of the prohibition against using things in the adult world as playthings."

make breakfast, and take them to kindergarten. Another picked them up, played with them until supper, then took them to bed in the children's room.

At first, the goal of our collective rearing was the gradual removal of the children's fixation on their respective parents. The children were to have the chance to initiate more intensive relations with several adults and to turn to others as well as to their parents with their desires and troubles. The general guideline was the development of self-sufficiency in the children.

In retrospect, we can see clearly that we all, especially the men, placed too much emphasis on adherence to a rigid program. Frequently the program was carried out despite the children's expressed disapproval. If, before going to sleep, one of the children wanted a specific adult, (s)he got use to hearing, "X is not on today". The spontaneous comforting of a crying child, usually by his/her parent, was criticized by Eberhard, who thought that whoever was "on" should be the one to do the consoling.

At the time we were working from a fixed plan for judging the children's development. We thought, for example, that children three and four years old should be able to wash and dress themselves. We overlooked the fact that the children's emotional development had been retarded by traumatic experiences. Behind their refusal to begin to do certain things for themselves, despite their physical development, was hidden the desire to regress to a condition in which they were tenderly nursed and cared for as babies by their mothers.

True to their middle-class origins and their education in high school and university, the four men very

markedly embodied a rationalized perception of human emotion. They had trouble interpreting the children's actions intuitively and were always trying to push those actions into the intellectual categories which they could understand and react to. If the children intentionally pushed food off the table or urinated in the room, the men asked angrily, "Why did you do that?" or "What was that for?" We understood only gradually, that, for example, the obvious mischievous destruction of food had a particular significance: the children wanted to show us in this way that we adults had spoken only among ourselves during the meal and had not paid any attention to them. Since they couldn't protest verbally against being left out, they protested with a provocative action that the adults could not ignore. We learned only very slowly to respond to these forms of children's communication....

Reacting spontaneously to the children's forms of expression was much easier for the women than for the men. Although the rational approach to behavior generally dominated and the children's needs were frequently frustrated, one major, positive result did emerge from the commune's first phase: the respective parents were relieved of exclusive responsibility for their children. This gave them the opportunity to gain a certain objectivity toward their behavior with regard to their children and, with the help of the more objective observation of the group, to take a new look at some of their rigid, irrational reactions.

We have done our best not to react continually with prohibitions and anger to the children's ways of expressing themselves, even when those ways have contradicted our

own ideas of cleanliness and orderliness. At the beginning we frequently fell into the trap of trying to outtalk the children when they resisted a particular demand. This insidious kind of suppression is seen primarily among liberal parents who shy away from making clear prohibitions and using physical force. Doing so obscures for the child the objective, present conflict between her/his wishes and the parents' demands. Aggressive energy can no longer be directed against the source of suppression, but must be displaced to some other object. With such an upbringing the child will tend to be aimlessly aggressive or to direct the aggression masochistically against her/himself, as one can see in the constant whining and complaining of some of the children.

Through our general discussions we quickly came to the heart of the tendency to manipulate the children's desires. Where we have seen no other solution, we have preferred to make clear prohibitions (and have tried to give reasons), rather than to prevent the children from doing certain things by playing tricks on them.

In important areas the children have had much more freedom than in an ordinary family. We tried to influence their play as little as possible and avoided pushing bought toys and storybooks on them. The usual children's room stuffed with toys is the correlative of the traditional prohibition against using things in the adult world as playthings. In the communal house the children had a great deal of freedom to bring furniture into their games. For us, it seemed important for a sense of dealing with reality in games that the threatening things of the adult world be divested of their fixed functions

and take on new functions in the game. As a result of our self-evaluation, the children were not pressured to empty their plates. We preferred to let them put on dirty clothes if they really wanted to, and suffered the kindergarten teachers' disapproval. To us the child's love for a particular piece of clothing was more important than the exaggerated pressure for cleanliness. Until winter the children bathed almost every night, so we didn't need to keep them washing continually, but instead reached the same goal as a sort of by-product of the very pleasant occupation of taking a bath.

For several months after the children joined the commune they both suffered from the shock of having lost their mothers. Grischa developed an enormous appetite. She regularly put just about everything in her mouth. Her wolfing down of food had a clearly aggressive element. This regressive emphasis on oral behavior expressed her desire to return to the condition of the time before the separation from her mother. Grischa couldn't openly express her aggressive reaction to her mother's disappearance, but the rage was clearly a part of her eating habits. If someone didn't agree to her wishes, she often threw herself screaming on the floor and rolled up in a ball, and it was impossible to talk to her. If someone touched her, she kicked him or her away and bawled, "leave me alone!"

In the first months Nessim rejected all tenderness from women. If a woman tried to pet him or take him in her arms, he pushed her away and said, "Leave me alone!" He never asked for his mother. If he wanted something, he expressed it in a nagging, whining tone. At the beginning both children woke up screaming almost every night. It was impossible to get them to say what was troubling them. They gave no answer to questions, but only continued to scream convulsively.

The program for gradually releasing the children's fixation on their respective parents simply couldn't be realized at first. In squabbles between themselves, in desires for tenderness, or in anxiety-filled situations, the children still turned to their

respective parents.

As the children gradually learned to express their emotions, probationally as it were, to other adults in everyday situations, they gradually learned to express aggressiveness against their parents. This ability developed hand in hand with the ability to turn to the other adults in the commune for love. During the period of analysis the group reached the highest degree of internal unity and stability. The integration was more than a mere program; we had developed strong libidinal relationships with one another. In this phase the children turned more frequently to other adults as well for their needs. They could accept them at least in part as substitute parents. A part of Nessim's defense against women relaxed. He gradually let himself enjoy their affection and began to express a desire for it. Grischa developed a strong affectionate attachment to Eberhard.

The more the adults broke through their emotional hangups in the analysis, the more spontaneous and less intellectual was their behavior toward the children. While at first the children had stood more on the edge of the commune, now we devoted ever more attention to them. We discovered the same suppressed instincts in the children that the analysis had made us aware of in ourselves, and so developed a much greater understanding of their non-verbal ways of expressing themselves. The greater sensitivity which we gained from the analysis and from our intensive observation of the children also helped us to learn to understand our own hidden desires and needs better.

From Eike's journal: *At night both children lay in bed. I caressed Nessim and in doing so caressed his penis, too. Grischa: 'I want to have a penis too.' I tried to tell her that she has a vagina that one can caress. Grischa dismissed that: 'I want to have a penis to peepee with too.' I said, 'You can have Nessim's penis. You can caress Nessim's penis.' Nessim refused at first, fearing Grischa would make an aggressive attack on his penis. I said that one must caress the penis very nicely. Nessim*

was now agreed, but wanted to caress Grischa's vagina in return. Grischa refused just as Nessim had before. I said that one must caress the vagina very nicely too. Both were agreed now, but argued over who should go first. Nessim agreed to Grischa's caressing his penis first. She wanted to caress it "a whole lot of times" and counted on her fingers. Nessim wanted to let her only once. I said something about in the middle. Grischa caressed Nessim's penis very carefully with one finger, and Nessim just as carefully Grischa's vagina. Then they both tried to have sexual intercourse.

Eike's ability to feel his way into the children's situation and to overcome their fear of letting someone touch their genitals is connected with his reliving his own castration fears and redigesting them better. Children notice the difference between the sexes very early. Its emotional and rational digestion is one of the most important achievements in the developments of a child's personality. As the journal shows, we tried to act in such a way that the difference between the sexes would be experienced not as a fearful threat but rather as a possibility for establishing a tender relationship with others.

A positive attitude toward childhood sexuality means for us not only that one frankly explains sexual functions to the children, but also that one emotionally approves of their genital pleasure sensations. In the average upbringing the difference between the sexes is explained

in this way: "Boys have a penis, girls don't." The sexual difference concentrates on the visible possession or non-possession of an organ. We took pains to make clear to the children the equal worth of the male and female genitals in receiving pleasure and at the same time to avoid an evaluation of their various games according to their relationship to the alleged masculine and feminine roles. (This job was made easier for us by the fact that in our everyday life we had already given up assigning activities according to sex.) In this way we think we can work against "fetishizing" consumer objects, i.e., turning

them into substitute sex objects.

An affirmative attitude towards the children's sexuality will sooner or later direct the children's sexual interest to the genitals of adults. Here too is usually where the limit is set on children's sexual curiosity in methods of so-called "free upbringing," due to the inhibitions of the adults themselves.

Eberhard's journal: ...*Grischa wanted to stroke my hands and face. I was allowed to stroke her only after she had stroked me and then only for a moment. As she stroked my stomach, she thought my ribs were breasts. I explained to her what ribs are and that I have only a flat chest and nipples. She stroked mine and showed me hers. We talked about girls' breasts when they are older.... Then came a "reaction": She grabbed my prick with her left hand, pulled down her pants and said, "Stick it in." I had expected something like that [Marion had already said that while playing in the tub, Nessim put his prick on Grischa's belly and she bent backwards so that he could "stick the penis in the vagina," which however didn't happen because of the lack of an erection], but I was still so inhibited that I quickly said it was much too big. After renewed stroking and attempts to close my penis came the demand to "stick it in," this time more energetically than before. I said, "Try it!" She held my prick to her vagina and then resigned herself to the fact: "Too big."*

Children's sexual interest, if not limited by intimidation and prohibitions, extends to coitus-like imitation of adult sexuality. As shown in the journal, children themselves realize the impossibility of satisfying their genital desires with adults. That children can actually live out this experience assumes not only that there is no prohibition on it but also that they can overcome their own inhibitions. Their own experience, consciously acquired, has the effect on children of turning them of their own accord to people their own age rather than adults to satisfy their genital sexuality more realistically. A precondition for this mastery of reality is that children grow up in a child-

ren's collective.

A children's collective should make it easier for children to learn social conduct. In a collective they would experience the reality that fulfilling their own interests can restrict the individual desires of another child. Experiencing this conflict is necessary for developing more intense relations among children.

The children's home we had in mind would be based on psychoanalytical principles and would include facilities for the children to stay overnight. We decided to organize daily joint outings to the Havel River in Berlin for all the children. Most of the children wanted to go on these outings only if their parents came too, so at first parents came along to get the children used to the new experience. In the weekly discussions held among the parents, we had from the beginning giving our opinion that we had to find a "neutral" person for the children, someone who would continually go on the trips with the children and who would later be in the children's store. Here our ideas differed from the ideas and practice of the other children's stores, wherein parents took turns with the supervision. The experience of these outings supported our conviction. The children whose parents' turn it was to go on the daily outing were continually checking on their mothers or fathers, sometimes couldn't stand other children going to their parents for help, and had on this day trouble playing with the other children—usually they wanted to play in front of their parents, to show off.

For the parents too this was a new situation. Their biggest problem was acting as they usually did toward their own children; they tended to fall into a restrained neutrality, in which they tried to treat their own child exactly as they did the others. Naturally, that only intensified their own child's anxiety. The children soon developed a great affection for the new teacher that we had found and loved to go to kindergarten. Through this libidinal tie to the teacher, a part of the anxiety-determined ties to the parents could be loosened. Consequently it was possible for the children too to develop more stable rela-

tionships among themselves, and so a collective came into being that had its own sense of identity.

Clearly the children would like to see the children's collective extended beyond their being together only at the children's store. There are similar tendencies in the group of parents. For a long time there had been a discussion going on as to whether the adults who up to now had not been living in communal houses ought to draw together into communes. In each small family taking part in the children's store, without exception, there was tension between the parents from the beginning. In the course of working together on the children's store, it became clear to just about everyone that these marriages could no longer be maintained. The parents' long ingrained ways of reacting to their children were questioned in the course of the parents' collective work. In one of our first discussions a mother could still assert of her four-year old son, "He's not interested at all in his penis. Sometimes he holds it and says it hurts. But then he forgets about it immediately." Another couple said, "We always sleep naked together in front of the children. They aren't interested in that at all." The observation in the children's store of the children's obvious sexual interests and the general discussions about them soon led to the parents no longer being able to repress the sexual expressions of their own children.

What helpful peripheral function can a commune and children's collective have in resolving these conflicts so as to strengthen the children's egos? A precondition for such a resolution is that the parents have an emotionally affirmative attitude toward the children themselves. The parents positive attitude is in turn dependant on the degree of their integration in a commune or a children's store-collective. There appear to be two abstract preconditions for a productive integration: 1) *a considerable range of common interests;* 2) *the development of methods with which a higher sensitivity to the emotions of other members of the group can be achieved.* ○

COMMUNITY & THE SMALL GROUP PROBLEM

The following excerpts from a paper by David of Twin Oaks and two responses to it first appeared in the Leaves of Twin Oaks, April, 1975. Subscriptions to the Leaves are \$3.00/yr.

"LEAVES OF TWIN OAKS"



The small group problem arises because of the contradiction between a nearly universal human tendency and the needs of the community. Other things being equal, most humans prefer to spend that time which they spend with others in the presence of those others with whom they feel most comfortable. They tend to feel most secure with those who share with them a long history of pleasant times spent together. Because time and emotional energy are limited, most people find that they develop such feelings of relatively intimate relatedness with only a small group (from two to fifteen people, typically).

The community, if it is larger than such a group, must stand in competition with those groups for members' energy, loyalty and feelings of relatedness. There are bound to be times, for example, when the community's need for a member's labor conflicts with a demand from a group-mate for that member's time. Further, such groups can, in time, develop barriers to entry. With such exclusiveness, they become power blocks which develop their own ideology separate from that of the community as a whole.

Most communities with any substantial ideological base have recognized this contradiction and have dealt with it in some way. In this paper I will take a brief look at a number of the ways in which the small group problem has been resolved by other communities, and then I'll try to relate those observations to the situation, as I see it, at Twin Oaks.

The Oneida Community, the Shakers, and many contemporary spiritual communities have attacked the problem in a very radical way. Through various means they sought to prevent completely the formation of small groups. Complex marriage and mutual criticism were the key tools employed by the Oneida Community. Complex marriage worked to prevent exclusive sexual relationships and mutual criticism was used to squelch exclusive relationships of any variety. The Shakers employed a combination of celibacy, strictly scheduled days, and frequent group gatherings to suppress the development of small groups and to increase the number of "pleasant times spent together" with the entire group. By having one's day strictly planned, a member had little time for informal gatherings which could result in small group formation. Many contemporary spiritual groups use the same mechanisms as did the Shakers.

The Kibbutz: In their early days the kibbutzim were nearly as radical as the above groups in their suppression of small groups. They were particularly aggressive in their suppression of that traditional primary group, the family. They stripped it of all traditional functions (child raising, food preparation, acting as a consumption unit) and brought considerable formal and informal social pressure to bear against those who tried to maintain strong familial ties.

The work place provides another setting for the possibility of the emergence of small groups. Whereas Oneida guarded

against this through the use of mutual criticism, and the Shakers through the use of strict scheduling, the Kibbutzim prevented the development of long-standing work-place ties by having members rotate jobs. (Small groups which develop from work-place relationships are particularly dangerous to the community because they can result in the formation of economic interest groups. Such groups may work for the agrandisement of their particular activity regardless of the interests of the community as a whole.)

It is interesting to note that as the kibbutzim passed out of the revolutionary phase and into what Talmon terms the "stabilized phase", most of them allowed some functions to revert back to the family. Biological parents began to have much more of a hand in the socialization of their children, and families began sharing some meals together. Some commentators argue that this trend is weakening the feeling of community in the Kibbutz, but many second-generation members (who tend to support the increased role of the family) maintain that it is the emergence of groups in the work sphere and in the political sphere that is undermining the sense of community. They see the re-emergence of the family as a part of their efforts to "humanize" the Kibbutz. The workplace and political groups, they argue, are caused by the increased size and complexity of the kibbutzim and by the demands for increased production and efficiency made by the Israeli government.

The Hutterites: Blood related families are the main social units in the Hutterite Communities. The community, however, assumes many of the traditional functions of the family (child-rearing after infancy, meal preparation and dining, entertaining) in an effort to prevent the family unit from becoming too important. While there are no sanctions against strong familial bonds of affection, there are social pressures against nepotism in the workplace. This insures that the work-place groupings cross-cut the familial groupings. Finally, daily meetings and rituals, and occasional celebrations, are community-wide events, insuring that all members share many happy times with the entire group.

Small Groups at Twin Oaks: Twin Oaks has been as radical as the early kibbutzim in its rejection of the biological family as a small group. It has not been as extreme, however, as Oneida, the Shakers and many contemporary spiritual groups in developing mechanisms to prevent the eventual emergence of small groups, familial or otherwise. Like the Kibbutz, Twin Oaks stripped the family of all traditional functions. Like the Kibbutz, too, Twin Oaks depended upon an ideological commitment to its revolutionary goals to maintain its anti-family and anti-(exclusive) group fervor. While this fervor seems somewhat abated at the present time, there still seems to be, on the surface, at least, few pressures for the re-emergence of the blood-related family as a small group of significance. We must pay attention, however, to the possibility of the emergence of small groups in other spheres.

Until about a year and a half ago, the labor credit system seemed to operate fairly effectively to prevent the emergence of work-place groupings. The new system, which allows members, particularly skilled members and those in managerial positions, to self-assign the same tasks week after week, is not rotating members so that they have as many different work-partners as previously. I believe that we can expect with increased growth and the increased demands of more complex industries, to see this trend continue.

Social groups have always been in evidence at Twin Oaks. They have usually centered around some activity, such as danc-

ing, card playing, music making, and volleyball. Such groups have had fairly fluid boundaries and have therefore been integrating mechanisms, rather than de-stabilizing ones. (When volleyball began to become a more exclusive grouping of skilled players last year, a lot of social pressure was brought to bear, and that activity ceased after years of daily games.)

Until about 2½ years ago, planners' meetings were events which drew a large proportion of the membership. These meetings were, I'm told, often occasions in which three important functions were served. The first is that the meetings themselves were shared events, grist for later conversations among any members who were present. The second is that much of the discussion often revolved around ideological considerations, thus generating a shared conception of the community ideology. The third function of these meetings was to serve as occasions for storytelling. I'm told that Kat, in particular, with her gift for narrative, often felt called upon to relate current discussion to previous events in the history of Twin Oaks. Such story telling must have generated in members a sense of shared historical tradition.

Planners' meetings today, with their often sparse attendance, and with their tendency to deal with highly complex matters in a technical way (with elaborate preparation by those who become expert in the matters which affect a given proposal) no longer serve the above functions.

Since meals are not taken together, there presently only about three occasions a year in which the group, as a whole, comes together. (Anniversary, Harvest Festival and Winter Solstice.)

The small group problem, at present, is manifesting itself only slightly, in the following ways: There are a (probably small) number of people who feel alienated and friendless. They feel somewhat left out of all the tighter groups. There are some groupings beginning to form around the work place (i.e., the construction company, the hammock shop, CPC), and there is a hint of exclusiveness developing in some of the social groups (e.g., music makers and poker players). To the extent that social groupings cross-cut the work-place groupings, however, they have an ameliorating effect on the small group problem. Cross-cutting alliances help spread out members' loyalty to other than just one group.

As we grow, however, and as our industries grow more complex and demanding, there is a clear danger that the social groupings will begin to more nearly parallel the work-place groupings, creating a very unstable condition for the community. Even if this parallelism doesn't develop, it's very possible that either the work-place groups of the social groups will emerge much more strongly than the other, making the cross-cutting nature of the two an ineffective integrating mechanism. There will, in addition, be a growing number of new people, as yet unskilled, who will feel alienated from the cliques and from the community as a whole.

All communities (indeed, all societies) tend to divide themselves into sub-groups. How a community chooses to deal (or not to deal) with this tendency can have a determining effect both on the lifestyle and the longevity of the community. I believe that as we at Twin Oaks grow in membership, this sub-grouping (and the consequences of sub-grouping will become more apparent to all of us.

If we ignore the problem as we grow, it is certainly possible that our social groups and work groups will remain at least as cross-cutting and non-exclusive as they presently are. My sociological intuition tells me, however, that such will not be the case.

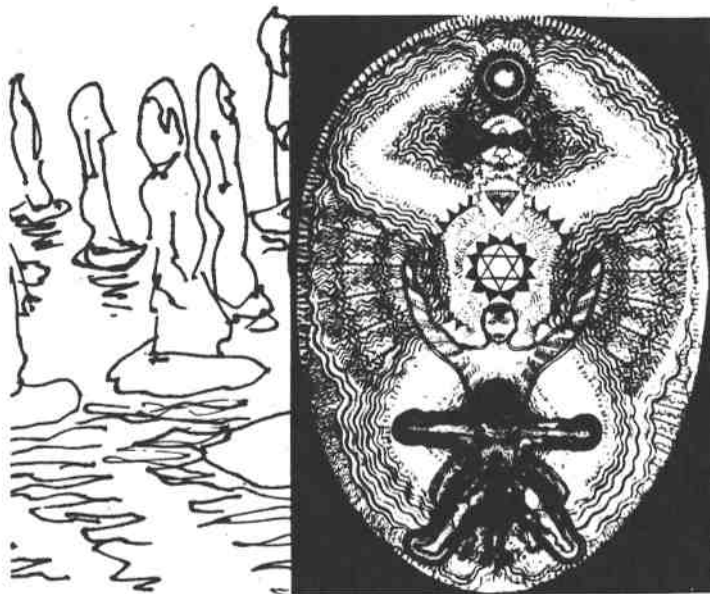
I already see some signs that we are heading in the direction of developing cliques which could become "interest groups" (power blocks) which could eventually fractionalize the community.

My only purpose in writing this paper is to help focus our collective awareness on the possibility that what I think I'm observing is in fact starting to happen—and that we would do well to pay attention to the "small group problem" as we grow.

§§§

§§§

David



Response by F of Twin Oaks:

I agree very warmly with (this paper): that so far we have avoided fragmentation not by suppressing subgroups, but by having them overlap; that that is the right way to do it; and that it is not clear how to go on doing it as we get larger.

Such a texture of society seems to me right, not only because it contributes to complexity and therefore stability, but because of its direct utility to me as an individual. Behaviorally speaking, we cannot all love (pay attention to) each other, but there is a potential unity to the group as a whole if each person has access to the others according to cos need. If every person is connected to every other thru a chain of groups, then the links can be energized as needed, with a maximum of personal contact. Also, if a person belongs to several groups, co is not agonizingly dependent on any one.

However, I don't think any group will last long if it is artificial in the sense of having no other set purpose than to be a group. We have to put up with the risk of having common tasks and goals to be the basis of the groups, and counter it by seeing to it that these tasks and goals are various enough, within each person, to keep any one of them from occupying cos whole world. That means, among other things, forgoing some of the economic advantages of specialization. We have got to be rich enough to afford that—and then let's afford it, regard it as something worth paying for.

Response from Pat Conover, a sociologist, member of Shalom Community, and friend of Twin Oaks:

1. You have selected members over the years, thru the de facto shape of extant community structure and processes, who are reasonably satisfied with a low level of primary group em-

phasis. Change will be very difficult because of this. Change in the direction of increased emphasis on primary groupings will have extensive, and many unanticipated impacts on T.O. structures and processes. It is hard to imagine a more fundamental source of dramatic change.

A. In terms of personality characteristics theory (and my limited observation) I suggest that you have selected members who are happy with lots of privacy time. The ideology of self-actualization or development is intrinsically hedonistic and individualistic. Neither value is in keeping with the formation of strong primary groups. T.O.'s strength has been its simple distributive justice which promises maximum time and energy to each person to pursue self-gratification. In ideological terms I think of T.O. more as a mutual support collective than as a group with strong group consciousness. I'm guessing that this is a great setting for working out self-clarification and then when such clarification is completed members look for a primary group to share this with. In this sense I see T.O. as a "School of Living" eternally destined to a high turnover unless there occurs a change of basic model.

1. Conclusion—If you retain Juniper as a "School" you might have lots of branches for "graduates" and with enough branches, the "school" could be maintained for its feeder functions.

B. A lot of T.O. ideology is just a general sampling of a pervasive alternative culture. (This seems more relevant than **Walden Two**.) I mean that T.O. is more together as a society than as a culture. By trying to be a "general commune" you have attracted people with divergent values and interests—an elementary basis of disagreements and conflict. Since all important decisions adversely affect some, often in important ways, an important source of turnover is built into the model.

1. Important primary groups will sharply heighten that built in tension.
2. It is naive to think that values don't **really** matter so that a good social system can overcome "academic differences without real social cost.
3. You have had the luxury of not paying attention to such issues with full seriousness because of success in attracting new members because of your prestige.
4. Conclusion: you might formulate pluralism (rather than ambiguity) as a core value, establish other core values, and then let small groups organize themselves within such limits.

2. Identity change is a social fact which requires primary group support to sustain. Entering the alternate culture and specific communes requires identity change. Identity involves not only ideology and personal re-orientation but also a sense of connection to those people who recognize and support identity and identity change. Twin Oaks as a collection of roles and statuses (as a sheerly **social** system) doesn't meet the depth needs in identity reorientation because there are not those who co knows very well and who know co very well. Depth knowledge and identity support is the essence of primary grouping. I see T.O. as being good at the negative process of helping people break free of old identity linkages, but very weak on providing the process and structure for the formation of new positive linkages. This, to me, explains the attractiveness of T.O. to new members and its difficulty in holding on to old ones.

In summary—I think you need to come to grips with your

turnover problem (24% in 1974, Eds.). Twin Oaks has proved to be a social system which, as is, is only capturing the long term commitments of a fairly small proportion of even those persons who have been members for a year or more. You have even had a significant turnover of members in your most committed core. The things that attract people to T.O. initially are apparently not enough to sustain long term commitment. I am suggesting that the very success of the T.O. model in promoting individual clarification prepares members to seek more—more of several things. With a multiplicity of branches/primary groups, it would be possible for members to shape new groupings to meet emerging interests and needs, to grow and change and still be able to find or make a place in T.O.

It would seem to me that, in experiential terms, one would want to be part of a large community which shares some **common** values and orientations and which is **just** in organizing basic economic and political aspects, and, at the same time, be part of a primary group which shares **particular** interests, involves the whole personality (as opposed to merely the role of commune member), and emphasizes **love** and **friendship** as the immediate texture of life.

Shalom, Pat

Pat's paper sparked a lot of discussion. Much of what Pat said seemed quite accurate, especially his observation that Twin Oaks is "good at the negative process of helping people break free of old identity linkages, but very weak on providing the process and structure for the formation of new positive linkages." Much of Twin Oaks' strength is in its tolerance of diversity. (New members are attracted by how deceptively easy it is for them to join us in living in a radically different way; no value commitments are demanded, no obeisance to a leader is necessary, all that is demanded is a desire to live with us cooperatively.) That very tolerance, however, makes it difficult for many to find real support for the values they're taking on as their identities change over time.

In his paper Pat was talking mainly about Juniper, but many of us at Merion recognized that whether or not he had accurately characterized Juniper, the overall analysis was uncomfortably true about Merion. Some of us, at least, felt ready to transcend the hedonism of concentrating on individual self actualization by making commitments both to each other and to the community (as well as to the world at large.) We knew that we certainly did not yet qualify as one of the primary groups that "graduates" of Juniper would go to in order to find support for their emerging values. Though we were only nine, we had not evolved a coherent set of agreements concerning what Merion is all about.

Thus began the "agreements meetings" at Merion, attempts to arrive at statements that we could hang over our door, and about which we could say, "This is who we are...this is why we're here." At the first meeting we reiterated our pledge to non-violence, agreed that "bad-vibing" each other, Juniper, or even the U.S. Gov't was something we want to avoid, and that we all wanted to be open to being reminded, with compassion if possible, when we slipped. (Bad-vibing includes public bitching, sarcasm, and other ways of being self-righteous.) We agreed that instead of bad-vibing, we want to put out positive energy into changing what we would criticize.

Besides having the agreements meetings, we've also begun again getting help with our group process from a group therapist. None of this may result in our generating a coherent culture, but it feels good to be moving in that direction.

○ David

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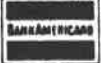
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(found poem)

ANIMALS, PLANTS, and BREAD

I am 15 and a girl.
I want to live on a farm with a commune.
I want a home yet be free
(not forced or pushed).

Where I can feel squashed and squozen.
I want to be free and not be pushed.

I want to work hard, I want to work
with animals, plants, and bread.

I want to be free and not be pushed.
I want to be free and not be pushed.
I want to be free and not be pushed.
I want to be free and not be pushed.

I want some wildness and
love, and I've got my heart set on
it. Please if you find out about this, or
please let me know.

Laurie
415 Coon
11th

(from a letter in Reach
found and arranged into
lines and titled by
Marisha Chamberlain
469 Grand #2
St. Paul, MN 55107)

ANSWER

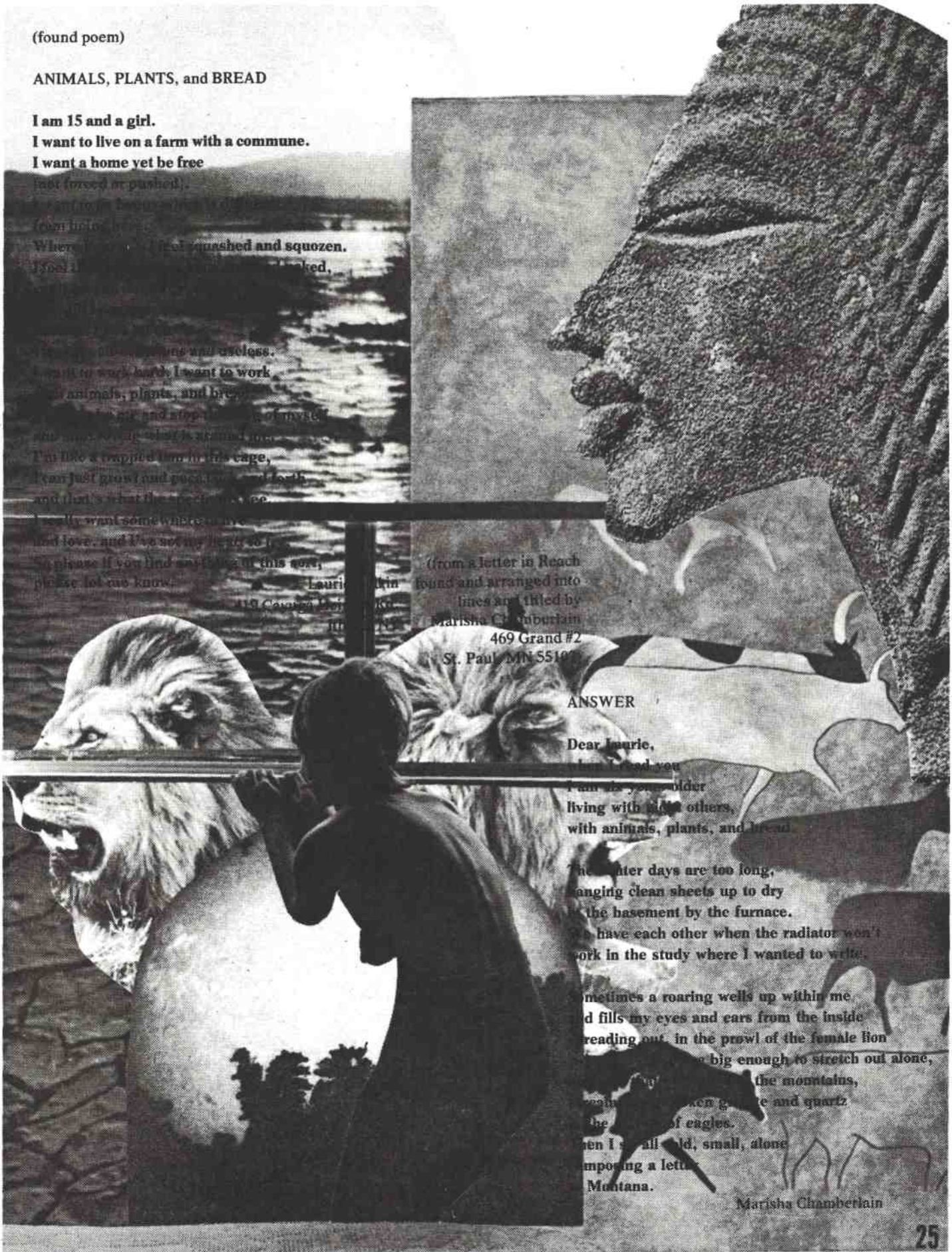
Dear Laurie,
I read you
I am six years older
living with many others,
with animals, plants, and bread.

The winter days are too long,
hanging clean sheets up to dry
in the basement by the furnace.
We have each other when the radiator won't
work in the study where I wanted to write.

Sometimes a roaring wells up within me
and fills my eyes and ears from the inside
reading out in the prowl of the female lion
big enough to stretch out alone,
the mountains,
granite and quartz
the wings of eagles.

When I am all cold, small, alone
imposing a letter
Montana.

Marisha Chamberlain





Jealousy

a few thoughts

from *The Harrad Grok*

Some people are already in touch with those hurt and scared feelings connected with the possibility of losing something in a loving relationship. There are those who state they find these feelings unbearable. "I can't deal with them," we're told. Interestingly, when we are in the presence of their jealous experience, they often do not **look** as pained or panicked as they may later describe themselves as having been. Of course, feelings are private and varied, but we have been able to determine that the primary feeling experienced by almost everyone in almost all instances invoking jealousy is just plain old garden-variety anxiety. Anxiety itself can vary in intensity, from a vague free-floating discomfort to an acute panic reaction. Perhaps more important is the fact that people vary in their capacity and desire to accept anxiety. Most Americans would rather not. About one in three adults used anti-anxiety drugs (tranquilizers) last year.

Those of us who want to make open and multiple relationship styles work may have to just accept a certain amount of jealousy-connected anxiety in the confidence that, like the experienced professional, we will grow in our ability to handle anxiety which itself will fade in time. Just as we accept risks in relationships and the pain of growing, jealousy may just be a part of the pain of the price of admission to a richer life.

*Jealousy is becoming
the New Sin of the
Liberated Generation.*

Yep. I'm jealous because I am insecure. I'm jealous because I've made myself believe that I need another person to reaffirm my own existence. I'm jealous because I'm worrying about that support eroding, ending. And with all my agonizing, it has somehow escaped me that all I can really do in dealing with the situation is to get my own shit together!

I have loved the same woman for five years. We lived together for as long. Got married. Ring and all. Then, three years into the affair, she met somebody else. I was jealous. I was afraid that she would go away and live with him. So I complained to her. I told her she was a terrible person. I wondered why she was doing this to me. I threatened to knock the bastard's block off. Nothing worked. She was strong. And ultimately, I realized that I couldn't control her. So I stopped trying. I got into my own relationships. I got into therapy. I started dealing with her honestly.

Know what? She left anyway.

Oh well, I said (between the tears). So I tried to do it well. And I failed. Right? **Wrong!**

That's what I've learned thus far. I can only manage my own act. One person can't pilot a relationship.

So next time, I says to myself, I'm going to be more self-oriented. Sure, I'll make concessions—they're necessary. But I will not compromise myself. And when I feel jealous, I'm not going to grieve about what's going on with her, or us, but what's going on with **me**.

Maybe, in the process, I'll get to like myself so much that I won't **need** another person. Then I can concentrate on feeling good about being with another person, and feeling good about my solitude when **that's** happening.

It seems a lot healthier.

"Fidelity? Oh, we're much too close for that to matter."

I think, apart from sex itself, jealousy is probably the strongest human passion going. And the kind that really stings is sexual jealousy. Which makes it all the odder that sexual jealousy should be well on the way to becoming the New Sin of the Liberated Generation. Yet that's what seems to be happening.

Even monogamy itself came under attack; the Women's Movement argued that a woman who committed herself to one man was collaborating in her own oppression. And while the argument remains unsettled among feminists to this day, it pulled out the last prop from an already badly shaken system of sexual ethics. An attack on monogamy is implicitly an attack on sexual fidelity, and that, in turn, makes jealousy an indefensible state. From the politico's point of view, to be jealous is to be a kind of capitalist pig of the heart: you're being possessive, treating your lover like a piece of property with "No trespassing" signs posted along the fence. You are, in other words, being politically incorrect. Shame on you.

I first encountered some aspects of this kind of thinking a couple of years ago, not, interestingly enough, in the Women's Movement but in conversation with a man in the peace movement. We were talking one night about monogamous relationships: he thought they were bad. "It's selfish and lazy," he said. "Two people lean all over each other and never bother to get close to anyone else." I took exception to his opinion, saying that the one really long affair I'd ever had had been an amazingly vigorous experience, forcing both of us to reveal ourselves and to take emotional risks we would never have bothered to take otherwise and, as far as I could tell, still leaving us free to enjoy deep friendships with other people. I admitted, however, that we agreed not to sleep with anyone else while we were together...that, indeed, I got jealous when a man I was really involved with slept with other women. "But doesn't that just add to your relationship?" my friend said, pointing out that he actually introduced his girlfriend to men he thought she'd like to sleep with. I managed to fight off the conviction that he was some kind of

pervert, but it was immediately replaced by the conviction that I was a mean prig. Finally, I said I felt rather guilty if I got involved with a married man, since I was doing something hurtful to another woman. He really blew up then. "That's none of your business," he said emphatically. "You're interfering with the relationship between a man and his wife when you start feeling guilty about her! That's just pure emotional imperialism."

Emotional imperialism? I left the conversation feeling guilty because I'd felt guilty. I tried to figure out why it's not interference when I sleep with someone else's husband, but is when I feel guilty about it. This new morality was obviously going to be even trickier than the old.

Shortly afterward, I had the opportunity to put these revolutionary ideals to the test (it is a boon, after all, for a single woman to be told she should sleep with other women's mates and not feel guilty about it). A woman I know and like, who has the mixed fortune to be married to one of the more attractive men alive in the universe today, happened to remark that she didn't think fidelity was important, and neither did he. "Fidelity?" she asked me in the same incredulous tone my former peace-movement buddy had used. "Oh, we're much too close for that to matter. "Wowee," I said, full of amazement and lust. Well, lust outed after a decent interval, and was that ever a miserable mess. It shouldn't have been, rationally speaking; I didn't want to get involved with her husband to any degree that would threaten their marriage, and he didn't seem inclined in that direction either. So what was the problem? Simply put, she was jealous—low-down, on-the-ground, what-are-they-doing-now jealous. I saw her at a party one night, and she looked haggard and in pain. It turned out she and her husband—my lover—were going through a difficult time in any case, but I was a contributing factor. She and I both knew this and could barely manage to say hello. At one point, I sprawled out on the rug while talking with some people, and I saw her eyes travel the length of my body, tracing every curve like a tongue exploring a sore in the mouth. She was, of course, feeling

nothing I wouldn't have felt in her place. Except for one thing—she also felt guilty for feeling jealous.

My part in that situation came to an end, finally, and left me wondering where my common sense had been when I first got into it—although I might not have given the matter a lot more thought if it hadn't begun to be clear over the past year or so that attitudes once confined to the fairly arcane thought processes of movement folk are spreading like chestnut blight through the popular media. In the small flood of how-to-have-a-liberated-relationship literature that has been pouring out during the last year or so, I keep encountering the pretense that jealousy doesn't exist—much like the Victorian pretense that sexual passion didn't exist—at least not for mature, free-spirited people. The book **Open Marriage**, by anthropologists George and Nena O'Neill, is a case in point. I think it has been such a smash best seller for two reasons: first, people don't take marriage for granted as a good thing anymore and yet they don't know quite what to do instead; second, the ads, as well as that rather clever title, suggest that the book is going to say it's O.K. for married people to sleep around. Actually, that's what the authors do say, but with the pious caveat that if your relationship isn't "mature" enough to permit such flexibility, then don't try it. Jealousy, these new moralists imply, is not only unliberated, it's childish. Sort of rude and unnecessary, like chewing with your mouth open. Take that, Othello.

Similar thinking has cropped up in any number of other places—in **Newsweek's** cover story on divorce, for example, and in **New York** magazine's special issue on couples. Even the good, staid **New York Times** ran an article—somewhat wistfully entitled "Fidelity: Is It Just an Old-Fashioned Concept?"—in which a representative sampling of recent college graduates allowed as how fidelity was just an old-fashioned concept and that they would do their best not to impose such a ridiculous burden on their future mates. Everybody seemed to feel that jealousy was wrong, although some of the women interviewed were more hesitant than the men, but they were

apologetic about their hesitation. The same apologetic air was evident in a marriage contract printed in an issue of *Ms.* not too long ago. The couple who'd drawn up the contract emphasized not only equality and mutual respect but also freedom and independence. Then they blew it. Starting with a phrase like, "Freely recognizing our insecurity in these matters..." they swore, to the best of their ability, to be sexually faithful to each other. Ha! Political yahoos! And there it was on paper for everyone to see!

Have we all gone thoroughly mad? What sort of liberation is it that leaves us apologizing for our passions? Freely recognizing my insecurity in these matters, I'd still argue that in the recent welter of theorizing of simple human reality. It is as if we've slipped back to the eighteenth century, back to the view that people are perfectable and social relations can be made to function like a well-oiled machine. The trick is to get the grit out of the cogs, and the machine will run perfectly, the way it rationally should. According to the latest blueprint for happiness, jealousy is grit, mere sludge in the engine of the revolutionary, nonpossessive relationship. The only trouble with the blueprint is that very few people seem to be able to follow it with any success.

Take the O'Neills. They have said when interviewed that an open marriage doesn't have to be sexually open; theirs, as it happens, isn't. Well, **sexual** openness, as it happens, is the crux.

It's true, of course, that the superficial logic of the jealousy-equals-possession-equals-immaturity argument is seductive, and it's also true that the old morality left too little leeway for human complexity. Just because your lover sleeps with someone else doesn't have to mean he is a hopeless moral slob or doesn't love you anymore or that the world and your romance are coming to an end. But this burgeoning new morality, whether wrapped up in political or psychiatric rhetoric, is no more realistic. It is as if, having discarded a lot of dumb old rules, we're loading right up again on dumb new ones. New guilts for old. Ludicrous, isn't it?

Equally ludicrous is the argument that sexual jealousy is endemic to a monogamous society. A couple of weeks at the library and a few hours on the phone with anthropologists are enough to explode the popular notion that somewhere out there in sexy Polynesia or up in Greenland with the wife-proffering Eskimos jealousy doesn't exist. As sociologi-

cal observers reiterate, however various and liberal the sexual attitudes of different peoples, sexual jealousy appears to be a constant. It occurs in restrictive societies and in societies where sex is more open. Indeed, sexual jealousy plagues societies that have far less use for it than ours (in one polygamous African tribe, the term for fellow wives is "people who roast each other"). Further to say that jealousy is mere possessiveness is as simpleminded as saying love is mere possession. I don't feel I own a man simply because I love him, but if I love him and think I'm faced with the threat of losing him, I may well feel jealous. Why jealousy and not just grief? Perhaps because grief is the acknowledgment of a fact, an acceptance of loss. He's gone, I feel terrible, and that's that. But jealousy is a **refusal** to accept. He isn't gone—he's still here, at least when he's not there with her; I may or may not lose him. Jealousy is a state of tension, unresolved and tormenting, which is no doubt why it provokes people to do things like kill each other or, with us milder types, throw shoes at the wall.

Freud defined ordinary, garden-variety jealousy as a cluster of emotions "compounded of grief... and of the narcissistic wound... feelings of enmity against the successful rival, and of... self-criticism which tries to hold the [jealous person's] own ego accountable for his loss." This so-called normal jealousy, as Sigmund Freud and other analysts have pointed out, has its basis in a real situation in which a relationship is plausibly perceived as threatened. Pathological jealousy, by contrast, persists despite the absence of any real or even probable threat. It's at once a disguise for and a symptom of a disorder or anxiety in the jealous person, and its solution lies not in the adjustment of the relationship but in identification and treatment of the disorder. In its most common form, pathological jealousy is a reflex of insecurity. I know a woman who has become so jealous that she can't bear for her husband to spend time with other people, women or men. Not by accident does her jealousy coincide with the mounting success of her husband in his career (he's a writer) and her increasing anxiety over her own lack of one, particularly now that the children are grown. She's tormented by a sense that her life is empty, but for the moment unable to bring herself to start a career since she's convinced she's incapable of doing anything well. The only success she has had is in isolating herself and her husband from social contact of any sort,

an intolerable situation which won't improve until she's able independently to recover her sense of self-worth. To describe this woman as merely jealous is like describing someone who's shrieking with pain as noisy. More than jealous, she's crippled.

This distinction between ordinary and pathological jealousy is constantly being obscured by the kind of new social thinking I've been talking about. The result is a common assumption—in the O'Neills' **Open Marriage**, for example—that **all** jealousy is a sign of inherent insecurity on the part of the jealous person... which makes way for the notion that "healthy" people can "out-grow" jealousy altogether, conjuring up visions of some emotional Land of Cockaigne where everybody is perpetually secure, infinitely generous and selflessly undemanding. If there is such a state, it's called Nirvana, and takes Buddhist monks years, even lifetimes, to reach. And it requires some pretty thorough transcending not just of bad passions—like sexual jealousy—but also of the good ones—like sexual love.

What seems to be missing in the kind of thinking that attributes all jealousy to personal insecurity or emotional immaturity or nursery-school possessiveness is the perception that love itself creates the conditions for anxiety. If a woman loves a man (or any X loves any Y) and that man seems to be getting seriously interested in another woman, then the first woman isn't being insecure if she feels threatened. The relationship itself has become insecure, at least for the moment. Say, then, that the man turns to first woman, and says, "Don't worry, darling, I don't love you any less just because I'm spending half my time with Josephine, whom I also love." What if it's true? What if he really does love them both and has no plans to leave first love for second, and first love is a busy woman with lots of interests to take up the time he's spending with second love? Well, anything might happen. A friend of mine in that situation seems to have retreated, emotionally and sexually, from her husband and from other men as well. She is at once very calm and very, very busy. Another friend just seems to have accepted the situation. She's been married for several years to a man who usually has an outside affair going. **She** usually doesn't, claiming she's just less inclined than her husband to get sexually involved with people. He assures her that he won't leave her, in fact is crazy about her. She believes him, and intellectually agrees with what is doing. Yet when I

asked her if she would prefer that he not sleep with other women, she said yes. Why? "Well, because then I just wouldn't have to be always **coping**."

Coping. I know what that's about. I once found myself on the short leg of a triangle and had a brief go at being magnanimous. It seemed clear my lover's feeling for this other lady didn't spring from dissatisfaction with me, that he wasn't going to leave me and that, presumably, he needed to see the lady or otherwise he wouldn't be doing it. O.K. Part of loving someone is respecting that person's needs. I kept up an "open marriage" for about a month, and it didn't work awfully well. My peace of mind shattered on little things, like the time a terrific concert came up and tickets were impossible to get but he got a pair and then took her instead of me. Or the time I had my first article rejected and wanted him to comfort me with apples, as it were. But he was off spending time with her. Having fun while I suffered.

The nagging question, finally, that refused to go away was: **Why is he doing this to me?** Making me cope in a way I wasn't making him cope. Then I began to contemplate the power he had to hurt me, and I writhed under it and the need I had for his reassurance, and I cursed myself and found myself plotting what to do to get away from him, back to my safe, inviolate autonomy. Grief...enmity... the narcissistic wound... self-blame.... Round and round the passions went. If I managed to keep the jealous hydra at bay one day, it would come back the next and the struggle would start all over again, always with the thought, **I wouldn't do this to you**. At some point the energy required for all that coping was too much, and I fled.

Love creates need and power; that's why loving is dangerous, why some people don't do it at all. I need my lover if I'm to be entirely happy; it is only he who knows me, finally. I have the power to hurt him, as he does me, by seeming to love him less, by leaving him. One doesn't seek this power. It's a gift, endowed by the intensity of one lover's feelings for the other, the understanding that at some point he chose to make himself vulnerable to me as I chose to make myself vulnerable to him. If in love there is trust instead of terror, it comes from the knowledge that neither lover will take advantage of the power the other has granted. We strive for balance in this respect: to be equally powerful, equally at risk. Finally, how does one recognize love

except by the way one loves? "I wouldn't do this to you," I said, and knew I meant it. I wasn't blaming him... simply perceiving a difference between us that I found, as the divorce courts say, irreconcilable.

Not that the difference would have been irreconcilable for everyone—remember my friend who is able to "cope," even though she wishes she didn't have to. Or take all the couples around who are moving more or less spontaneously into communal or group marriages. I've recently met a husband and wife who both sleep with other people regularly without feeling jealous—provided the relationships outside the marriage remain clearly secondary. For all these people, "Thou shalt not commit adultery" has come to be replaced by "Thou shalt not be jealous." Apparently, for them it works.

Whenever old rules break down, of course, there's always an impulse to set up new ones in their place. It makes life so much simpler; it saves a lot of thought.

You know just where you are at any given moment. But the point of liberation—whether sexual, political or personal—is to live with as few rules as possible, and that means allowing as much room as we can for human variety. The only guidelines, after all, should be experience and necessity. For some, that may well mean an end to fidelity or the need for it. But for most of us, sexual jealousy in some form will probably be around as long as sex remains an expression of love and love remains the most effective means (apart from religion) of assuaging our essential isolation. This sort of jealousy is a kind of intelligence: a perception of one's needs, the singular emotional needs that are for each of us a corollary of love, and as various as lovers.

Myself, I sing the Song of Solomon, and will stop only when I find that, for me, it no longer rings true: "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy as cruel as the grave."



CONSCIOUS CHILD REARING

BUBBA FREE JOHN

1. CHILDREN AND THEIR STRATEGIES

People have all kinds of illusions about children. A baby looks so fresh and unblemished that you think it is straight from heaven. You would like to assume that a baby is an exception to the general criticism of men's lives that is communicated in my Teaching. But he is not. As soon as he is born, a baby starts performing the same activity of separation and self-meditation that all men are suffering.

In a very real way, a baby represents a sophisticated, double-edged strategy. He is strategically creating and maintaining his separate individuality on the one hand, and on the other he is seeking to become insensitive to the suffering that separative life implies. A baby represents strategies that are ultimately as profound as any that are played out in the complications of a mature personality. It is just that at birth the mechanism is apparently fresh. There are no character lines in the face, no ability to speak, no way to assert independence or otherwise enact what eventually appears in the maturing individual. Although it is not so obvious in the child, he is Narcissus. He represents the same adventure that defines all of human life in separation.

From the moment of birth, a child suffers separation in real practical terms, and he dramatizes that separation by expressing his needs. Then, in reaction, as parents, you unconsciously fulfill his demands for

attention and reinforce his assumption of separation on this very gross level. As he adapts to more sophisticated ways of living and expressing himself, he communicates the same demand for attention in other ways. He spends his whole life demanding attention and having that demand fulfilled, or not fulfilled. In any case, his life is the life of Narcissus, of suffering and ignorance, and it begins long before there is a developed personality.

2. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

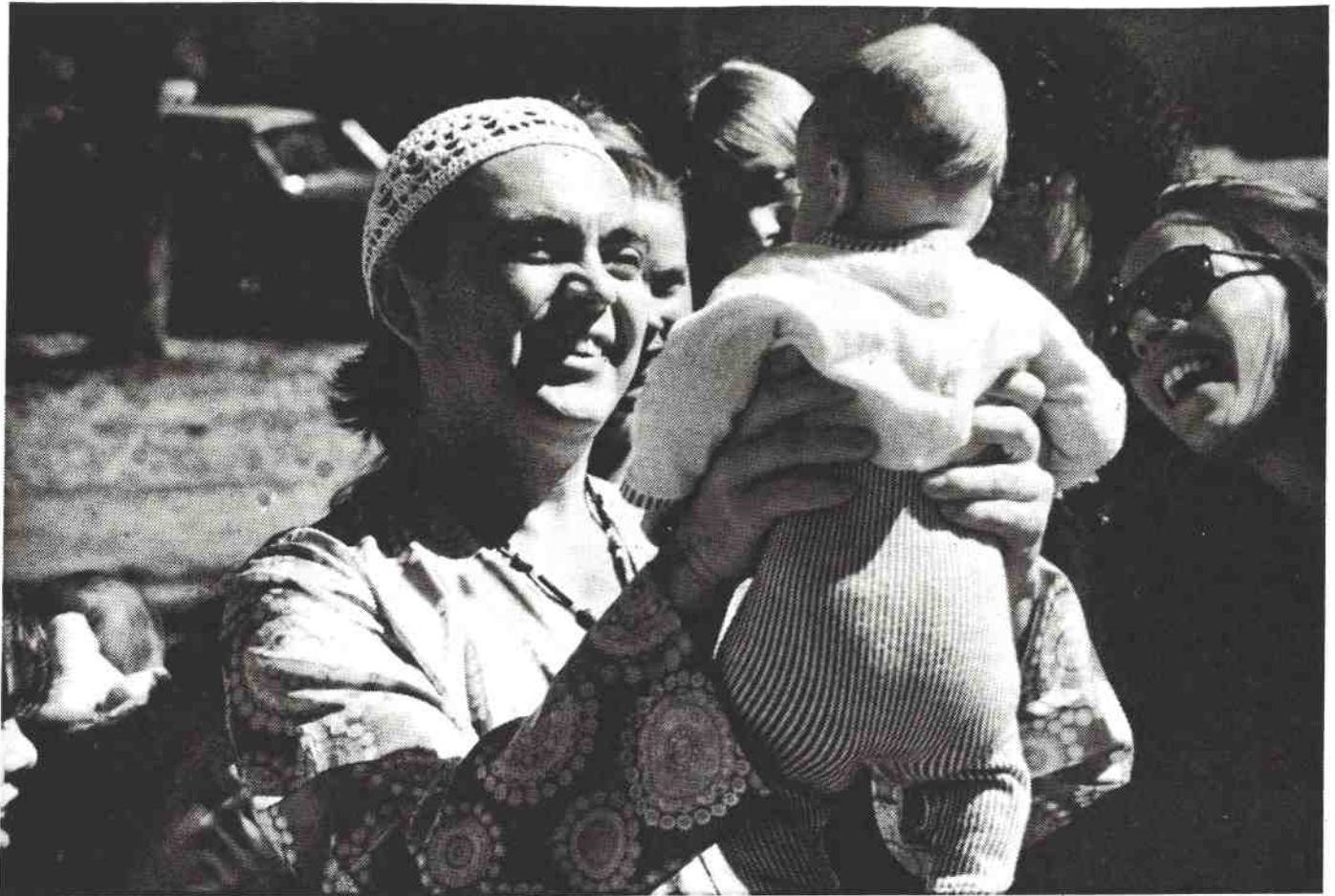
As a parent, you must become sensitive to the strategies your child is enacting. There are times when it is best *not* to fulfill your child's demands for attention, and perhaps he will cry a lot. It is useful on occasion to leave your baby completely alone without the consolation of a gentle touch or a soothing voice. Without putting him into a psychotic terror, require your child to see his situation. He has the capacity to experience that separation on a certain level, to comprehend his involvement with it, and intuitively to know his non-separateness in a very real way. You can serve that possibility in him by understanding his demand for attention and not supporting it.

Babies communicate through their actions that they feel separate. They want you to remedy that feeling, to console them, to fulfill their search for connection. They want you to accept their assumption of separation,

and they want you to console them in the midst of it so that they will not have to feel it any more. But simply by cooperating with the strategy, you only reinforce that egoic assumption. You help them to become insensitive to it and unaware. In fact, you contribute to their suffering, because the assumption of isolated egoic existence is human suffering. And that comes to an end only through consciousness, not through momentary consolation. You have to know when to leave a child alone, letting his demands go unfulfilled, and when to give him contact.

When you hear a child crying, you immediately feel that you should pick it up. But do not indulge that feeling within yourself: "Aw, look at the poor kid." Observe what he is doing instead and know when the strategy of separation is operating. Sometimes leaving the child alone may have a negative effect. But in that case, you can recognize signs of withdrawal in him. You must be able to recognize such a loss of contact. The child may stop demanding attention, but if he shows signs of withdrawal and interiorization, then you have to draw him out again. You must constantly involve yourself in the rhythm of contact and no contact, not arbitrarily, but with real sensitivity to the character of the child's demands. There is no fixed technique.

Since a child is basically no different from anyone else in the community, you should relate to him



simply and naturally. But you do have specific responsibilities to him. Your responsibility to a child is to serve his functional development until he can be responsible for his own life. You have to nurture him and teach him certain basic skills: walking, talking, using his hands, his eyes, his senses, and using the thinking process. These are all functions of a person's life, and as a parent you are there to develop them. You are not there to indoctrinate him in any way—not into conventional cultural games, nor into my teachings about spiritual life. You have a functional responsibility and that is your primary concern.

A child should do whatever work he can. Otherwise a child is an idiot. People fail to make demands on children because they never really make demands on themselves, and they think the random behavior and energy of a child represents a profoundly creative state. But in fact it does not. It just represents a lack of development, a lack of adaptation. Conventional learning is all about

adaptation and function, because you have to learn to function before you can create. Many people with brilliant capacities are non-productive because they never learned to take on the disciplines of simple functioning. I am not talking about functioning as some grim depersonalizing affair in which a person becomes robot-like. Functioning is actually a humanizing and happy discipline. It is relationship.

You must bring a child to function at whatever levels he can. Therefore, you must know when he becomes capable on a new level and actually require him to function in that new way. Then his attention is brought to something beyond himself. He can engage in activities that are not self-referring by nature, and thus he becomes brighter, livelier, more capable of relationship, not always oriented toward his own private desires.

You must also become responsible for your own reactions to children. They are living, energetic, demanding people. They require you to

be present and forceful, and that is good. That demand is useful for spiritual life because it requires you to deal with life forcefully and directly, and with humor. That force of life is something that people are ordinarily very reluctant to confront.

When you are faced with that living demand you have to respond to it instead of just thinking about it. You are required to move out of your own self-enclosure when, day-to-day, you have to confront the complications of life that a child creates.

Children are not a problem, but they are also not gods. There is a strong tendency in some people to idealize children and to become involved in a soupy mysticism about them. This is particularly true with young babies. Many mothers become invisible at the time of their baby's birth and do not reappear until months or years later. They virtually *become* a tit. Instead of avoiding the demand that the baby makes, they become involved with it to the exclusion of the rest of their lives. They stop thinking and interacting with

any real energy, and bask in a private enjoyment that makes them immune to real relationship.

Your child does not have to be identified with you and you do not have to feel as though you own him. You can enjoy a simple, happy, and full relationship, but only if you discipline this tendency toward possession. You must really be present with these apparent individuals. You aid your baby most by being present, truly present, without fear and hope and psychological confusion. But this unobstructed relationship occurs only when *you yourself* are living a truly conscious life.

You must be sensitive in your relationship to a child. See what is awakened in you and what is awakened in the child. Use the communications you have available so that you can have an effect on his separative strategies. Obviously, at the early stages, what you say does not make any difference. But the tone of your voice does, and so do the ways that you touch the child, how quickly you respond when he starts crying, and other non-verbal signals. They have emotional impact. Later, when verbal skills and other kinds of social adaptations have matured in the child, then you can appeal to him on another level. You can begin to speak to the conscious life in your child. When you are free of your fears of children and your fears *for* them, and equally free of your hopes, then children are a real enjoyment. You no longer imagine that they are any more innocent or happy than anyone else, so you are free to be present with them without self-consciousness and without the usual strategic games. Then you can enjoy real contact with children, real love and friendship, instead of the nostalgia and sentimentality that people usually associate with their sons and daughters. It is not a negative affair of always refusing to indulge the child's games, but a positive affair of present relationship, of shared life and mutual enjoyment.

3. THE COMMUNITY AS A PARENT

As soon as it becomes possible, a

child should begin to adapt to a larger world than just mother and father. So it is good if, very early in the child's life, many women nurse him. This also relieves the mother of that fixed condition. It is good for many people to care for the child and for the mother and father to be absent for periods of time. If the parent holds the child close and exclusively for a long time, then entering into relationships with others will be forever be traumatic. "Community" should take place early, and you should continually find more ways to give the child human contacts. One way that can be done in our community is for everyone to be simply aware that taking care of the children is essentially a shared responsibility.

People are full of guilt and sorrow and self-reflections about their own childhoods, and they use their children as a way to dramatize that. Because they play games of identification and ownership, people think that their obligation to their children is mystical rather than functional, and they interfere with the development of their children. You should certainly not feel free to assume that your child belongs to you or to imagine that your child is an extension of you, somebody to fulfill some portion of your destiny. You should not feel free to assume that your child is here to represent you, and that everything your child does reflects on you. You can intelligently abandon all the personal imagery that you associate with your children and can allow them to be an expression of the community. So you should share the responsibility for children, and in that way prevent them from these strong games of identity in isolation with their parents.

At a certain age, children tend to become omnipresent if they are not responsibly managed. They are random, full of desires, and they do not observe the social niceties, some of which are necessary for us to carry on in a relatively calm and functional order. So the appearance of a child in a household threatens peace. After all, it is no arbitrary demand that there be quiet in a household. People will only react to the nuisance that children represent unless there is a

workable arrangement for managing them. So you must get together and actually agree upon a way of sharing responsibility for the children. Then do that. The threat which children represent in a household disappears when everybody acknowledges his responsibility and performs it. Everyone who sees the children in the community should know that responsibility has been assumed for them. Then adults will not look upon children as a nuisance and a threat, and when they do see them they will more happily engage them.

The process of growing up should be a process of adaptation, of humanization, not a free period before growing up during which people are admired and thought to be cute. Most childhoods are wasted in a sense because so few people approach children intelligently. Children are often left to nearly random experience which they have to figure out when they get older. But if we approach children consciously, with respect and love, we will not waste their time. We can help them become fit for life, even truly conscious, spiritual life.

Traditional cultures always accounted for the stages of an individual's growth. At each stage the child was tested and required to adapt, becoming more and more socialized as he grew. And he had real responsibilities. He did not get into psychological conflicts, on the one hand wishing he were an adult with a real life, and on the other hand always afraid of functional responsibilities. His capabilities were recognized and nurtured, and he was required to participate in life in a meaningful way. It can be that way for our children too.

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When three six year old boys climb to my loft, shed their clothes and announce, as one roughly pounces on me, that they've come to fuck me, I am stunned. I speak to their roughness, tell them and show them gentleness. I don't let them fuck me but I hug them each and stroke them softly. In time they leave. I'm still wondering what they wanted. To emulate adult loving the same way they want to learn other skills like chopping wood or riding a horse? Are they after pleasure or only performance? I know they feel easier approaching me because I've struggled to free myself from unnecessary adult power over them. We are not equals, but I respect them and I want them to have more pleasure with less guilt than I grew with; but I feel uncomfortable when they involve me in their sensual/sexual exploration.

We lived in a free school, a free-for-all commune where sexuality, from celibacy to pan-sexuality, was discussed and acted out, though heterosexuality was the most prevalent. The children had not been shielded from our adult gropings to sexual freedom. In familial, inter-familial, and large communal sleeping rooms they'd watched it all. Were they too stimulated? Or are they naturally so aggressively curious?

When my five year old boy friend comes to me, eyes wide shining with love, and whispers in my ear, "I want to fuck you," I'm complimented and uncomfortable, more uncomfortable than when an adult man approaches

me. I don't want to turn off the child's budding sexuality. Still I feel he doesn't understand what he's asking. What does he want? To be close to me? Valued by me? When I said I loved him but I didn't want to fuck with him what did he hear? That he and his penis are too little? Time after time he asks to fuck me. My discomfort doesn't lessen, nor does the weight of my responsibility.

I recall a blatant lesson my son received. I was in a man's mountain house. Acid in the morning had freed our songs and sexual energy. My eight year old son entered, shy at first. He approached me tentatively, then possessively and finally began butting his head against my belly. I protested physically and verbally but he continued trying to ram me, spurred on by the man's exclamation of rape, his laughter, and clapping.

Relievedly I turn from those days to thoughts of daughters, our sisters. How will they learn the pleasures of their bodies? Who will teach them, touch them?

As my daughters grew out of infancy, I stopped touching them as much. I felt it was an aspect of weaning. I've been learning to show my love more. Once, after kissing my daughter, I asked her how my kiss compared with others. She answered that I was the only person she kissed. She left me feeling very responsible, pondering the question of incest again. I thought of the times we've slept together, when I've wanted to touch her sweetly rising breasts. I've stopped myself because I didn't want to make her uncomfortable. But does my paralysis and silence leave her

waiting for a boy to uncover her bounty of pleasure?

I resent that, knowing that boys are ignorant of women and, on a deep level, despise them. So I think on incest more. Children are born completely, helplessly, hopelessly in love with the adults who care for them. I fear increasing their dependence on me by touching them more sexually. I also fear overwhelming them with my feelings and needs. Somewhere inside me I agree that would be wrong. Would it? Where does that voice come from? I've glimpsed myself dependent on my daughter for pleasure. I criticize that fantasy as horrible and unfeasible though I may be dependent on them in all other ways in my old age.

One night while I was caring for our common three year old daughter I rocked back in the Yoga plow. My skirt slipped down revealing my vulva. She stroked me, giggled, covered me and rocked me down. She moved away. I rocked up and over again. She came and touched me, again giggling and rocked me down. A little while passed and I rocked over again. This time she stroked my vulva and asshole repeatedly. Gone was the giggling. She chanted an ageless ancient language and rested on my buttocks. It felt like a good interaction and I thought that maybe it's children who will lead me from guilt, confusion and shame to a clarity of how to share in a healthy way, the sensual/sexual energies which arise between us.

it is an arduous task
to ensure consistent
growth for each of
us in the everyday
circus of our life together—
it deserves attention—

we children of the
middle class are
by nature given to
emotional laziness
and verbal excess—

our behavior with
one another
our regard for one another
is a daily statement
of who we are and
what we are growing
into—

I think we need to
examine with careful
scrutiny who we are
as individuals and
as a group—
who we are—
what we want—
what we expect—
what we are willing
to give
and where we are going

tho these are tired
old questions
they beg response—
they are tired and old
because they come up
so often—
they come up so often
because they are tired
and old—
we must conduct
rectification movements
now and in the future—
we must constantly
rid ourselves of that
which is wrong or
unnecessary—

policy is a starting
point for practical
action in our daily
life—
it manifests in
the process and end
result of our interaction—
we are carrying out
policy whenever we
interact—

if we are not
carrying out a correct
policy, a mutually
respected policy,

we are carrying out
an unnecessary one—
if we are carrying out
an incorrect policy
unconsciously
we are doing so
blindly—

if we are not satisfied
with our life here
we must change it—
no one is a prisoner
we all have the key—

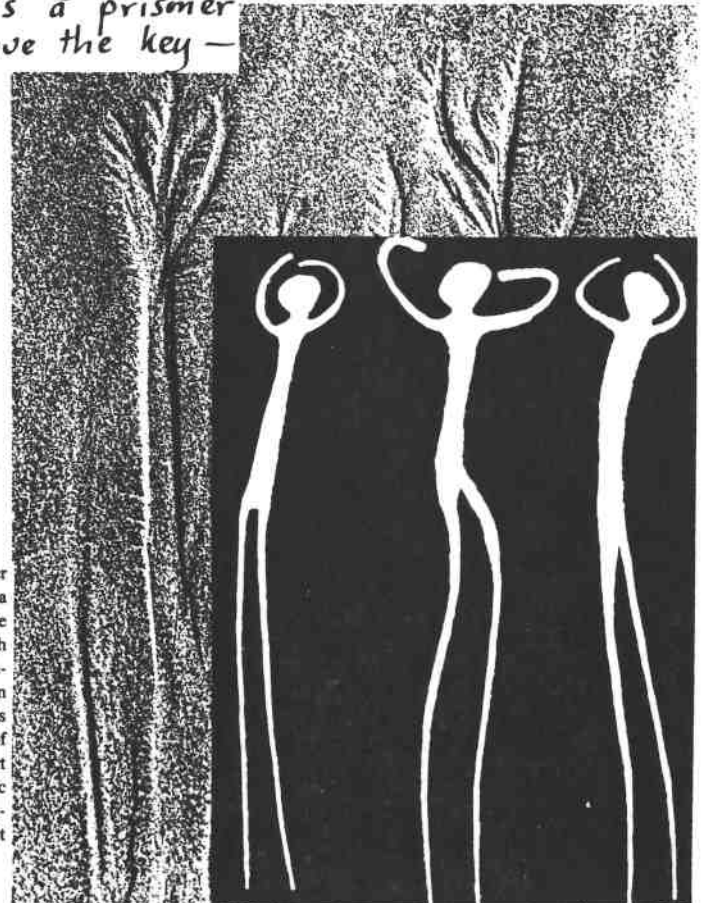
if we combine our
attention and direct
our expectations
we can fill our lives—
it is possible to create
basic rules to govern
our interaction and
direct our contradictions
the rules can change
if they prove to be
wrong or unnecessary

only through practice
through experience
can we verify
whether a policy
is correct or wrong—

the flow of energy
through a system
acts to organize
that system

A community-brother
of mine wrote this a
while ago when we
were going through
tense times, and pin-
ned it on the bulletin
board. Since he was
writing on thin strips of
paper, he wrote in short
lines, not for poetic
reasons, but just be-
cause that's how it
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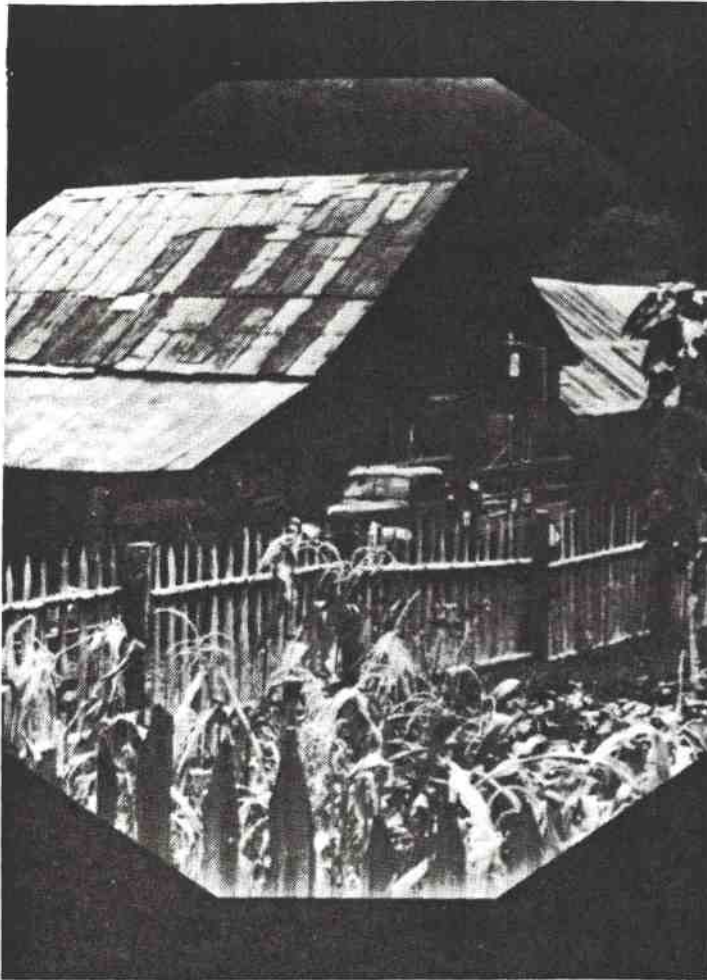
Elaine



DEVELOPING A MATRIARCHY

MORNINGSTAR SINGER

The following article, by Morningstar Singer of Blue Mountain Ranch, is reprinted (slightly modified) from the Nov., 1974 issue of Plexus, a 'feminist' newspaper published at 3022 Ashby, Berkeley, CA 94705. The photos are from the book January Thaw, co-created by a number of Blue Mountain residents. See page 50 for publication information on and a review of January Thaw.



We did not begin as a woman-oriented collective family—what I call matriarchy—but as a group of men, women, and children living on a piece of land in the woods. The hippy commune I moved to in 1970 has become more and more woman-directed, however, since the first wave of feminism hit us three years ago. Formerly, the commune consisted of 50-90 transients and more settled members, all of whom had various connections to a tribal city family. People used to work out pioneer fantasies on the land. Sex roles were on the whole stereotyped: the men played mountain macho with chainsaws and big trucks; the women maintained the kitchen and the kids.

In a transient scene with that many people, all the contradictions, tediums, and frustrations of housewifery were magnified. The women had to cook for, clean-up for, and run after twenty-some children and many, many men. No one could stand the pressure: we called for a population decrease and a more settled, different kind of life.

Over the years, it became clear that a core group of both women and men wanted to live together in a way we used to call "more communal" and now call "matriarchal". This group stayed on the land and stayed together, but only after a power struggle which caused many brothers and sisters to leave feeling resentful and hurt.

Approximately ten women and ten men remained. We felt like a group and tended to see a collective family as the right home for ourselves and our children, so we persevered. Those who stuck it out have molded into a unit. We have seen sex roles disappear from our work. Women have become more interested in running the ranch and more competent, while men have put more energy into getting it on with each other. We are seeing the children become 'ours', monogamy fade, and love for our own sex come into focus.

Not everyone identified with sexual politics. Some valued their monogamous relationships more than the promise of us all being together.

As power came more and more into the hands of women, there were men that didn't trust what we were doing with it. Even some women had this concern. Although no one who didn't work through these feelings could have entered the group as a new member, some resentful people hung on. Only recently have they admitted what was happening and split.

We women have not caught up to all of the men in knowledge and strength in every case. But we are not dumb and helpless: we are healthy and strong. Women at the ranch drive big trucks, run chainsaws, winch big logs, and carry hundred-pound sacks (though it takes two of us). We also turn compost, take care

of pigs, and build beautiful buildings. Some of us even weld a little and fix vehicles, although the mechanical-metal area seems to be the last male bastion.

When women demanded the right to work in other than the domestic sector, obviously men had to begin to share in domestic work. It was always easier to get men to cop to their responsibility to the kitchen than to the kids, especially young single men without children. The first men to share the domestic work later became our accomplices in demanding *universal* participation in the kitchen and kid scene. Truthfully, I don't know if the women's demands would have

been met without the weight of the liberated fathers on our side. Certainly these men who cooked and took care of children provided a role model for new fathers. But we all needed collective child care to really free us, in particular to allow women with children to do other work without doing double duty.

For over a year, two or three people a day signed up to "do kids". This was sometimes fun; when it wasn't, we had to talk about it. Now there is less organization: the kids are older, but also the big people and the little people are simply more tuned into each other. We became a self-conscious family.

I love my relationship to my three-year-old daughter, who has been raised by this group since she was born. Because I am only with her when I want to be, the content of our time together is loving most always. For over a year, I have been able to come and go, leaving her in care of everyone at the ranch, not just one person. Since our kids all sleep in the same house, she will be put to bed by whoever is staying there. She will be fed by whoever is making dinner. And she is loved by her friends, who think she is as delightful as I do. Similarly, there is a wonderful

opportunity for me to develop real closeness to children not my own.

Not only can we survive without old style roles in work, but we are learning how to do that in our sexual/emotional lives. I no longer need to share intimacy with just one person, always a man, in order to be loved & loving. Many people are there for me, as I am for them.

There are no official couples (people who emphasize the exclusivity of their relationship by sharing a bed) on the ranch now. Each person sleeps in her/his own space. When we want company, that happens, but most people are usually sleeping alone. Privacy to read, write, & think is essential because it is often the only time we have alone.

In the winter, we have to share cabins, so most of us live with people we are not sexually connected with. It has taken years to get to where B, who sleeps with A and C, goes off with one and they all three kiss good-night and it's OK. But such events still cannot happen in the same cabin.

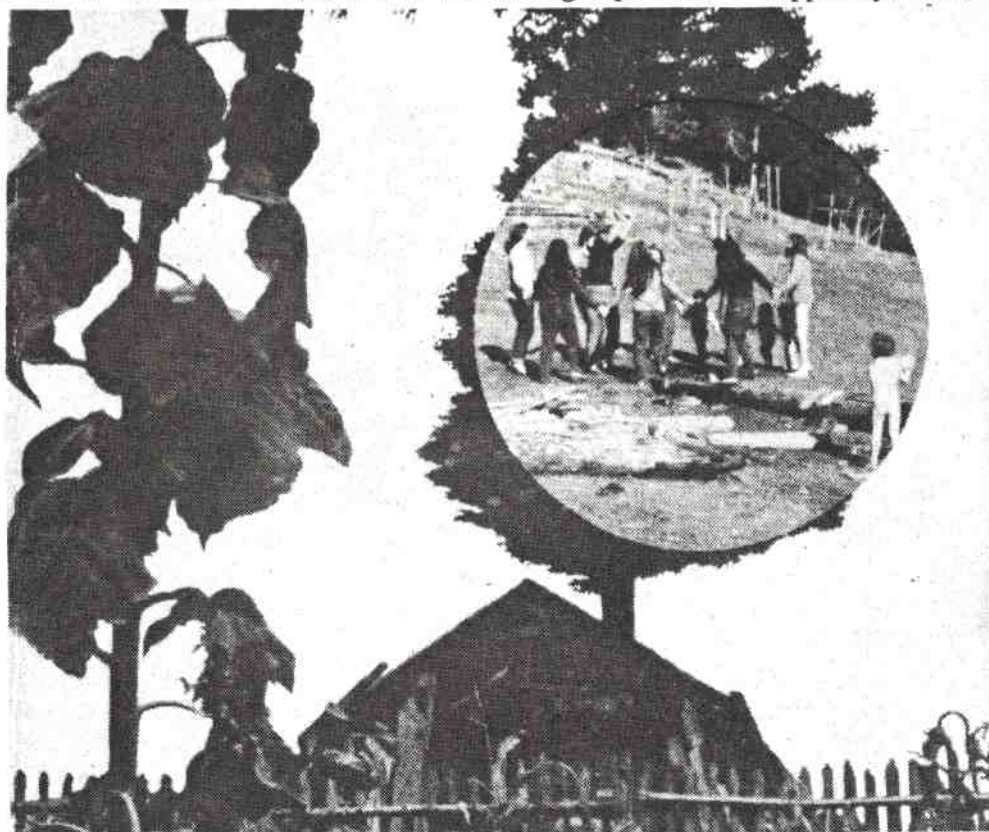
Sex is the heaviest, as our programming is so deep. The talks we have had about our sexuality in men's and women's groups have

been valuable, but much too rare. This summer we started to talk in a mixed group, but group talking is not enough. Feelings have to be expressed in daily life too. It takes many, many encounters and experiences to really change our programmed patriarchal attitudes.

Many people at Blue Mountain sleep together without sexual expectation so we can get closer and more relaxed about our sexuality. Some make love rarely, or not at all. While heterosexuality is still open, legitimate, and unquestioned, lovers of the same sex have to be completely alone. Hopefully this will change as more of us come out.

It has taken almost six years to define somewhat who we are. I can't say it has been easy and there is a heavier struggle yet to come. We have yet to work all together for more than our personal survival. It will probably take six more years to define what it is we can do together outside of our valley.

But I know one thing: the patriarchal nuclear family holds no future for me or any other woman. It is our past and our death. I really believe it won't go away by itself or without a support system to replace it.





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WHAT IS Spiritual Marriage?

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"I thank you for the most perfect marriage in the world based on Brahmacharya [continence] and not on sex. . . . I am grateful to you that I was able to serve you, wait upon you and be of use to you as is the duty of a wife. . . .

How thankful I am that my husband put God and his country before me. . . .

As we grew older you grew more beautiful to me for it was your soul I loved, not the material."

from "My husband, M.K. Gandhi
by Kasturba Gandhi"

How many of us think we have a perfect marriage? We long for fulfillment in love yet usually settle for much less with the comforting rationalization, "Surely perfection isn't possible anyway."

Inevitably such an attitude limits and determines our experience.

Why not perfection in marriage?

At Ananda we are in the process of discovering and evolving "spiritual marriage"—a pattern of monogamous marriage in harmony with our goal of Self-realization through yoga. Finding American culture nearly barren of "model spiritual marriages," we look within ourselves and also to India as a source of inspiration. Although we are not "followers" of Gandhi (except, of course, in a general sense), the words of his wife convey certain oriental attitudes toward marriage that we are testing out in our everyday life here.

In my own struggle to define spiritual marriage I asked a good number of residents in our community to help me by discussing their actual exper-

ience of marriage, as well as their ideals.

Mrs. Gandhi's first statement, "I thank you for the most perfect marriage in the world based on Brahmacharya and not on sex," sounds almost ridiculous in an American context. Perfect sexual compatibility, with "more and more and more joy" in physical love-making, is supposed to guarantee a happy marriage. Yet since the divorce rate has increased along with the rise in sexual freedom, the relationship of sexual sophistication to the success of marriage is at least open to question.

In a yogic marriage sex is given far less emphasis. In part, this tends to happen gradually, without any sense of sacrifice, as the natural outcome of a healthy, unselfish way of living, vegetarian diet, and meditation. Where there is also a more conscious attempt at self-control, it is due not so much to moral precept as to the discovery from actual experience that immoderation in sex leads to a subtle sense of energy loss which interferes with the attainment of other goals. Of course sex in moderation, which develops out of a deep love between two people, may be far less draining than that which is based only on self-indulgence. "Only give up a thing," Gandhi wrote, "when you want some other condition so much that the thing has no longer any attraction for you, or when it seems to interfere with that which is more greatly desired."²

Clearly, therefore, the decreasing emphasis on sex in a yogic marriage does *not* constitute a return to the puritan ethic of sin and guilt. Rather,

it is the inevitable outcome of increasing desire for a greater pleasure: "Much has been made during this past century of the harmfulness of repression. Little or no mention has been made of the uplifting effects of transmutation. . . . The pleasure of sexual experience is fleeting, but the joy that comes from redirecting energy upward toward the brain is unending. . . . every cell of the body dances with joy."³

The teaching of Brahmacharya can be understood on different levels. Yoga starts with a person as he *is*, and most people are not ready for complete continence. A few make strong efforts at self-control, preferring to sleep in separate beds—"I want to get out of delusion!" Others say, "I am nowhere near ready for celibacy now. If I were, I'd be a different person. I believe in a more positive approach: meditate, and your bad habits will fall away." Often quoted is a saying from Yogananda, one of our favorites: "When Bliss comes, everything else goes."

Most felt that to make *too* extreme an effort at self-control would result in a strain on the relationship and more of an energy drain than would sex itself. *Moderation*, combined with an attempt to "spiritualize" physical union, seems to be the prevalent practice, as well as the ideal usually counseled by our teacher, Swami Kriyananda: "I've seen so much unhappiness along the spiritual path in couples who were trying to be continent completely and weren't able to be, and started becoming all twisted up because of this. . . . Don't let it become a matter of suppression and frustration. Let it

become rather a question that your love for each other on a physical level is of such a divine order that gradually you don't need to express it on any other level except the Divine."⁴

In spiritual marriage at Ananda, then, moderation rather than complete *brahmacharya* is the predominant practice. The direction of growth, however, is clear: There is no belief that one can find fulfillment in sex for its own sake, and the underlying assumption is that someday, the need for sex will "fade away" altogether.

The question may then arise, what is the purpose of marriage, if not sexual fulfillment?

The married people at Ananda usually say that their marriage is primarily intended to help them grow *spiritually*. I emphasize the spiritual aspect, because of course it is generally assumed that a healthy relationship should produce growth of *some* kind. Much is being said these days about individual expansion in an "open marriage," where growth appears to be understood in an outward way, as being able to relate to more and more people, sometimes sexually as well as emotionally or intellectually. Spiritual growth, on the other hand, is defined inwardly in terms of *depth*—the depth of one's relationship with one other person and with his higher Self, or God. Depth is achieved through inner and outer victories over one's lower nature, resulting in an increasing sense of inner joy and genuine respect and compassion for others.

In an article, "The Perfect Soul-Mate," Paramahansa Yogananda said, "Physical marriage, practiced in this world, is only meant for the propagation of the species and the union of soul-mates, who become liberated after finding the perfect love of God by intense spiritual discipline and meditation. Such couples learn many lessons through physical marriage, such as the way to unite feeling and reason (positive and negative) and to make two flesh as one through mutual respect and unselfish cooperation."⁵

Men and women at Ananda often say that they are, through marriage, learning to overcome self-centeredness and to develop the qualities they

lack. The real attraction between the sexes, according to Swami Kriyananda, is as much mental as it is physical. Men have reason uppermost, women rely more on feeling; yet each feels a longing for balance. A perfected soul, such as Christ or Yogananda, has achieved a union of reason and feeling, doing and being, wisdom and love. Thus marriage may be considered a "sacrament" because a perfect marriage can bring us closer to the essence of our being, which is both male and female.

If the direction of growth is towards a harmonizing of one's masculine and feminine qualities, what, then, is the function of sex-roles and how are they "played" at Ananda?

Mrs. Gandhi's words, "I am grateful to you that I was able to serve you, wait upon you and be of use to you as is the duty of a wife," are typical of a "model Hindu wife." Can such a model be relevant to women raised in America? In an outward way, actually, there is much variation at Ananda. Some women are relatively submissive while others prefer equality in sex-roles and decision making. Most wives have respect for the (male-dominated) Hindu ideal of marriage but modify it to suit their own personalities and circumstances. Inwardly, men as well as women share an attitude of trying to see and serve God in the form of their partner.

A common joke at Ananda is to speak of "women's liberation" as a group of women who meditate together, since divine communion helps to liberate us from ignorance of our true nature. Furthermore, since "what is day to the worldly man is night to the yogi," the role of "servant" (more frequently taken by women) is considered a great blessing. On the spiritual path both men and women have to learn humility within the guru-disciple relationship. "Submissiveness" in this context, far from being a sign of weakness, requires great inner strength. Although we have our individual natures to fulfill and outward roles to play, the "battle of the sexes" appears superficial compared to the greater battle we face within ourselves.

Much more could be said, of course, on the subject of sex-roles. Essentially we believe that whether in a man's or a woman's body, married or unmarried, in India or America, we are, according to past karma, where we need to be at a particular stage of development. Living in America gives some, perhaps, greater freedom to develop both their masculine and feminine potentials.

On the basis of our experience at Ananda, "spiritual marriage" may be characterized not so much in terms of an outward form as in an *inner* attitude—a particular direction of growth. Bliss or divine union is the goal of spiritual growth, and marriage, as it were, is a means. A similarly subtle, impersonal aspect of spiritual marriage is conveyed by Mrs. Gandhi when she says, "How thankful I am that my husband put God and his country before me."

This statement may strike one as unusual nowadays. To many there is no higher value than a personal relationship (and indeed, to value another person is higher at least than outright selfishness). Such an attitude was typified in a recent *Ladies Home Journal* article, "How to be Friends in Marriage": "Would you mind if we told everyone that simple but wonderful resolution we made when we married? We decided that we would *take care* of each other. I can't think of a better basis for a marriage."⁶

For some this might be an adequate basis for marriage, but for the spiritual aspirant it doesn't go far enough. A subtle difference in values is suggested by a former member of our community: "A man who is totally dedicated in his search for God may not always please others, and maybe least of all his family at times. . . . If husband and wife do their utmost to support each other in a personal way, temporary happiness may follow, but it will be short-lived—if either or both is really at all interested in finding God. . . . our real harmony *is* in God alone, and the closer we come to God, . . . the closer we feel to each other also, and the more real inner 'security' and happiness we feel." Mere words, of

course, can be deceptive. It is our actions and their fruits which reveal truly what our values are.

It has been suggested that Gandhi was most likely a difficult person to live with, for it took a man of strong character to liberate India. Similarly, it takes great courage and determination to attain cosmic consciousness. This means that spiritual marriage is not necessarily easy. As long as we are sincerely trying to grow (and even if we are not), we are bound to encounter tests and difficulties. But spiritual marriages are usually stable because of a commitment to inner character growth. As one woman here expressed it: "You reach a point where you realize there's no sense in trying to escape your troubles by running to another person or place. Since the real problem is always within yourself, you'll just have to face it again in another form. If you fail your test this time, you'll confront it again and again until you pass."

The assumption underlying this attitude is a belief in the law of karma—a knowledge that whatever comes to us is a result of our own actions in the past, good or bad. The principle can also be applied dynamically in the present: whatever thoughts or actions we are putting into the world now will come back to us. Therefore in marriage as in all relationships it is only to our own practical advantage to subdue negative emotions and encourage positive self-expression.

When I asked families at Ananda, "How do you reconcile the yogic emphasis on overcoming emotions ("even-mindedness") with the need for honest communication of feelings in marriage?", they generally agreed that whenever possible a person should try to discuss matters when he is calm, or when the intensity of the emotion and one's identification with it have passed. (This might involve leaving home for awhile.) A readiness to admit that one is wrong and respect for the other person are also essential for successful communication. Meditation, however, and communication by vibration rather than words, were seen as the real keys to harmony in a relationship.



Indeed, at least one couple stressed almost entirely the inner rather than outer causes of disagreement: "I seem to have mood cycles. When the mood is wrong everything 'out there' looks bad too, and talking about it doesn't help much. It usually takes a few days for the mood to run its course. Meditation will eventually, I hope, make me more even-minded." Introspection and a meditative attitude (meditation is, after all, an attempt to *listen* to one's higher self by becoming calm and receptive) may also make one more understanding and sensitive to others.

That a marriage based on *brahmacharya* (and presumably meditation) has the potential, at least, for being "perfect" is suggested in these words by Swami Kriyananda: "The more close we are to people, in the true way, the less we have to show it by hugging...or even by smiling at them. We find that it's more and more on a mental level. Such that people who are really close to one another know each other's thoughts."⁷

¹ *East-West*, Vol. XVII, No. 2, October 1945, pp 10-11.

² Fischer, Louis, *Gandhi—His Life and Message for the World*, Mentor Books, 1954, p. 34.

³ Swami Kriyananda, *14 Lessons in Yoga*, lesson 4, p 9.

⁴ Swami Kriyananda, tape-recorded lecture of August 27, 1974.

⁵ *East-West*, Vol. XVIII, No. 3, November 1946, p. 9.

⁶ Bernard Berkowitz and Mildred Newman, "How to be Friends in Marriage," *Ladies Home Journal*, October 1974, p. 192.

⁷ Swami Kriyananda, tape-recorded lecture of August 27, 1974.

⁸ From "Holy Vows at Marriage" by Paramahansa Yogananda.

The joy of soul communion within marriage or within a community is something that has to be experienced. Once it has been, one cannot be satisfied by anything less than divine love. One married woman said, "Having failed in my first marriage, my longing for love led me to encounter groups and experimentation in group marriage. Then I came to Ananda...Once you realize that God's love is what your heart craves, then talking endlessly about petty emotional entanglements seems like a complete waste of time. Much of what is called "growth" these days is just a kind of self-indulgence: an attempt to fill one's emptiness with experiences, or to "get high" without any genuine effort at self-improvement."

At Ananda we feel strongly that our country is in for hard times—severe depression and social upheaval (see *The Road Ahead* by Swami Kriyananda). There is a need to prepare ourselves mentally, emotionally, and physically for these trials. Strength of character and self-sacrifice (qualities demonstrated by Gandhi and his wife) will be required in the near future—will we be ready? Unless our lives and relationships are based on the solid rock of Spirit, they may crumble along with everything else.

"As we grew older, you grew more beautiful to me for it was your soul I loved, not the material." Kasturba Gandhi's words seem to suggest that changes of all kinds, including old-age or social revolution, may be withstood by a spiritual relationship. A marriage based on depth and loyalty, love for God and high ideals, can truly be a source of strength.

Ultimately marriage—and all of life—is an opportunity for us to perfect ourselves and "through our perfect love to find the perfect love of God."⁸

PERSPECTIVES ON POWER



In an interview in *Psychology Today*, anthropologist Marvin Harris discusses the power relations between the sexes. A couple of interesting ideas are approached here, and I'd like to note a few.

Harris contends that the need for male supremacy arose from a need for warfare. Warfare, he says, requires brutality, and so there arises the problem of how to condition people to be brutal. One way might be to withhold food from the warriors, but this would mean relying on weak and hungry warriors, which is no way to win a war. Sex, on the other hand, makes a fine reward—its worth fighting for, but doesn't interfere with the warrior's performance.

But if women were allowed to be equally as aggressive as men, this conditioning process won't work. Rewards are only useful if they can be given whenever the correct behavior occurs—if we had food pellets that refused to be eaten by rats, the rats would never learn to run the maze. This means that women need to be conditioned to reward male brutality, to be pliable and passive and willing to go off with the knight who slays the dragon.

So long as war continues to contain elements of hand-to-hand combat, Harris continues, armies will continue to rely on males because of their superior size and strength. But, even if war continues as a human occupation, we are rapidly approaching an era when individual fierceness in battle will not be necessary. Already, pilots are able to deliver their bombs without ever seeing their target, and missiles can be launched by operations requiring little more strength or stature than the ability to push a button. Even if the culture hasn't evolved out of its reliance on war, then, it has certainly evolved beyond the need for exclusively male warriors. It has also developed the other technique which might have kept women out of power

positions: effective means of birth control.

So, while our cultural habits of training little boys for toughness and bravery, and little girls to be attractive, pliant rewards may still persist, they no longer serve a survival function and will, Harris thinks, eventually disappear.

Indeed, he sees the assumption of and demand for greater power on the parts of women in the industrial nations as a clear indication that we have already begun to emerge from the phase of cultural evolution in which males held all the power roles.

Interestingly enough, however, Harris does not see the growing equality of the sexes as an altogether positive development. Rather than simply making it possible for women to assume more power roles, he sees the possibility that the decline in male supremacy may lead to a situation in which both sexes are equally powerless, or rather, may tend to shift power inequalities so that they lie along the lines of class rather than along those of sex. He points out that, as power positions become available to women, they will be filled by those women who have educational advantages which means those from relatively affluent backgrounds. In the past, such class differences have determined which men get power positions, but, since women were not competing for such positions, they were available to men from a wider range of economic situations. Now, Harris says, the more affluent families will be able to fill even more power positions, since it will be possible for the women of those families to hold them. Thus, assuming that the society continues to be based on competition and distribution of goods continues its present relationship to power, the powerlessness of minority people—women as well as men, may be expected to increase.

Thus, Harris believes that the apparent opening up of opportunities

without respect to sex roles may be an illusion; that, when all classes of people are considered, we can expect to see greater deprivation for those already poor. He further believes that sex roles are subject to extremely strong cultural determinates which, though we may not be aware of them, play as great a role as they did in primitive cultures. He suggests that a situation in which we all choose our roles freely, not subject to conditioning, may simply be an impossibility.

One might argue that while *some* conditioning factors may be unavoidable, there's no reason why those factors have to be sex or economic background. But I'm more interested in two other assumptions that Harris makes.

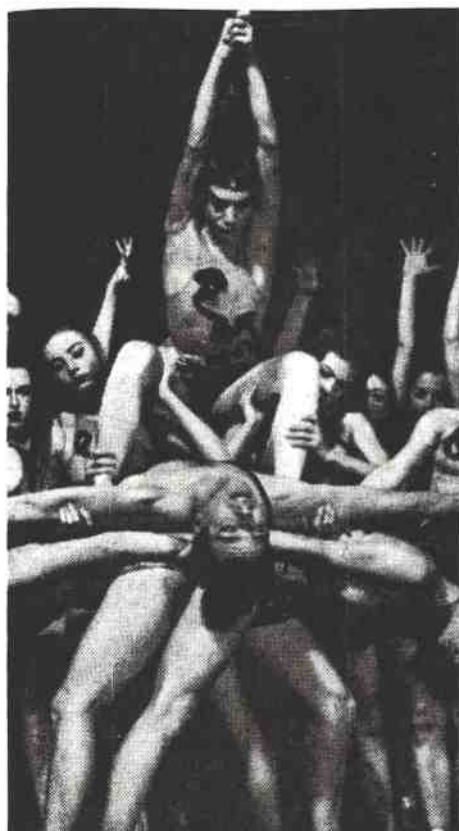
It seems to me that the possibilities Harris raises aren't being ignored—that they're at the forefront of the work of many a communal family and community-minded feminists. Feminism is not, to my mind, speaking simply to equality, but, as are many other parts of the "movement", to self-sufficiency. It's time to leave the old shit behind and get on with it. I question Harris' assumption that we're all going to stay and participate in the present system.

It also seems to me that looking at things in terms of power or the lack of it already sets up certain limitations. I've been trying to be powerful—to exercise power over my own life and power over others—for a very long time. This had led to fights and struggle situations with others and within myself. I think that I'd very much favor living in a community of equally powerless people right now. We may be stronger for not needing power. Within our own families and communes and communities the equal powerlessness of men and women can be a virtue which replaces equally powerful brothers and sisters.

politics of SENSUALITY

Deirdre English & Barbara Ehrenreich

from IRT



The problem for radicals is no longer, why and how does capitalism repress sexuality: but, Why and how does it repress all our other needs and channel them into sex?

In thinking about this it's necessary to contradict a common assumption shared by many liberal, radical and feminist sexologists. They believe that under layers of artifice there is some deep-down, true, natural sexuality, which we need only "discover" and "release." Actually, the evidence shows that sexuality can take a multitude of forms, depending on the social structures and the choices of people. In both China and North Vietnam, for example, the

liberation of women and the goal of equality are linked to a deemphasis on sex. To a lesser extent this is true of the other socialist countries as well, which see the sexual libertarianism of the West as part of its decadence and the objectification and exploitation of women. At any rate, an analysis can only begin from the understanding that the expression of human sexuality is, for the most part, learned.

Obsession with sex can only be understood in the context of the extreme privatization of American's lives. Very few people have meaningful work-lives, and many people have never experienced a supportive community or sense of collectivity in any realm. Unfulfilled needs for social relatedness, and for creativity, are channeled into the zone of "private life," where they can't do any harm. (Just try demanding more creativity or richer social relations in most jobs.) The less the collectivity or social satisfaction experienced by people in the public realms of work and community, the greater the pressure on the sexual relationship (whether heterosexual, homosexual or lesbian) to provide life with meaning.

Another feature of modern life is that it provides us with decreasing opportunities for physical experience, replacing them with television, automobiles, spectator events, and for the better off, weight-reducing salons and back-yards. Urban life, and many workplaces, actually necessitate a dulling of the senses in order to defend against sensory overload. There are essentially two ways for us

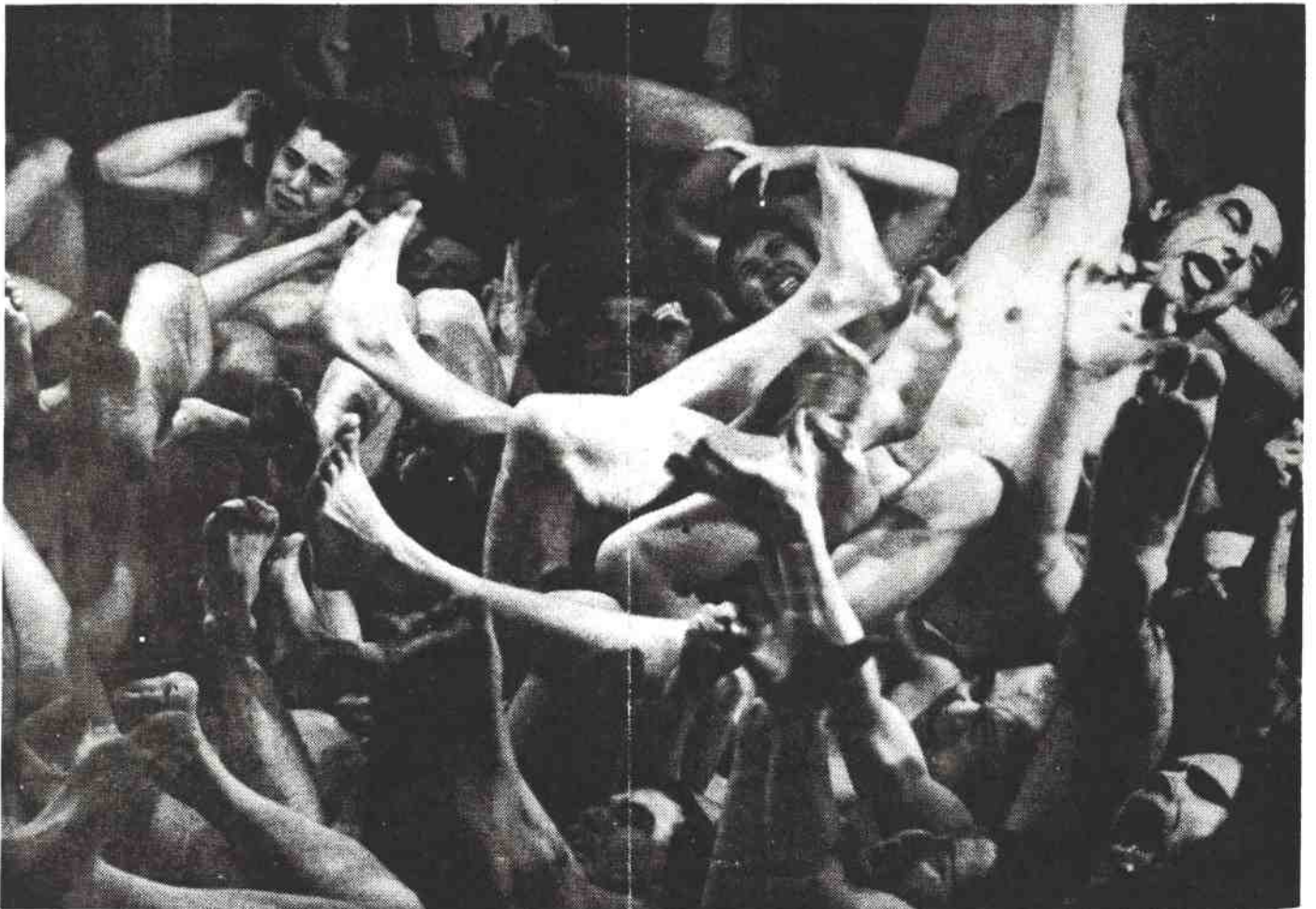
to compensate for the deprivation and de-sensitization of the body that we experience. One is to eat. The other is through sex which is presented to us in ever higher voltages as, along with food, the only sensual and physical experience worth having.

What all this adds up to is the human need for sex is made to bear the burden of all our bodily starvation for contact and sensation, all our creative starvation, all our need for social contact, and even our need to find a meaning in our lives. In the face of overwhelming alienation, the emphasis on sex is used to encourage people to individualize and trivialize their problems—looking for the cause of their unhappiness in their sex life, rather than in the world around them.

Of course, the dominant culture would like us to believe that we can achieve happiness through personal, sexual satisfaction. This is in fact what it will *strive* to provide if it will keep us quiet.

—Capitalism channels people's basic needs for creativity, social relatedness and physical experience into sex; at the same time society poses enormous obstacles to actual sexual fulfillment, which arise in part from the very weight that sex is made to bear. This means that the possibility of a truly liberating sex for all people depends on making some very profound political changes. Our sexual lives should cease to be the primary or only arena of power struggles between the sexes; and should cease to bear the burden of all our unmet needs.

"The human must realize free sexuality because it is a basic biological need. Marital fidelity appears to be more a tendency for gray geese, and has a consciousness-hindering effect on humans."



AA KOMMUNE

BROOKE

The commune is a real alternative to the nuclear family. By commune we mean an existential group with free sexuality, common property, common production and common child-raising. From the commune's point of view, the two person relationship and its legal form, marriage and family, seems to be a publicly supported sickness. Marriage is a relic from an antiquated stage of social development—the nuclear family has become a symbol of retarded consciousness. It is the center of sexual and economic repression.

In the nuclear family, humans are prepared for the nuclear family system. The human is parboiled in the nuclear family pressure-cooker. Here it is decided if co will become schizophrenic, criminal, priest or president. All of the emotional and physical sicknesses that are necessary for the nuclear family person to voluntarily submit to a system of exploitation and repression are produced here. Here humans are cheated out of their enjoyment and meaning of life. The nuclear family man is trained to achieve, programmed with the consciousness of a slave.

The meaning of work has gotten lost, production is for profit, without relationship to the existential needs of the human. The private sexuality and private property of the nuclear family were necessary restrictions of human freedom that occurred at an earlier stage of development, forced by reality. Stone-age people had to work continuously to withstand the conditions of a hostile environment. Because humans lacked the consciousness to perform this work of their own free will, it was necessary to use force. The human animal had to be impelled to work with extreme harshness. This task was taken over by the family father. In rural families one can still detect the tole that the family father once had. In any case the family was an existen-

tial work and reproduction group that offered early humanity the best chances for survival at this stage of development.

Today the family structure is a hindrance everywhere and prevents the consciousness that would be necessary to overcome critical problems that are gradually condensing to a catastrophe. The impending problems that cannot be solved by the nuclear families and whose solution determines if human life will continue to exist:

1. *to set all humans on the earth on the same economic basis and guarantee their nourishment.*
2. *to limit the growth of the human population.*
3. *to suspend overproduction and wasting of natural resources, to eliminate profit production and cut production back to fill basic human needs*
4. *stop the production of weapons...abolish the nuclear family wars.*
5. *Eliminate the nuclear family automobile. It is impossible in the long run for everyone to have their own car. The nuclear family auto is mainly responsible for the destruction of the human environment.*

It was the assignment of the nuclear family to divide humans into slaves and slavedrivers, to brutally exploit human work power and spread humanity over the entire earth. The human is the only animal that has to work. Work in this sense means doing something now in order to have enough to eat, to live and to wear later. Human needs became more and more differentiated with the development of technology. Because of this, co had to keep on working more and more. The fact that the consciousness of the human is still limping behind cos civilized technological development is certainly a result of cos constant work and exploitation for thousands of years.



*Art is an important
vent for sickness
in nuclear family
society.*

It was exactly the gigantic pompous and cultish structures, pyramids, temples, churches, castles, monasteries, skyscrapers, housing developments, railways, plumbing and sewage systems, dams, atomic reactors erected by work animals that have prevented consciousness. Even the workers in modern industry, the farmers, are nothing other than slaves, who are unable to develop consciousness because of compulsive labor.

Just 30 years ago, the farmers in the area around Friedrichshof in Austria and their hired workers had to get up at one in the morning during the harvest to cut the grain. This went on for 4 weeks. Then a month followed where they got up at 3 in the morning to thresh the grain. I spoke to an ex-field worker, who now owns a large farm with all necessary farm machines. He married a rich farmer's daughter. "We were eight children. We lived in a mud hut. When you went in, you had to go down a step. Two sisters died from tuberculosis; ever since we were little kids we had to work for the farmer." A day laborer earned 15 cents a day. For this money co could buy a kilo lard or 7 kilos bread. But the farmer had to work constantly too, to be able to live in those days. He was just as exploited. At that time, only very few could really live well.

Even today, the work pressure on humans is still much too hard. It is only better paid. Today co works very hard to be able to afford everything that consumerism offers. For cos vacation, car, weekend house, television.... The consume compulsion (addiction), drives the nuclear family person to work overtime. In the country, people are already disfigured, especially the women, at the age of 40. They are either emaciated or round like balls. One can feel that sexuality is unknown to these women. They are work animals.

Our sickness is already seen in early history in the gigantic cult buildings. In all so-called significant architecture: castles, temples, the sickness of the nuclear family person becomes apparent. Until the basic existential rights of all humans are satisfied; food, clothing, and shelter;

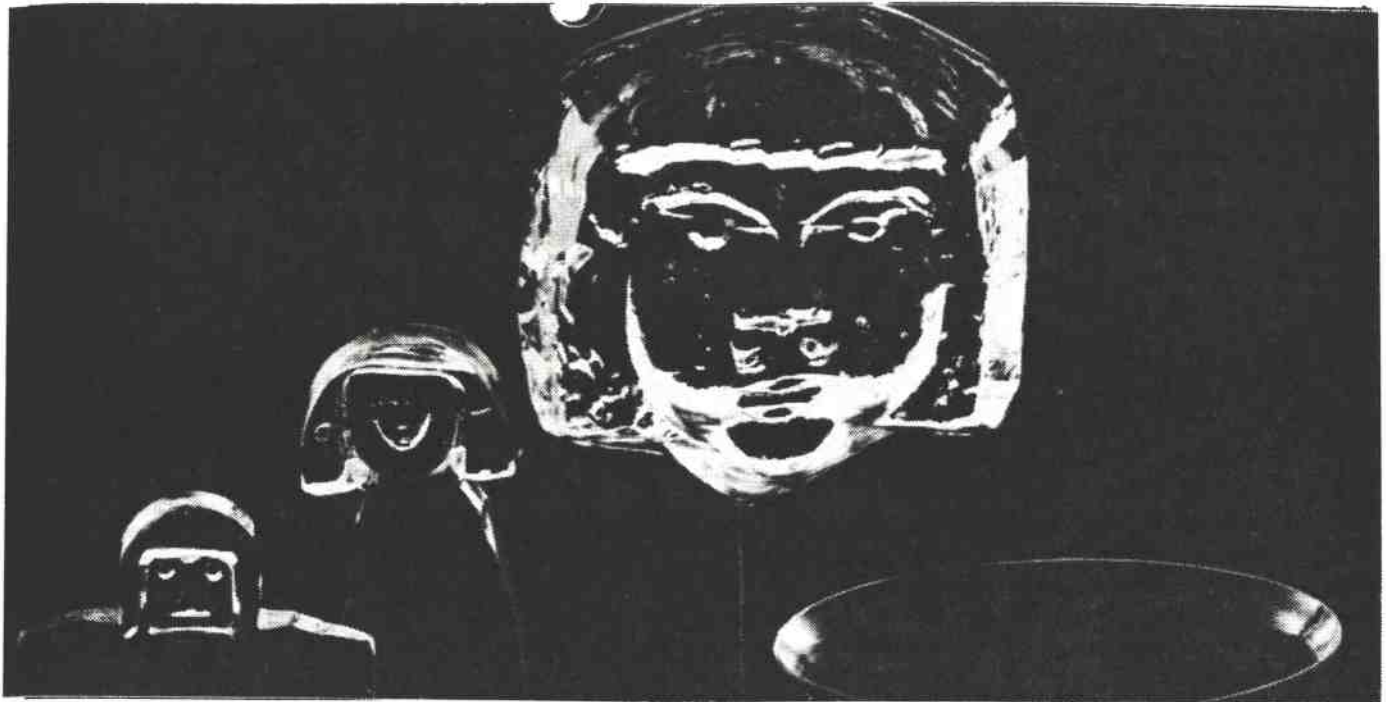
everything that goes beyond that is meaningless, and inconsideration of children who are born under such circumstances, a crime. In this way they are condemned to lead the life of a consciousness cripple. What the nuclear family calls culture exposes itself as a hindrance to consciousness. All *colossal* constructions and institutions serve to further stupidity, in their production as well as in their cultural after-effect. The same thing goes for all art *monuments* whether from Michelangelo, Rembrandt, or Beethoven, etc. Art is an important vent for sickness in nuclear family society.

In the commune art has a different value. It appears as self-expression in the group, as *direct representation* of one's own sickness, one's own damages. *In the commune there can be no art other than self-expression in a social context. Art has become life-art.* In commune society, work is meaningful because it takes place within the commune and in direct connection with the life of every individual. We work for ourselves, not for a boss, an owner, an exploiter. The work benefits us directly. There is no pay other than the result.

In the commune, there is no private money. It is taken for granted that in a commune society the existential needs, the physical needs (food, clothing, shelter), *as well as the emotional needs* (sexuality, communication, creative development possibilities) *are guaranteed.* No one has to buy the existential needs. Every human has a claim to their basic existential rights from the first day on.

Humans are the only animals whose sexuality is always present. It is not restricted to mating seasons. We are the only animal capable of free sexuality...And not only that—the human must realize free sexuality because it is a basic biological need, if life is to have any kind of meaning. Marital fidelity appears to be more a tendency for gray geese, and has a consciousness-hindering effect on humans.

ontogenetic: life history or development of an individual organism



phylogenetic: history or development of a species

A human who is incapable of taking full advantage of cos phylogenetically given possibilities remains a baby who got stuck at the crawling stage. Co will not be able to develop their human consciousness potential. Billions of nuclear families live, as far as their consciousness is concerned, far below the phylogenetic norm. Considering the phylogentic code and its ontogenetic realization in the individual human, we must regard the modern human as an ontogenetic failure. A rabbit in the field manages easily to live better than a human with cos large computer brain. Humans kept pushing the catastrophe out in front of them during the course of their development without ever solving it. So the human pushed coself around the globe in the last centuries until it was full. The attempts to push out into outer space are typical human attempts to push the catastrophe off further onto other stars.

The advancement to *social consciousness* was never completed by the human species. Co avoided solving the real problems, and when there was no other way out and all other means were exhausted, co avoided problems by having a war.

Strange as it sounds, capitalism in western countries allows a development—satisfaction of the human consume compulsion—and is a necessary step towards realizing the phylogenetic potential of the human. I mean the realization of free sexuality and complete economic equality of all humans, and equality of all humans in their level on consciousness, a result of phylogenetic consciousness.

In the group we have had free sexuality for 3 years. One could also speak of non-possessive sexuality, that is, no more private sexuality. The prerequisite of free sexuality is economic equality, common property. Money has been abolished inside the commune. There are no wages, all existential needs are filled in the commune. The individual is not left alone with cos existential needs. There is no supplying of individuals as practiced in the nuclear families, because by that means, the economic inequalities that originated in the stone-age could be maintained and take on an existential character in society. In the commune the group is supplied as a whole.

Sexual slavery, as in the two-person relationship, is present in every type of dependency, whether it is the dependency of children or of office workers. Free sexuality liberates

the women above all from her slavery. Only emotionally healthy people are capable of free sexuality, because free sexuality means intense communication with all humans without possessive dependency, something which a damaged human is incapable of realizing.

Whoever wants free sexuality will not find it at an orgy or in a brothel. The most unpleasant thing for the nuclear family person is that co cannot buy free sexuality—free sexuality can only be gained through an existential commitment. Money Makes the decisions for the nuclear family person, it allows co to stay the little cave person. Many people who still live in the two-person relationship say "I have absolutely no desire to change partners so often and not to have somebody just for myself. What about my feelings, I can't make it without love." What co calls feelings of love is the need for love that was never fulfilled in infancy. Co cannot imagine how liberating and enjoyable it is to fuck with everyone without being fixated; co cannot imagine the amount of positive life energy that is set free when co can express cos sexual feelings, instead of distorting or restricting them, and can realize them immediately in the group, instead of running around like a dog in heat.

The brutal horniness of the nuclear family is unknown to humans living in free sexuality.

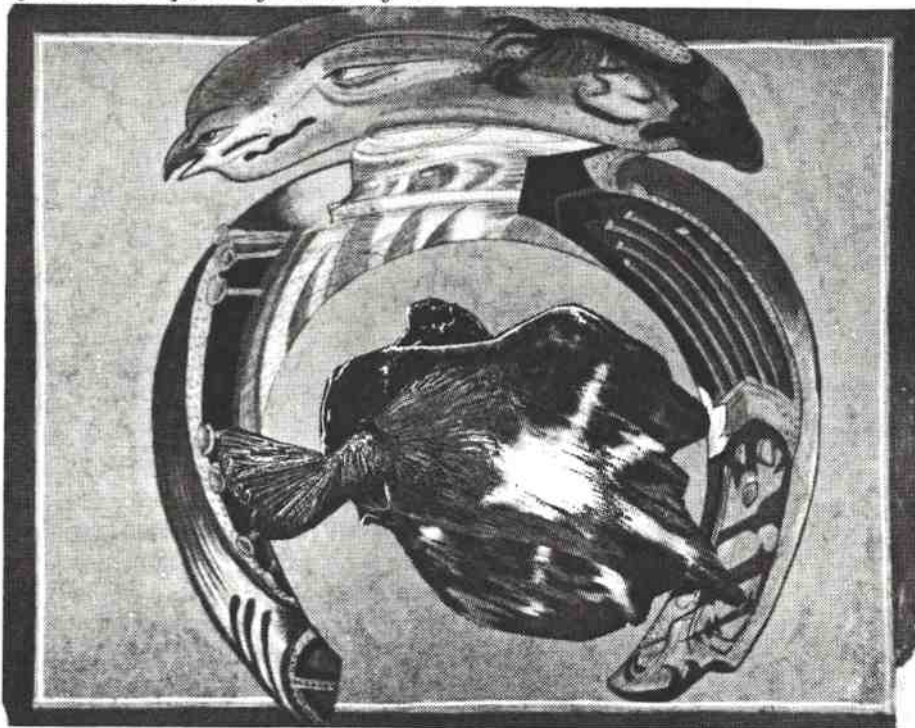
Real tenderness can only develop in free sexuality where the man no longer appears as conqueror, hunting the women down, seducing her, cornering her. The woman is no longer a possession, nor the man, to be taken or captured with cunning. The tenderness in free sexuality is the highest form of horniness, a tremendous feeling to fully enjoy sexuality without having to be afraid of cheating, lying, guilt and above all, without jealousy, an open and intense communication has developed between all members of the group. Love and trust in the commune are the result of the freedom and independence of the men and the women and their desire for one another. It is obvious that free sexuality, the positive atmosphere of sexually satisfied humans, is the basis for the growing up of children without emotional deformity.

All newcomers in the commune experience difficulties in the beginning. The "nuclear family sickness" breaks out. It becomes clear that co is incapable of adapting in a social environment. Difficulties that co could conceal and compensate under the cover of the two-person relationship now break into the open. In order to overcome the nuclear family damages we have developed *actions analysis* in the commune which climaxes in the *selbstdarstellung*, spontaneous self-expressions action in front of the group. The actions analysis emerged from the long hard battle to overcome the nuclear family damages which obstructed communication. Problems that are impossible to solve in discussion because the origins are unconscious can be resolved in actions analysis and overcome. Only through actions analysis was it at all possible for us to dissolve the two-person relationship and private property.

The AA KOMMUNE is located close to the Neusiedler Lake on the Parndorfer Plain. There is no settlement within an 8 kilometer radius. The economic basis: farming, transport enterprise, carpentry and cabinetmaking, two stores where work

clothes and jeans are sold. In addition the AA KOMMUNE has established a publishing co. that brings out the AA NEWS, books and documentation of the development in the commune, children's books and posters of the AA-Parabola. Since summer 1975 we have been holding continuous courses of instruction in actions analytical art and commune living lasting 10 days each to spread the ideas of the AA KOMMUNE. The AA NEWS appears in German, English and French. We are working on developing the AA KOMMUNE Friedrichshof into an international actions analytical center. The AA KOMMUNE presently consists of 70 adults and 7 children. Letting children grow up without damages is one of the most important functions of the

commune environment. The eldest children are now 3 years old. The AA KOMMUNE plans to establish its own school for the children when they are older. The AA KOMMUNE is constantly under construction: repairing the old grain-storage building, 3 storeys high, 900 sq m. total floor space. In the third floor is a 200 sq m. room where the selbstdarstellungen evenings take place and smaller rooms for the actions analysis. The commune's summer course was documented in photos, tape recordings and 16 mm film. These courses of instruction serve the purpose of conveying actions analytical selbstdarstellungen art to the participants and demonstrating the practice of living together.



Dear Communities,

We are sending you our contribution for your next publication, hope it gets there in time. The commune course of instruction this summer has been very successful, communes are being established based on our model in Berlin, Heidelberg, Wiesbaden, Bremen, Geneva. People from England, America and Norway participated as well. We will be exhibiting at the Frankfurt bookfair and showing our film at the Montreal Film Festival in October. Maybe a few of us could visit you sometime and get you hip to free sexuality!

love and thanks for helping
us with our propaganda,

the AA Kommune (brooke)

ALTERNATIVES TO ALIENATION

DAN BURSTON

THROUGHOUT OUR HISTORY, SEXUAL BEHAVIOR HAS BEEN GOVERNED BY NORMS AND INSTITUTIONS THAT LIMIT FREEDOM AND SPONTANEITY, AND HAMPER PEOPLE'S PERSONAL GROWTH.

Abstinence, or celibacy, and marriage have been the two most prominent repressors in this regard. And while they have functioned in slightly differing ways, for different reasons, in different cultures, their essential features have remained the same; they seek to restrict, or abolish, the possibility of sexual encounter.

Why do these institutions exist at all? Are celibacy or pairing the only, or the ideal, norms of sexual behavior?

J.J. Bachofen's epoch-making study *Mother Right*, and Lewis Henry Morgan's *Ancient Society*, published some years ago showed through a brilliant interpretation of myth, art, and a great deal of anthropological evidence, that fairly advanced civilizations had existed where sexuality was much freer, where women "wore the pants" in the extended clan and family, and did most of the important work in developing agriculture, art, and a truly humane legal system.

In these civilizations, adolescent sexuality was recognized and approved, monogamy was not strict, but rather a convention to maintain a semblance of social bondings. Furthermore marriages could not be forced without one or both partners consent (as they traditionally have been in male dominated cultures).

Wilhelm Reich, a break away student of Freud's, also corroborated Bachofen's findings in his books *The Sexual Revolution*, *The Invasion of Compulsory Sex Morality*, and *The Sexual Struggle of Youth*.

It was for the injustice and inequality inherent in the marriage that

Marx and Reich sought to abolish it.

In our own lives, we analyse the oppressive functions of the family, and pairing, still further. These institutions oppress men and children as well as women, and perpetuate an environment of sexual scarcity.

In conventional marriages, men are forced to pay for a meagre diet of sex. In most cases, one or both marriage partners are alienated by their conditioning from the opposite sex before the arrival of children, so that their arrival occasions a further withdrawal away from one another, and into their separate worlds.

Typically this means that the father becomes more involved with work, clubs, games, buddies, etc., and the mother with children and home-life activities.

Often, the reason the parents wanted children was neurotic in the first place. When this is the case, they use them as pawns in games designed to "get even" with their spouse. This prevents the children from developing healthy character structures and a sense of will and purpose that is rooted in themselves.

In order to induce children to "behave properly" parents often use bribery and force, usually in ways so subtle that they escape notice by the casual observer. R.D. Laing's works are particularly useful in demonstrating this.

What have we done concretely to overcome the pitfalls of marriage and the family?

Well, in our own commune, we have abolished pairing. Pairing is incompatible with our lifestyle, which is based on sharing (i.e. no private property) and overcoming our selfish-

ness and narcissism.

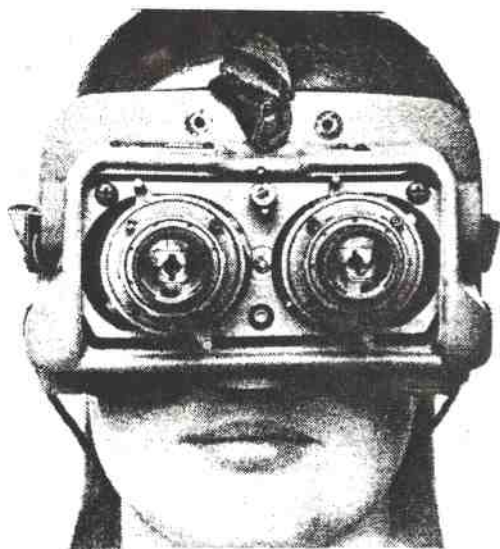
This presents difficulties when we are confronted with people who have strong desires to pair. These desires must be overcome if the person is to remain in the commune, because we know that ultimately, our community would be blown apart by the selfish rivalries that necessarily would develop.

An essential component of our lifestyle is attempting to put into practice the syndrome of attitudes that characterize the loving person; care, response—ability, knowledge, and respect, without restricting our giving to any one particular person. Sexuality is treated in this manner as well, since it is part and parcel of loving. And it is in this vein that we approach our sexual hangups, which are openly discussed and worked through.

Our arrangements offer possibilities that are not open to conventionally paired couples, but they also involve a great deal of sacrifice.

We could not accept a couple within the framework of our group, unless of course they are willing to renounce coupling immediately. However, it may be possible to start a separate "coupled commune" for leftists with whom we share broader social concerns, and for whom the possibility of a more personalized, intimate and cooperative lifestyle seems attractive.

If you are interested in any aspect of our lifestyle, please contact us at Box 46, Station M, Toronto M6S 4T2, Ontario, Canada, and tell us about yourself: your interests, hopes, and the reasons behind your interest in community.



BOOK REVIEWS

January Thaw by the members of Blue Mountain Ranch (Times Change Press, 62 W. 14th St., NY, NY 10011, 1974) \$3.25/pb (cloth \$8.50), 160pp.



As the cover states, "People at Blue Mountain Ranch write about living together in the country." Blue Mountain, since its formation in 1968, has gone through a sequence of changes in self-evaluation and orientation common among communes; the original "hippie" ethos, which included couples, sex-defined work roles, and emphasis on the biological parent-child bond, was thoroughly shaken by the early 70s ideas known as feminism and gay lib (see p. 34 for a short account of Blue Mountain's evolution). The book consists of tape recorded conversations, journal excerpts, drawings, photos, poems, and stories by a number of Blue Mountaineers, little and big, separated into the categories Beginning, Relating (4 sections), Work (2 sections), Kids, Taking Care of Ourselves, Parents, and Reflections.

I like to read about the trials and experiences of other communes, being comforted to find out that other people have to deal with the same problems that I and my commune always seem to be confronting. And so I enjoyed **January Thaw**. The book may disappoint the reader looking for something concentrating on a coherent ideology of communal living, raising pigs, or managing a commune's economy, although there are glimpses of such topics. The book is more for someone interested in a little of everything about a commune (as in **Celery Wine**, for example), with the concentration on introspection, people examining their own feelings.

I have two nitpicks, 1) there didn't seem to me to be as many men's viewpoints as women's, 2) the price is high. This, unfortunately, is inevitable for small press books of any quality; TCP is not profit. (For the history of TCP and its activities, see **Communities** #10, pp. 18-21).

Ecotopia by Ernest Callenbach, Banyan Tree Books, Berkeley (distributed by Book People)

This is... Well... Sort of a very strange book. I've read it through now, coming and going between feelings of being bored by its technical dryness, and being completely sucked in by the high emotional content. The book alternates between a sort of "straight" or factual reportage of Ecotopia's different scenes, and the personal journal entries of the book's main character, an American reporter of a major newspaper visiting Ecotopia on a diplomatic mission. Something very important happens here. Bit by bit, throughout the cycle of newspaper articles alternating with diary entries, a country's spirit is felt. Peoples' lives and the life force within them are opened to us.

I've read much material talking of whole ecological systems. Instead of saying "What if...?", **Ecotopia** offers us a "Here we all are" situation. But this is still the ideological sketching out of a living system in hardware terms, as many other ecological pieces have been (though most are reports or articles rather than novels). As in everything else, the medium is the message. No idea without its context. So what gives me the pleasure of going on a journey through Ecotopia is its completeness. It is truly a "full" system. The ecological "hardware" is grounded in an everyday life of dumping the trash, getting the kids to school, fucking, working at the factory. It's real—seeing (not observing) a pattern of living in balance/harmony, the feeling of those who live there. Ecotopia definitely has style.

Sometimes, when I say something about how Ecotopians, or she herself appear to me, she becomes very quiet and attentive. The other night I mentioned their way of holding eye contact for what seems to me excessively long times, and how this sitred up feelings it is hard for me to handle. "What feelings?" she asked. "Nervousness, a desire for relief, to look away for awhile." "And if you withstand the nervousness and go on looking?" "Then I guess tenderness, and a desire to touch. —It makes me afraid I'll cry."

To spend as much time feeling the nature of eye contact between Ecotopians themselves, and with our outsider, William Weston (one of us, perhaps?) is not simply just as important as the nature of Ecotopia's "stable-state" ecology—no cars, no petroleum pollution, no unbiodegradable garbage, no 40 hour work week, etc.—they are really the same thing! In this place, Ecotopia, the personal and the national become one. Duality is fading away here. Eye contact, naturalness of human emotion, pain, loving, sex, are all becoming or already are the same thing as soil conservation, biodegradable plastics, workers' control of industries... the love of a tree. The author, Ernest Callenbach, has seen this, and is offering us a small gift of insight.

Ecology is really synonymous with many ancient concepts of a natural universe, an overriding complete process. Nowadays it has become lopsided in its meaning through overuse in the West. Ecology is as much of Tao or Dharma as of electric autos and no oil spills. Our concept of ecology has become a very one-sided, 'hardware' oriented approach to the universal concept of balance.

Ecotopian sex, friends, and family are—along with its decentralization, lumbering, & small-scale factories—a part of the total personal life of each person there. The personal and the industrial, the home-life and the political all tend to merge in Ecotopia. Ecotopia is a sort of religious place. Like the ancient Chinese, or American Indian, or Buddhist, everyday life is religious—religion is everywhere—religion is very profane in Ecotopia.

But what matters most is the aspiration to live in balance with nature, 'walk lightly on the land,' treat the earth as a mother. No surprise that to such a morality most industrial processes, work schedules, and products are suspect! Who would use an earth-mover on his own mother?

From this Ecotopian perspective, all other forms of liberation naturally develop.

Ecotopians, both male and female, have a secure sense of themselves as animals. At the Cove they lie about utterly relaxed, curled up on couches or floor, flopped down in sunny spots on little rugs or mats, almost like a bunch of cats. They stretch, rearrange themselves, do mysterious yoga-like exercises, and just seem to enjoy their bodies tremendously. Nor do they keep this to themselves, particularly—I've several times walked in on people making love, who didn't seem much embarrassed or annoyed—it was hardly different from walking in on someone taking a bath.

... women in Ecotopia have totally escaped the dependent roles they still tend to play with us. Not that they domineer over men—but they exercise power in work and in relationships just as men do. Above all, they don't have to manipulate men: the Survivalist Party, and the social developments generally, have arranged society so that women's objective situation is equal to men's. Thus people can be just people, without our symbolic loading on sex roles.

The actual harvesting of timber is conducted with surprising efficiency, considering the general laxness of Ecotopian work habits... but when a crew is at work they work faster and more cooperatively than any workman I have ever seen. They cut trees and trim them with a strange, almost religious respect: showing the emotional intensity and care we might use in preparing a ballet.

Ironically enough, what makes Ecotopia such a—the only word for it is **comfortable**—place, is its Americanness. Ecotopia, a synthesis of many Eastern concepts and western ways. It is very much down-home. Very much still the U.S. The universal spirit is there, where it has never been before, in a Western place, yet it is still recognizable—very familiar. Sort of like having Eugene, Oregon, or Portland, or San Francisco and its hippies and Esalen meet with Zen monasteries, a Japanese gardener, tai chi, or an American Indian storyteller, and having the two worlds begin to melt together.

I stopped to watch some carpenters working on a building. They marked and sawed the wood lovingly (using their own muscle power, not our saws). Their nail patterns, I noticed, were beautifully placed, and their rhythm of hammering seemed patient, almost placid. When they raised wooden pieces into place, they held them carefully, fitted them (they make many joints by notching as well as nailing). They seemed almost to be collaborating with the wood, rather than forcing it into the shape of a building...

Ecotopia is very good because, though not the perfect truth of an ecological living system, it is not quite science fiction either. It is truth enough to engage our senses in a process we are already involved in. Because of Ecotopia's closeness to home, it is an inspiring book—and we all can use a bit of that.

"I've decided not to come back, Max. You'll understand why from the notebook. But thank you for sending me on this assignment, when neither you nor I knew where it might lead. It led me home."



I want to write about **Ecotopia** from a slightly different perspective, not so much because I disagree with the above, but because it doesn't touch on some of the things I find most exciting and special about this book.

For me, the major strength of the book is its basic premise, namely: In 1980, Oregon, Washington, and Northern California secede from the Union and establish a new republic based on the ecological notion of the stable state and a deep reverence for nature and its creatures. What follows, I think, is pretty much what you'd expect given the dominant counter-cultural values. It's nice to see it all together in one place, but it consists of nothing new and is not even all that well executed. While the ways in which people relate to one another are exemplary, it would seem that the people who read this book will already see this kind of relating as desirable, even if they aren't there yet. Certainly the plot is no cliff-hanger—I was often bored by it—and the characterization fairly shallow. As with most utopias, this one concerns itself with a stop-action picture of a state of being. It would have been far more involving and convincing had we lived through the exciting **process** of Ecotopia's formation, rather than being shown its **form**.

Despite all that, I have been much influenced by this book. In part, that is because it does give us a glimpse, however hazy, of a vision well worth realizing, and makes the vision just believable enough that it is hard to dismiss. More important, I think, is the wonderful **appropriateness** of that vision for the particular time and place in which it appears.

The Pacific Northwest is a lonely region with an intense aura of disconnectedness with the mainstream of America on the one hand, and one of homogeneity and relatedness within the region on the other. The rain falls on Eugene and Bellingham alike. The endless fir forests are everywhere. Further, nature is very much in evidence here, even dominant. It is impossible to ignore the environment (it leaks through your roof) and so there is a high degree of environmental consciousness. There is also still some hope of saving that environment, and a great deal of motivation to do so. There's a great deal of alternative activity here, despite, or perhaps because of, the sparse population, and a growing willingness to participate in political processes. All in all, this is **just the place** for Ecotopia. Almost, it could happen here. Moreover, the idea has great moral weight. It **should** happen here.

Because of its appropriateness, and judging by its growing popularity hereabouts, I think this book may well have a significant impact, much as **Walden Two** has had. It is not so much that I expect people to form organizations for realizing Ecotopia, though that may happen, but that they will see a vision in this book with which they can identify, and may alter the focus of what they are doing with their lives, perhaps just slightly, so as to turn in the direction of that vision. If they do, then a lot of people will be heading in something like the same direction. It has certainly had a great effect on our own developing regional consciousness, with the result that we've discovered greater rapport and common direction with the people in this region.

Delora, Jack R. & DeLora, Joann S. (Eds.) **Intimate Life Styles: Marriage and its alternatives** (2nd Edition). Goodyear Publishing Co., Inc. (Pacific Palisades, CA 90272), 1975, 432pp., \$6.95, pbk.

Using a social-systems approach in their introductions, the DeLoras present some 50 readings ranging from empirical studies to sub-cultural manifestos. A good, systematic overview.

Duberman, Lucille. **Marriage and its Alternatives**. Praeger Publishers (111 Fourth Ave., NY, NY 10003), 1974, 238pp., \$3.95, pbk.

A standard introductory text on issues related to the sociological study of the family, with the added feature that Lucille attempts to extrapolate from current trends to what the future holds.

Gordon, Michael. (Ed.) **The Nuclear Family in Crisis: The Search for an Alternative**. Harper & Row (49 East 33rd St., NY, NY 10016), 1972, 224pp., \$4.50, pbk.

Thirteen readings ranging from Plato to studies of the kibbutz and families in socialist countries to studies of 1970-variety communes are complemented by an excellent introduction by Gordon. Of all the books in this list, this one comes closest to providing some sociological and historical grounding for understanding the communal alternative.

Libby, Roger W. & Whitehurst, Robert N. (Eds.) **Renovating Marriage: Toward new sexual life-styles**. Consensus Publishers (255 Rose St., Danville, CA 94526.), 1973, 366pp. pbk.

Unlike the above books, this one is specifically concerned with the issue of sexuality after marriage. Advocating sexual pluralism, the editors present 20 articles on swinging, group marriage, co-marital sex, group sex, and open marriages. An excellent introduction to sexual issues.

Mazur, Roanld. **The New Intimacy: open-ended marriage and alternative lifestyles**. Beacon Press (25 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108), 1973, 134pp., \$3.45, pbk.

A sensitive and well researched argument for opening up marriages. Individual growth within open relationships is emphasized. This is a counseling manual for those who would try. Communal living is mentioned but is not considered in any depth.

Murstein, Bernard, I. **Love, Sex and Marriage through the ages**. Springer Publishing Co. (200 Park Ave. South, NY, NY 10003), 1974, 639pp., \$16.95, hdbk.

Ten years of research and writing went into this incredibly

complete history of marriage in Western society. (There are, in addition, two chapters on pre- and post-revolutionary Russia and China.) Although Murstein generally attempts to let the data speak for itself, he includes interpretive essays at the beginning and end in which he tried to draw on the universals which emerged in his study to predict the future of the family.

Otto, Herbert A. (Ed.) **The Family in Search of a Future**. Appleton-Century-Crofts (Educational Division, Meredith Corp., 440 Park Ave. South, NY, NY 10016), 1970, 204pp., \$3.95, pbk.

The ground-breaking grand-parent of the books about alternatives to marriage. Many of the articles are reprinted or referenced in the later books. The focus on hippie communes is understandable in a book written this early.

Smith, James R. & Smith, Lynn G. (Eds.) **Beyond Monogamy: recent studies of sexual alternatives in Marriage**. Johns Hopkins University Press (Baltimore, MD 21218), 1974, 336pp., \$3.95, pbk.

Like **Renovating Marriage**, this book is primarily about trans-marital sexuality. Its 16 articles and extended introduction comprise an elaborate argument against monogamy. "Monogamic marriage is, in its own macabre way, a legitimized and normalized form of emotional and erotic bondage." (p.35)

Streib, Gordon F. (Ed.) **The Changing Family: adaptation and diversity**. Addison-Wesley Publishing Co. (Reading, MA 01867), 1973, 173pp., \$2.95, pbk.

A light-weight cousin to the DeLoras' more complete introduction, Streib's book should serve as a good introduction to the issues for those who'd like to save \$4.00.

Sussman, Marvin B. (Ed.) **Non-traditional Family Forms in the 1970s**. The National Council on Family Relations (1219 University Ave., Southeast, Minneapolis, MN 55414), 1972, 148pp., \$3.00, pbk.

This is a collection of articles that resulted from the 1971 Groves Conference on Marriage and the Family. Originally published as an issue of the **Family Coordinator**, it contains many of the seminal articles reprinted elsewhere. The October 1975 issue of the **Family Coordinator** will be a follow up of this early work. Edited by Sussman, Cogswell & Marciano, it will be entitled **The Second Experience: Variant Family Forms and Styles**.

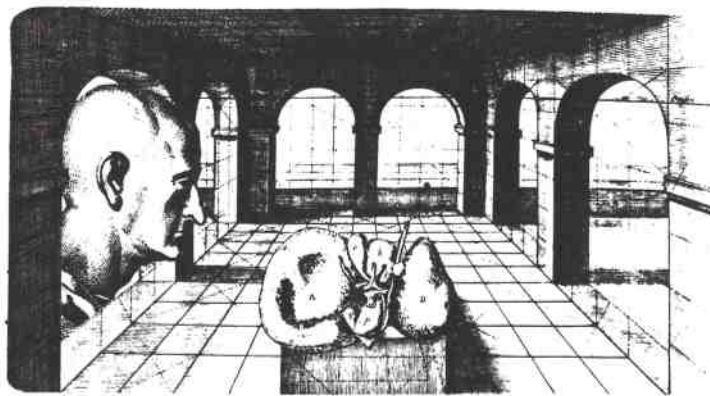
All of the above books address themselves to the problems involved in what is generally seen as the current breakdown in the nuclear family, that breakdown being evidenced in rising divorce statistics and in the proliferation of "alternatives" to the traditional family. In addition, all offer opinions about the future of the family in the Western world. Some, like Duberman, rely primarily on the extrapolation of present trends. Others, like the DeLoras, rely on a functional analysis, identifying present sources of strain to predict the institutional accommodations that will be made to those pressures. Most predict a fur-

ther liberalizing of marriage, an opening up of the institution, freeing its participants of the demand for exclusivity in their relationships. Some predict a growing pluralism in the types of marital structures accepted within Western society. All, however (with the exception of Gordon), take for granted the fundamental stability of the present industrial/economic macro-structure. The needs of a monopoly-capital industrial society (for geographic mobility, for a meritocratic socialization system, and for large bureaucratic administrative structures) are treated as givens. The possibility of a fundamental re-

ordering of society along lines which would enable people to regain a sense of community and connectedness to their work and land is usually dismissed with a sentence or two, if it is even considered.

To most students of the community movement, then, reading the above books can be an exercise in frustration. In their analyses of the social realities impinging on the nuclear family, they continually pin-point the very pressures which many communal alternatives have been designed to deal with, yet they dismiss the community movement as either comprised of temporary growth centers or hippie escapist retreats. Families are said to be losing some functions and gaining others (both to their detriment.) They're losing the production function; family produced crafts and family-run services are giving way to mass produced goods and services. They're gaining the consumption function; instead of eating from their garden they buy from Safeway and General Foods. They're losing most of the socialization function to schools, nurseries, day care centers and organized youth activities such as little league, boy scouts and summer camps. They're gaining affectional functions; with increased mobility breaking down community and extended family ties, and with work and consumer activities taking place increasingly in impersonal bureaucracies, the family becomes the sole source of emotional support (though therapists and encounter groups are now whoring that function to some extent.)

All of these trends, then, seem to focus people's intimacy needs onto the family, to the spouse actually, since the kids have important things to do at school. Since these needs are often too great to bear, the results have been the proliferation of (1) ways to purchase intimacy (prostitution, massage parlors, growth centers, swinging clubs), (2) divorces and re-marriage (serial monogamy), and (3) experiments in open marriages and non-commercial swinging. The books listed above, taking as given the geographic mobility and bureaucratization of services required by industrial society, elaborate on the advantages and disadvantages of the above solutions. They discuss the temporary and/or false intimacy of swingers and massage parlor patrons, the social disorganization that may or may not be inherent in serial monogamy (especially when children are involved), and the problems of jealousy involved in opening up one's marriage. Each solution has its proponents and detractors (see Murstein, the DeLoras and Duberman for the best overviews), but all ignore the possibility that these solutions might be unnecessary, or at least severely modified, were the roots of the problems attacked.



These writers fail to take seriously the attack on these problems embodied in the communal movement because, almost universally, they see the movement toward community as involving only three different styles of group living: urban communes, group marriages, or 1970-variety hippie communes. Speaking of all three types, Murstein draws the conclusion that "commune adherents are mainly transients: in moving from a single status to marriage, they have stopped off at way stations." (p.551) The transient nature of these communal alternatives is virtually undisputed. Urban communes appeal to university students, young professionals and hippie drop-outs. These groups are both an economical way of sharing living expenses and a way of expanding opportunities for interpersonal intimacy and growth. The economic sharing is usually individualistically based (each contributes a share from one's private income) and commitment beyond the lease-term is rarely asked. In most urban groups individuals retain strong outside professional ties and remain more committed to individual growth and success than to the growth and success of the group.

In group marriages, the second type of group living mentioned, commitment and economic sharing may be more total, but most observers agree that the interpersonal energy required to maintain such marriages is incredibly high. Murstein (p. 537) points out that a six member group has to contend with a total of fifty-seven different relationships among two to six people. Few have the dedication to maintain the energy levels required to develop those intimate relationships over even a short period of time. Fewer still are those who reach satisfactory maintenance levels which can endure over the years. (Ellis's article¹, the research of the Constantines², and Patricia See's study of nine 'families'³ are the only sources quoted in any of the above books.)

The final category of group living dealt with in the literature is the rural commune. Murstein, who uses thousands of primary and secondary sources in his mammoth study of marriage through the ages, neglects the 30 or so community newsletters and the growing number of first-person book-length accounts available and relies, instead, on Jesse Pitts's accounts (from short visits) of hippie communes, Houriet's 1969 journey through the counter-culture, Hedgepeth and Stock's photographic essay on hippie

communes, and David French's 1971 account of a hippie commune that failed. Streib's collection contains one account of the first incredible summer of an anarchist commune (reprinted from a 1967 issue of the *Modern Utopian*). And the Deloras feature Estachild's oft-quoted attack on male chauvinism in hippie communes (from *Women: a Journal of Liberation*). Of all the writers reprinted and referenced in these books, only Ramey⁴, Millar⁵, and Kanter⁶ make any real effort to distinguish among different types of rural communes. Ramey points out that both religious communes and the more structured secular communes are relatively stable alternatives. His own interest, however, lies mainly with urban communes, so he's content to give only a short description of these alternatives. Millar makes the valuable point that communal groups differ widely both in how organized they are and in how much sexual sharing goes on. Furthermore, he says, "some groups have a good deal of variety among their members in terms of sexual style. Some groups may contain both sub-groups that are monogamous and rather ascetic and others that are more interested in expanding

sexual contacts and hedonistic."⁷ Kanter distinguishes among traditional religious communities, small anarchist groups, and communities centering around growth centers. None of the three researchers, however, present any data nor investigate any variables operative within the different types of groups. Their writings, therefore, seem to have made little impact on others searching for alternatives.

Thus Whitehurst says of rural communes, "Although the life-style is romantic and holds a great attraction for large numbers of escapists who hold some kind of idyllic dream of returning to nature, few have enough of a sense of commitment to endure for a long return to the primitive conditions required by most of the farm returnees."⁸

And Morton Hunt holds that "while agrarian communes may have sounder foundations than their urban counterparts they can never become a mass movement; there is simply no way for the land to support well over 2,000,000,000 people with low-efficiency productive methods of a century or two ago."⁹

French, David & French, Elena. **Working Communally: Patterns and Possibilities** Russell Sage Foundation (230 Park Ave., NY, NY 10017), 1975, 269pp., \$9.50, hdbk.

Thamm, Robert. **Beyond Marriage and the Nuclear Family**. Canfield Press (Harper and Row, 10 East 53rd St., NY, NY 10022), 1975, 231pp., \$3.95, pbk.

Fortunately for students who wish to seriously consider the community movement as an alternative, 1975 saw the publication of two books which seek to demonstrate that communal living and working groups are the logical alternatives that best counter the pressures at the root of the problems identified by the above writers. One, David and Elena French's *Working Communally*, looks at the issues from a socio-economic perspective. The Frenches argue that communal workplaces need not be havens of stoneage technology (many contemporary communes have tractors and other implements of an appropriate technology), that communal industries need not be marginal crafts (80% of all manufacturing units in the U.S. have fewer than 50 employees), and that communal living can be the basis of a society in which we have the opportunity to relate as a whole people to many more than just our spouses. Communal workplaces, in the Frenches' vision, are industrial and agrarian enterprises run on a human scale. In them, competition among individuals is largely replaced by cooperative efforts to make the small workplaces succeed. Geographic mobility, a necessity for the individual working in far-flung enterprises, is replaced by a sense of permanent attachment to the communal group. One measures one's self worth, then, not solely by one's success in a career, but by both the success of the group and the quality of one's interpersonal relationships.

Extrapolating the Frenches' arguments to the area of couple and familial relationships, one could argue that the increased meaningfulness of work and the increased

variety of stable interpersonal relationships would decrease the pressures on the individual to seek need fulfillment in extra-couple sexual relationships. On the other hand, closeness to others in the group, coupled with modern birth control methods and communal child rearing could result in more casual attitudes toward within-commune sexual relationships.

The second book, Bob Thamm's *Beyond Marriage and the Nuclear Family*, adds a social psychological dimension to the Frenches' work. From that perspective the roots of the current problem lie not in the industrial/bureaucratic systems, but rather in our inability to deal with the dependency, jealousy and self-involvement that characterize our relationships as we adjust to the socio-economic reality. He argues that the growth of communal families is the next logical step in learning to transcend the interpersonal difficulties that lie at the core of today's problems. In the communal families that Thamm envisions one will be able to feel secure enough in having a number of people each partially fulfilling one's needs that jealousy and/or dependence need not dominate in one's relationships with others. Because of industrial societies' need for mobility, some may have to move away, but the loss of any one person from the group will not be devastating because the gratifications of peoples' needs are spread out among a small number of significant others.

Given that any movement toward the communal ideals of the Frenches must exist within a long transition period during which the industrial society as presently

constituted will dominate much of our lives, then Thamm's detailed social psychological analysis is a valuable complement to the Frenches' socio-economic one. Both, however, need the added weight of empirical studies. Thamm and the Frenches provide theoretical support for the idea that intentional communities will provide the arena within which many of the social and social psychological problems associated with familial relations will be worked out. The detailed ways in which that does or does not happen, however, can only be gleaned from the systematic study of those who are living the alternatives. (The Frenches do illustrate their points with descriptions of three groups, but these descriptions do not constitute systematic studies.)

As far as I know, the only work addressing these problems are the studies of the special case of group marriages mentioned earlier and Jaffe's work (with Kanter) on couples in urban communes.¹⁰ Jaffe's study suggests, among other things, that in urban groups dominated by singles in a non-couple ideology; couples who move into communes tend either to break up in the first few months or to be relatively stable in the group. Those who do break up think that they'd like an incest taboo (other than within the couple) in the next group they live with. Those who didn't break up were able to maintain joint obligations and joint territory within the communal, household and tended not to have extra-couple sexual relationships.

Thamm's theoretical work, however, would suggest studying the singles and the types of relationships they tend to form rather than studying the couples who join. It would suggest action research in which a researcher/facilitator attempted to open both singles and couples up to experiencing others as partial sources of gratification in non-dependent ways. And the Frenches' work would suggest looking more closely at the types of relationships which develop in communal groups who've been able to establish communal industries and engage in income sharing. Such research could help determine whether or not communal living is really an alternative that can result in people rediscovering ways to relate to each other wholly and satisfactorily, and, if so, what variables are associated with such discoveries.

If any readers are aware of, or are engaged in, work of this type, please write me (David) at Box 426, Louisa, VA 23093.

¹Ellis's article (Otto, pp. 85-98)

²Constantine, Larry L. & Constantine, Joan M. *Group Marriage: a study of contemporary multilateral marriage*. Collier Books (MacMillan Publishing, 866 Third Ave., NY, NY 10022), 1973, 299pp., \$2.95, pbk.

³Delora & DeLora, pp. 320-28

⁴Sussman, pp. 67-88

⁵Libby and Whitehurst, pp. 192-207

⁶Gordon, pp. 173-79

⁷Libby & Whitehurst, p. 207

⁸Ibid., p. 314

⁹Delora & Delora, p. 420

¹⁰Jaffe, Dennis, & Kanter, Rosabeth Moss, "Couple issues and separation in communal households: a four-step model of the separation process. *Journal of Social Issues* 1975, Vol 31. See also Kanter, R.M., Jaffe, D.T. & Weisberg, D.K. "Coupling, parenting, and the presence of others: intimate relationships in communal households. It will appear in the special issue of the *Family Coordinator* (Oct. 1975) dealing with variant family forms.

Both these articles are outgrowths of Jaffe's doctoral dissertation, *Couples in Communes*, Yale University, Dept. of Sociology, 1975. For more information, contact him at 11976 Walnut Lane, Los Angeles, CA 90025.

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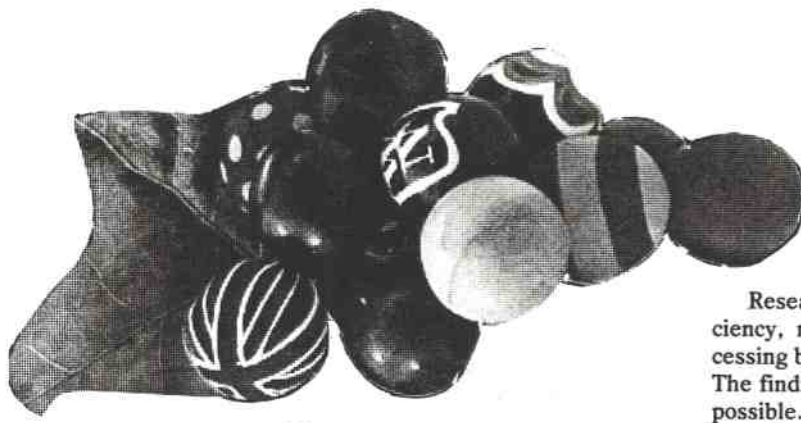
left with the democrats?

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GRAPES

unamerican activities

The Polish weekly newspaper **Kultura** reports on what is said to be the first "Hippie Commune" in Poland. The newspaper says that it consists of five men, three women, a donkey and a dog. **Kultura's** report is believed to be the first public acknowledgement of hippies in communist countries. The leader of the commune, a 30-year old-former television mechanic identified only as "Witek," explains that members abandoned city life because they couldn't take the pressure or the drinking.

Witek adds that the commune allows its members to "do their own thing." The newspaper says the police have the community under observation.

from The Drummer
via Lancaster Independent Press

John Seymour, author of **Self Sufficiency** and **The Fat of the Land**, intends to establish a Centre of Living at and around his farm in Pembrokeshire (U.K.) The object will be to provide a place where people who wish to master the skills needed for self-sufficiency in the countryside can come and do so. Such people will be able to stay for as long as it takes them to master the necessary techniques (a year seems reasonable for most people) and when they leave, if they desire, the Centre will try to help them establish themselves as peasant-craftspeople, or peasant-food-producers, or peasant-professionals, or whatever they want to be.

Thereafter it will be hoped that contact will be kept with as many as want it so that they shall still feel affiliated to the Centre, that help will be given to them if possible when necessary, and that they will continue to help and support the Centre, and in particular help other free people to establish themselves in the countryside.

The main aim will be to train people to be able to take a piece of their country and make it produce more food than it did before with less input than it had before, and also to earn a good and honest living at some craft or profession. If a person cannot make his or her land produce more than it did before then they shouldn't have it!

It is to be hoped that some alumni will stay near and in close touch with the Centre, perhaps even helping it to expand and themselves becoming a part of it, others will drift further away and perhaps some of them even set up Centres of their own. There is no reason why such an infiltrating movement should ever stop!

Instruction in the various skills (which will have to be completely professional—not the blind leading the blind!) will be provided partly by the 'staff'—partly by experts paid to come in from the outside. It is necessary to find a small number of people who are willing to come in as working partners and invest capital in the Centre. They will be assured of a good life and their capital will be secure but money-making is not the object.

Research will be carried out on every aspect of self-sufficiency, not only in husbandry and food production and processing but in power, heat production, crafts and manufacturing. The findings of the research will be disseminated as widely as possible. Anyone interested write to: **John Seymour, Fachongle Isaf, Newport, Pembrokeshire, Wales, U.K. with an international postal coupon.**

living love center

Here at the Living Love Center we believe that true love is simply accepting another person completely and unconditionally.

The atmosphere here is one of love, openness and trust. It is a safe space to work on raising our consciousness. We are learning to recognize our emotional addictions and to reprogram them. We become aware of what life situations trigger our negative emotions and what demands we have been placing on the world and people around us. We see how our demands cause frustration, frictions and emotional upsets within us. We find that by working on ourselves and getting into a loving centered space that our interactions with others become much more beautiful and flowing.

The Living Love Center was founded two years ago by Ken Keyes Jr. (author of *Handbook to Higher Consciousness*). Ken was a psychology major and with interests lying in Consciousness growth and a desire for self improvement, he discovered a path to love and happiness.

Our house is located in the foot of the Berkeley Hills in Berkeley California. The beautiful 32 room home is maintained by some 50 people living communally together. 24 of the residents are permanent staff and the remaining 26 are students.

The students are enrolled in what we call our 90 day Consciousness Growth Program. This program is open to anyone who has read and studies the *Handbook to Higher Consciousness* and is sincerely interested in applying the methods to their everyday life. During the 90 day program we are working toward unconditional love, joy and oneness. We do this by using the methods described in the *Handbook* and learning to liberate our conscious awareness, (staying in the here and now moment and interacting with others). We see that by learning to love and accept ourselves unconditionally that it becomes only natural to love and accept everyone around us.

Most of us are finding that soon after using the methods we begin to become more and more aware of what it is that is causing us to be uptight, angry and irritated. Now we've learned the methods and we can use them in aiding us to get free from all that unhappiness.

We believe that there is no reason for anyone to experience unhappiness and pain. We can live all of our lives in perfect harmony if we are willing to get out from under that which keeps us separate from each other. Our trip is based on love, unity and happiness and by working on our own consciousness we can create this world for ourselves and also for all of our brothers and sisters. **Living Love Center, 1730 La Loma Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94709.**

ashburnham

June and July saw significant developments at Ashburnham. By the end of the summer, the fundamental bases in Agriculture, Forestry, and Community will be completed.

On July 10th the Ashburnham Town Planning Board unanimously approved the designs of the final seventeen homesites, making a total of 34 lots officially approved for building. By the time you read this, most of the lots will be staked, flagged, and marked, making it possible for leasees to begin choosing their lots.

Our natural agriculture experimentation has been, so far, extremely satisfying. On the land devoted to this use, clover and short grass are gaining strength over the local weeds, and the vegetable seeds broadcast randomly have securely established themselves. In keeping with the theory of natural agriculture, we intend the harvest of none of these particular vegetables; instead, they will be allowed to go to seed and to replant themselves naturally. Next season, if all goes well, we should be able to begin the harvest of strong strains of semi-wild carrots, cabbages, and other vegetables. Our spring wheat (which will be harvested) is growing well.

The development of our forest management program proceeds in three steps: 1) We are now in the process of identifying and mapping all of the stands of trees on the land. The Ashburnham land is graced with large stands of pine, maple-oak-birch-pine, beech-birch-oak, and hemlock-beech. Eventually we will know where exactly on the land these stands are. Then we can begin 2) developing the actual management program. We want to be sure that it fulfills the needs of the community for firewood and building lumber on a self-sustaining basis. The decisions made here will affect the entire project in the long term as far as an everlasting supply of fuel is concerned. These decisions will determine the 3) implementation of the management program. Common forestry practices such as thinning, release, and pruning will definitely be involved, but the extent to which they are practiced is the important part. One of the major factors in determining the scheduling of the program is money. To help us with this, we are investigating the possibility of obtaining some federal money under the Forestry Incentive Program and the Rural Environmental Assistance Program.

A public meeting was held for the purpose of providing information about the Ashburnham Land Project to the general public. It was successful in beginning a dialogue between members of the Project and other residents of the town.

Having never before encountered a land use project comparable to ours, and fearing large-scale real estate development schemes, a few of the townspeople were reluctant to accept the panel's proposal that no more than fifty families would ever occupy the land as fulltime residents: "Is this a commercial enterprise?" "Are these fifty families a foot-in-the-door approach for two or three hundred families?"

Other townspeople, while apparently willing to accept the statements of the panel at face value, were skeptical about the economic basis of the Project and questioned the ability of the residents to remain independent and support themselves off the land: "What kind of outside cash flow is there going to be in your community?" "What's going to keep these fifty families from signing up for general relief?" "Where are your people going to find jobs?"

A principal focus of concern was the nature of the Foundation's tax status. Should the Foundation attempt to place the land under tax-exempt status as an educational project, comparatively little tax revenue would be generated for the town. Such revenue, of course, is the primary means by which a town's schools, roads, police and fire departments, sanitation services,

etc., are financed. Some people feared that the community residents would turn out to be "freeloaders" who would use public services without contributing to the support of these services: "Who's going to pay for more schools, roads, bussing, police protection?" "Are we going to have to support you through our taxes?"

These are realistic questions and, of course, the answers to them will emerge as our Project grows. In the meantime, they deserve the careful consideration of everyone involved with the **Ashburnham Land Project, 62 Buckminster Road, Brookline, Mass. 02146.**

WomanSpirit

The July moon waxed from Capricorn into Aquarius as 200 women from up and down the West Coast, plus Pa., New Mexico, Arkansas, Maryland, Delaware, Washington DC, Arizona and Montana met in the Oregon Siskiyou Nat'l Forest for the WomanSpirit Tribal Gathering. Sponsored by **WomanSpirit** magazine of Wolf Creek, Oregon, the gathering offered "a space/time to live our matriarchal/amazon fantasies." A secluded natural meadow, ringed by tall fir and cedar trees and bordered by Briggs Creek, became a woman's village for all of us for 5 days (July 18-23). Family "clans" of 7-25 women occupied campsites in the forest and came together for workshops and evenings of rituals, music and dancing about the campfire.

Local women worked with the Rangers and the Sherriff to give us as much privacy as possible on public land. They purchased lots of food, worked out menus, hauled in drinking water and basic supplies—the most important was a 4'x8' bulletin board. We women put these resources together into the structures and schedules which fit us best. There were "hobo" camps, and gypsies who visited around at mealtimes; there were small clans and large ones. Some took names, e.g. Kiwa, and Sisters of the Owl. Some clans stayed together the whole time, others changed as women came and went from the Gathering. The support we gave and received in these family clans was a great part of the experience. The clan was home, but we had freedom to move into other groups—like workshops and evening rituals.

On our last night—the full moon—women from many clans joined to plan our ceremony around the fire. Dance groups showed us what they had learned, chants and rounds were sung, musicians played. Our energy was high and mellow. Even the intrusion of 2 pickup trucks of men only brought us closer as we circled close to dancing sisters and felt the pain of us all voiced by one who sobbed and beat the ground, and was held and finally comforted, and we could continue.

Our last day: the partings, the arranging rides, giving addresses, searching for lost belongings, and clean up. We left the forest clean: trash neatly stacked for Ranger pickup. We had no epidemic illnesses, only one snake bite and two missing sleeping bags. We proved that 200 women could meet and live and move on without burning up the bonedry meadow or having a confrontation with the log truck drivers. For 5 days we lived in peace, healed ourselves of old hurts, grew in trust, and ventured into the future of sisterhood we all dream about.

We have lived the future and we are all seeds. Ruth & Jean Mountaingrove, Box 263, Wolf Creek, OR 97497.



REACH

In Reach we publish (free) updates on our annual commune directory and notices of 1) upcoming communal/community-related conferences; 2) existing communes/communities looking for new members; 3) people trying to form new communities; 4) people trying to find the right people or existing groups; 5) people offering services useful to communities 6) people desiring correspondents or information. We prefer to print items worded as we receive them; however, we get many which are so long that we feel compelled to edit them. Please *be terse!* Send all Reach items to *Communities/West*; items received by the 5th of the month preceding the date of an issue are highly likely to get in that issue; after that you take your chances.

CONFERENCES

A seed family of dedicated brothers and sisters are centering in the San Francisco area to live and work together in order to focus energies on evolving a world's fair of alternative lifeways. The fair will be on the West Coast during the summer of 1976.

Our vision is to provide a space to share with each other individual/group/global alternatives to present ideas, systems, games, techniques, tools, rituals. The concept focuses on holistic living-loving lifeways devoted to peaceful evolution through healing ourselves, our sister/brothers, and our Mother Earth.

Present needs include: a) people energy in the form of ideas, planners, and doers to center with us in the Bay Area; b) people to function as regional contacts; c) land sites in the country where the fair can actualize; d) green energy in the form of donations, grants, and non-interest-bearing loans to support the organization and actualization of the project.

The first of four planned progress/feedback/input newsletters with further information will be available at the end of September. Let us know if you would like to be on our mailing list.

Communicate your ideas, energy, queries, love. Let us hear from you. Namaste, *Bruce Craig, Media Coordinator, New World Fair, 625 Post, San Francisco, CA Box 259 94102*

GROUPS FORMING

We are building a city for 100,000 people within 100 miles of San Francisco

A new kind of city

A city that honors life

A city that advances human evolution

For further information, write: *Arcology Circle, 119 Frederick Street, San Francisco, CA 94117.*

A new community is being formed in Northeast Washington. We still need more members to join us in purchasing 400 acres. The land is located 10 miles south of the Canadian border on the West bank of the Columbia River. 17 shares to be sold at \$5000 a share (total cost of the farm \$85,000). A good sized down payment is necessary. The growing season is long enough to grow peaches; and we expect our main source of income to come from intensive farming of fruits, grapes, nuts, berries, herbs, and vegetables. We also hope to become a healing center. We already have a very experienced teacher of Reflexology (Shiatsu, Do-in, zone therapy etc.) We seek members knowledgeable in any aspects of farming or methods of healing. For further details write *Rural Resources & Information, PO Box 13, Rice, WA 99167.*

At this time we are tow families: Walter-32, terry-27, Johanna-2½, twins-2½ and Bob-25, Linda-24, Auriana-3½, Mountain-9 mo. We have forty acres about ½ mile from the Pacific (an unspoiled beach) and 150 miles from San Jose Costa Rica. It is hot and tropical. Since it is dry for 6 months, many things must be irrigated. At present it is unaccessible by vehicle 4-5 months a yr. It is mostly in grass pasture. We feel it can support 5 to 8 families. There is more land available if needed.

No one is living on the farm at this time. We are planning to move there Nov., 1975, giving us a full dry season to erect some structures and prepare for the wet season. We plan to use windmills to pump water. We are hoping others can join us before then so we can

all design this project together. Comfortable houses may be built from \$300 to \$1,500.

Some things we are into: "organic"ness, getting "straight" (Steve Gaskin), be here now, raw foods, healing, massage, yoga, I ching, astrology, some animals, getting high, arts, crafts, music, and more all the time. We try to keep in the flow of life and try to realize that uptightness only blocks the energy flow.

We can get to know one another to some extent thru out letters. But the only way we can decide for sure if it is right for you to join us is for you to come down so we can all feel it out. We believe that "fate" or whatever directs universal energy to change, guides us all to the place we need to be, the lessons we need to learn, the things we need, and the tasks we must accomplish.

Please keep in touch and let us know of your plans to come down—by mail, telegram, or message (phone 25-43-92, Bob or Linda Koutnik). Bear in mind we only pick up mail and messages once a week. Also a lot of mail seems to get lost between here and there. *Bob and Linda Koutnik, Apartado 5839, San Jose, Costa Rica.*

Join us in the development of a space age living village family. Yoga & meditation are our main vehicles to develop our self realization in order to raise the consciousness of souls at large towards animals and all seemingly oppressed souls on this plane of duality. The message of all masters is our lifes guide, the essence of truth free of anti-Aquarian Age dogma & prejudice. Those *sincerely* involved in spiritual sadhana under a guru(s) or their own godseives may harmonize with our Santana Vishiva Dharma (universal religion) (non sexist. non toxic). *Amethyst Ahimsa Ashrama PO Box 1070 San Diego CA.*

We, Frank (34) and Robbie (27) are teachers now living in California. Ellen Sue (37) and Roger (38) and their two children live in Penna. Ellen Sue is a teacher and Roger does marketing. We have been corresponding the last few months, have now met, and want to contact other people regarding the several goals and directions we have developed for our proposed community.

Type of Community: We have decided to build a nature-balanced community based mostly on the Israeli Moshav, that is, something between a cooperative and a commune. All land will be held in common by means of a land trust or corporation. All large machinery would be centralized and communal. We would have individual family dwelling units situated around a communal building where we would have the evening meal together, perhaps two or three times a week. At least at the outset each family or unit would have to provide its own income, a portion of which would go to the community to cover operating expenses.

Planning and Decision Making: While we believe that as much planning and decision making as possible should be done by consensus, we've seen that it can become a very cumbersome process. Groups spend hours trying to come to a consensus on a relatively minor issue. Therefore, we favor a committee-consensus form of government.

Lifestyle: We lean toward vegetarianism. This does not mean that all members must be vegetarians, but we would favor vegetarian meals when the group eats together. Also, we are against the habitual use of drugs or alcohol. We feel that drinking as a regular activity or habitually getting high is not conducive to the emotional stability of the person or group.

Group Interaction: All four of us have participated in encounter groups. Our similar experiences have convinced us that a regular encounter session would be a necessary and effective tool for dealing with interpersonal adjustments and personal or communal problems and growth.

Long-Range Goals: Free school; alternative energy; exchanging ideas, skills and services with other communities; food co-op; organic farm; vegetarian restaurant; economic self-sufficiency; becoming a model for the larger society.

Where We Are Now: By next summer we plan to have saved a substantial amount—\$3000 to \$5000—from each family or unit to put toward buying land in a country setting near a large city or university town. We favor the area from Missouri east to the Atlantic, and in the warmer states. If what we have in mind fits in with your ideas of community, please let us know so that we can form definite plans for a larger core group. Next summer we plan to meet to have a series of workshops to get to know one another better. If all goes well, we will then begin looking for land. *Frank and Robbie Warner, 618 Leslie Drive #A, Salinas, CA 93901 [408] 443-1278; Ellen Sue and Roger Spivack, 1000 Market Street, Lewisburg, PA [717] 524-4508.*

GROUPS LOOKING FOR PEOPLE

Costa Rica, small existing community looking for other beings who are into fruitarianism, raw foods, and spiritual disciplines. Send an international air mail response coupon (obtain

from post office) or \$.30 stamps for descriptive literature to *Omandog Press, PO Box 255, Wethersfield, CT 06109 or Essene, Villa Colon De Mora, San Jose, Costa Rica, C.A.*

Our commune seeks women and/or single parents who are into graphic arts or photography, vegetarian food, and open honest communication to join us in living, working and playing together. We are presently two women, four men and one child occupying a spacious sunny house with large yard and garden. We have room for a few more adults and a few more children. We seek women in order that our group be more balanced sexually and provide a stronger base of support for women and men working at unlearning limiting sex roles. We seek children as peers for our seven year old girl and because we wish to have younger people be a part of our daily lives.

We are a community-oriented graphics collective, doing layout, paste-up, design, copy camera and darkroom work to support ourselves economically. At present, two days per person per week provide us with group expenses plus a small allowance for those who need it. We are committed to sharing work rather than splitting rent, and graphics is the base we have established. With additional skilled members, we could take on more exciting, involving and creative graphics projects, or branch out into other areas of activity.

We are also committed to personal growth, each in our own way. Personal interests of present members include Aikido, T'ai Chi, yoga, dance, body work, intuitive perception, photography, gardening, nutrition, communal childrearing. *Good Times Graphix, 2425 Market St., San Francisco, CA 94114.*

Twin Valleys School is an educational commune designed to teach young people how to live while teaching them how to make a living. It consists of 130 people of all different ages, professions and technical training. We produce 80 per cent of our own food organically, do all of our own building, and equally share all of the responsibilities, duties and resources of the community.

As well as building many geodesic domes, we are also working on total energy units consisting of hydroponics, windmill electricity, solar heating and methane gas. We are also investigating our own lumber mill and grinding mill for the grains we grow.

Our community is an intentional community with a spiritual base as its main motivation, and an educational framework for its main source of funding. We have been in existence for almost four years.

One of the prime requirements for a student at Twin Valleys is that no one else wants him. We welcome inquiries and participating guests. Please write to let us know when you are coming out. *Twin Valleys School, Wardsville, Ontario, Canada.*

PEOPLE SHOPPING AROUND

We're tired of the city and lack of spiritual stimulus. If you know of a commune or collective near a university and place where a carpenter can make a living please write us. We need a warm communicative growing environment. 46 male B.A. social welfare, exp. with M.R.'s, finished carpenter and cabinetmaker. 22 female medical student into arts & crafts. *Charles & Linda, 779 Frederick St., San Francisco, CA 94117. [415] 731-6006.*

I am eager to hear from land-based communities or people interested in forming a community where individual and collective self realization and learning to live in natural harmony with the land go hand in hand. I would like to contribute to a place where people are integrating what we know from the conscious growth disciplines so abundantly available to us now, from the growing body of knowledge about alternative (i.e. natural) energy systems and from our unique unfoldings of the creative loving beings that we are. I feel it's essential in community to maintain a flexible balance between collective being (including, eventually, intercommunal networking and community service) and the time and space needed for individuals to explore their deeper selves and the gifts and joys they have to share. And I feel many of us are ready for this level of living without needing charismatic leaders or common belief systems to keep our energy together.

Some of what I can offer this community is love of truth and fun, a working familiarity with centering/self-healing tools from many spiritual psychological and natural healing traditions, a knack for working with children and food and gardens, dozens of wonderful chants, skills in design and communication through the printed media, and an eagerness to learn how to build structures and grow foods in ways that further our growth towards self sufficiency. *Marve Shapiro, 2719 Derby St., Berkeley, CA 94705. [415]-848-2053.*

I am interested in finding a "family" commune to join. Now I am 31 years old, with a law degree, business administration degree, extensive sales and marketing experience, and hard worker. However, due to back injury, I can't contribute heavy physical labor.

My parents are dead and I have no living relatives. I am inheriting \$250,000 now and am willing to contribute support to the community. It is my plan to use my inheritance to finance co-op business enterprise, then have the "profits" channelled into supporting programs. I can work with the commune to help with sales, marketing, advertising, financing, etc. as much as are needed. But I am not materialistic—the profit is channeled into community benefit only.

I am "conventional" in attitude, but am open to new life-styles. I seek to join a

"family" commune to give my love and companionship to my "brothers" and "sisters", and receive their affection in return. I love children with a deep love, and desire to have 2 of my own to give love to. *Clovis Carl Green, Jr., Box 900-27914, Jefferson City, MO.*

My daughter, Sarah 2 yrs, and I, Linda 28 yrs, are looking for a space to live & grow. My daughter needs a place to run free with people to love her & people she can love.

I am thinking of a small futuristic town or large farm with several people living on it. There will have to be a place for my 3 cats too, I'm having them fixed. I would like a cabin of my own, wood heat, or at least my own sleeping cabin or quarters.

I am an Art student, love painting, print-making & photography. Am interested in psychic phenomena, mystic arts, organic farming, nutrition, vegetarianism, nature, ecology, animals.

If there's a commune out there that thinks there might be a place for us (on the West side of States, preferably) please get in contact. *Linda & Sarah Ellsworth, 1737 E. 41 St., Tacoma, WA 98404.*

I am a Naturopathic Physician looking to join a large community or group of communes located near each other. Would like to establish a natural health care general practice. I'd teach natural health care classes and provide health services in exchange for room and board and opportunity to visit surrounding area to practice Naturopathic Medicine. I need out of the city to continue to grow naturally. My sincere desire is to use all my skills to preserve and strengthen all living things by natural means. I'm a good physician who wants to love and serve. *Bob Richards, N.D., P.O. Box 3065, Tucson, AZ 85702.*

What is a natural lifestyle? To me—foraging, raw foods, tropical or semi-tropical environment, bare feet, minimal or no clothes, no fire, no tools or very simple tools, spontaneous consciousness/instinct (constantly growing). Instinctive eating, movement, sex. Group family? Group commitment and support. Responsibility for actions—in tune with laws of nature/god (learned instinctively/intuitively through experience?). The cultural hypnotic spell cannot be broken without awareness/action. Surely if totally open awareness and expression can be attained nature/god will teach all that needs to be taught. If possible—telepathy, astral projection, ki, third eye, and other energy/consciousness abilities are surely natural. There is much i'm uncertain about, but i hope experience will reveal the truth. I view this as a starting place of total commitment—to re-experience life and all relationships (people, plants, light, rain, animals, self, walking, etc.) Is there a natural community i could become part of? Do your ideas agree or harmonize with mine? If so please write. If we can agree on a goal (?), ideal (?) we can move together to realize it.

What do you think is a natural lifestyle? Is it worth accomplishing? ideal(?) we can move together to realize it. What do you think is a natural lifestyle? Is it worth accomplishing? All communication welcome. Let's grow together. *Gordan Wieland, 3446 Illinois Ave., Louisville, KY 40213.*

PEOPLE WANTING HELP

I am writing in hope that I may find someone with a little understanding. I am a lonely soul, locked up within these walls of prison. I am interested in corresponding with anyone who is willing to write to me.

I have no family, and I'm lost to the world. Please take a little *human concern*, about the many lonely hearts in prison who have no one to care about them. We all need to be wanted by someone. *Allen Salte 141-682, Box 69, London, OH 43140*

This letter is a desperate appeal to you for advice on where to acquire emergency funding.

Link society is a penal reform oriented organization addressing itself to the needs of human beings behind bars, and inmates families outside the "walls."

Background data: Link has been operating for over three years. Being funded to years from Mobile's Campaign for Human Development. As of November 1974, Link has not been funded and operates on five and ten dollar donations, plus two full time volunteer staff workers and one part time volunteer. More than 2,000 appealing inmates have been in contact with Link and the number of families of inmates and non-inmates helped by Link is untold.

In citing the critical funding needs of Link, without immediate assistance, our doors will close in a matter of weeks. Thank you for any assistance you can give. *Mrs. Marie Davis, Mrs. Geraldine Wilson, Mr. Jerry H. Pogue: Link Staff*

Editorial note: We don't have the Link Society's address and so are unable to print it. Does anyone out there have it? Please send to *Communities/West*.

We are just beginning an organization called Noah's Fund, Inc., who's purpose is to provide humanitarian services in as many areas as we can efficiently direct our energies. We are set up as a non-profit corporation and our first activity is an organic foods distribution service. There are plans for a musicians' management program, some publications, and a health food restaurant. We are presently young and few, and have little experience with legal matters and business hassles. We would love to hear from anyone doing a cooperative of any kind for ideas, advice and encouragement. Hopefully we can grow into a practical alternative to competitive self-interest in our city. Any ideas or questions *NOAH, PO Box 12532, Raleigh, NC 27605.*

I'm a prisoner who'd like to carry on a conversation with some people that have their heads in about the same place as I do. I'm traveling along a very spiritually minded path and I'd like to rap to others that are traveling with me. So far most of the folks that I've been writing to are into Zen, yoga, other eastern religions, occult, meditation, etc., etc., etc., but I haven't run into any Christian Scientists, and that's what bag I'm in. So, if any of you Christians Scientists reading this could get into writing, please do. *Brian E. Pace "Maui", Register #41115, Box 711, Menard, IL 62259.*

SERVICES

Wild Foods and Gardening Workshop. One or two weeks. Time will be spent in field learning identification, gathering, preparing wild food and herbal medicine. Techniques of drying and using herbs for healing. Also, gardening, harvesting and winter preservation. Bring tent or can work out arrangements by letter ahead of time. Food provided: simple lacto-vegetarian diet of local and home grown food. About \$100 weekly. For additional details or questions send a self addressed 20 cents stamped envelope to Jean White Ridder, Rte 1, Box 159, Rural Retreat, VA 24368.

Naturopathic Physician offers to teach health care classes and provide health care services by traveling to communes if expenses can be met. Will accept some bartering, exchanging some services for goods. *Bob Richards, N.D., PO Box 3065, Tucson, AZ 85702.*

The Farm Yoga Sports Center will have yoga sports tapes soon. Among the tapes: Stephen on yoga sports; Jack Scott on his program at Oberlin; Chip Oliver on playing pro football and being a vegetarian; and more. For the cassettes send \$3 to *The Farm, Yoga Sports Center, c/o Larry Melton, Summertown TN 38883.*

We are re-evaluating our services in home-steading skills and would like to direct our energies to those couples or individuals in the "mid career" or over 35 age group. We are emphasizing the rewards of living on a reduced income and direct our energies to exploring ways in which we can overcome the problems and crises that are fast overtaking the society. For additional information write *Ted and Joy Keiser, Merryweather Farm, Henniker, NH 03242.*

open Northwest Information Network is a cooperative communications system for the Pacific Northwest...one of several information exchanges which encourage new contacts and cooperations between people; and help folks coordinate and benefit from joint efforts...the Network is people joined in synergy with each other, moving together toward common goals.

Established in the summer of 1973, the Network began as a coalition of five Puget Sound area groups. Now, Northwest Information Network is over three dozen active organizations spread across three states and a province...interconnecting more than 3200 groups and individuals. For more info write OPEN Northwest Information Network, Box 5599, Seattle, WA 98105.

Naropa Institute is an environment of people; teachers and students, teachers as students and students as teachers—sometimes missing the mark, sometimes being boring and sometimes communicating directly, challenging and inspiring each other. And we're an environment of traditions, a space in which Eastern and Western disciplines meet and interact with enormous energy and pressure, grounded and tested in the personal experience of students and staff. All of us are involved in practices which relate to intellectual, psychological, and spiritual development. And so we find ourselves already committed to the rigor, the critical intelligence, the openness and humor which this process requires. Energy is happening, rather than completion; we create a situation in which learning and growth actually occur.

Provoked and inspired by Chogyam Trungpa, Rinpoche, the Institute began in the summer of 1974 with over 2000 students participating in a diverse and chaotic first session, a celebration. In contrast, the subsequent

winter program was a time of austerity—few course offerings and limited resources. Expansive again, the summer of 1975 offered a wide range of classes, while at the same time providing greater opportunity for intensive study and practice—and nearly 1500 students responded enthusiastically with an attitude of greater seriousness and commitment to the ongoing challenge and energy.

As a natural development from these earlier programs, and in accord with our general intention to work directly within our American cultural frame, the Institute now offers 2 year degree programs on a year-round basis. The new degree programs begin in January, 1976. For further information, write: Naropa Institute, 1441 Broadway, Boulder, CO 80302.



Here follow accounts of a number of items which people asked us to put in but which were too long and complicated and confusing to edit.

1. Mutual Association for Security and Survival [M.A.S.S.] Box 928, Radio City, New York, NY 10019. A society to assure members of surviving predicted imminent worldwide collapse. 4 page newsletter and printed cover letter.

2. School of Living, Heathcote Center, Rte., 1, Box 129, Freeland, MD 21053 [301] 357-4069 or [717] 225-3456 [messages]. School of Living, founded in 1936, promotes decentralist

economics, rural revival and homesteading, publishes *Green Revolution*, and is looking for people. We received 3 1/2 pp. letter explaining the situation there and what kind of people they're looking for from Larry Lack, Heathcote coordinator, who seems the person to write for further info.

3. Invitation Center [Box 1195] and Nebula Learning Community [Box 552] Anna Maria, FL 33501 [813] 778-2422 [both]. Two-page printed letter announcing fall events at Invitation Center and 3 pages describing Nebula Learning Community and the Living Love Growth Methods.

4. Bakavi, Mike Nickerson, PO Box 2011 Station D., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Bakavi is a Hopi word used to describe some combination of ecology, cooperation, siblinghood, consciousness which sounded commendable to me, but a bit vague. A couple of flyers.

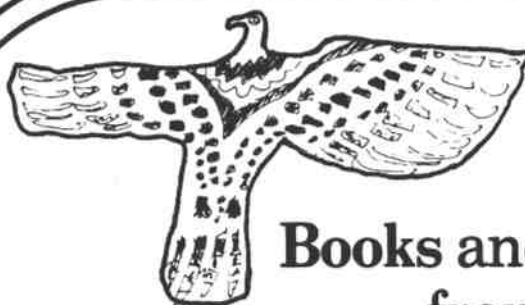
5. Ashburnham Land Project, The East-West Foundation, 62 Buckminster Rd., Brookline, MA 02146 [617] 734-3853 and 734-7909, Woodward Johnson, co-ordinator. We've been getting article reprints, progress reports, photos, letters and flyers all summer (see Grapevine for some of the material). They seem very interested in reaching new people.



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(This winter, read your ass off.)



READ- BACK

Toward an Ideal State

Your lead-off article in **Communities** #16 excited me. Your thoughts/discussion of **Communities** in an intellectual framework is the kind of talk that leads to a "better life". **Communities** and publications like it are fine vehicles for that journey.

I believe most of us in our daily lives need to Be Here Now as a practical matter. But after toiling head down we need to lift our eyes and look ahead. I agree that a planning activity provides a structure for looking ahead and that activity needs additionally a structure provided by some vision of an ideal state.

Somehow we must fashion the future from parts of our past and present. I've become increasingly objective about world/national/regional and local power games. **Communities** will have to compete and accept somehow changes that process inflicts upon them. A vision grounded in and guided by thorough historical/social/and technological analysis can, I believe, provide a means for seeing how action itself has changed the plan. Further, don't get into a communist-capitalist analysis because it is like pointing a loaded gun at yourself. Those terms are worn out. They have too many meanings and associations that **Communities** needn't be burdened with.

A cultural analysis, while not applicable as taught in the University, is useful if you accept as an underlying assumption that change and understanding it is a function of normal social and economic institutions that have already been created. Like you note: our distribution system runs on oil and is working at a deficit. The Arabs themselves are becoming aware just how massive dislocations could be if they followed strict supply-demand theory.

I say use local and regional political structures. Who cares if people are caught by prevailing values of consumption and status. Why be defensive about it? So what—become a small business

mentality in your public relations. Become successful. Support people who can articulate and promote a vision where qualities such as labor, time, efficiency, calm, reflection, uniqueness, dignity and general worthiness are crystalized and valued.

I know cultural syntax in the U.S.A. will tolerate a **Communities** vision. Don't become pawns in power games like Patty Hearst etc. With some political clout based on local and regional numbers others may become convinced as you yourself suggest that **Communities** group structures are workable. Bread and fishes maybe. So what? Who's to say that's not worthwhile, not the beginning of being here now.

Paul White

Toward an Ideal Magazine and no state

The reason I subscribed to **Communities** was for info on communes, etc. needing members & the detailed descriptions of these groups, & for the other "Reach" ads & for other useful info about communities. I like "Readback" too, & yer price seemed reasonable. But you seem to be too "fluffed up & puffed up" (does anyone watch TV commercials?). I mean why do you have to have 5 different articles on "planning"? & they're all so long! I know each article probly has useful info, but I don't wanna look for that needle in that haystack! I'd say you cud use a good editor who cud take all those articles & find the useful info in um & organize it into one short article one page long. Maybe a lot of the readers who stay with you can hack all that reading, but I bet most potential readers can't. Us communalists are mostly neo-farmers (ain't we?) & we don't wanna waste time with too much reading; we got other stuff to do! We wanna get good mileage from the material we do read. Out of sixty some pages, probly only ten or fifteen wud be useful to most of yer readers. The rest are probly redundant & irrelevant.

I think ten or fifteen pages wud be a nice size for yer magazine. & I think the content of the descriptions of communes cud be better organized. e.g., each commune cud be described in the same order, listing important characteristics such as the name & address as usual & its goals, no. of members, desired no. of members, amount of land, type of organization, etc. Cudn't you make up a questionnaire in this fashion & have all the communities who get listed with you fill um in?-out?

My second topic is anarchism. For one thing, I think you give Bookchin too much exposure. In yer ad for his **Post-Scarcity Anarchism** yer quote from his book says that the ideal society we shud create soon must be based on socialism & anarchism. But that's contradictory, kuz anarchism insists on freedom for everyone to choose for themselves individually what sort of economic order they'll follow, whether it be socialism, communism, barter, self-sufficiency, or whatever. The only thing anarchism opposes is authoritarianism. Exposing Bookchin as much as you do presents a one-sided view of anarchism & it cud mislead yer readers into supposing that his definition of anarchism is the rite & only one. Bookchin claims that material abundance is now upon us & so government is no longer necessary. This is nonsense. Anarchism has never been dependent on material abundance & has in fact always existed rite in the very midst of governments. Without anarchy no society cud function long kuz government eventually makes everything illegal so that, if everyone obeyed all the laws, nobody cud do anything. Why don't you get other books on non-authoritarianism for yer Bookshelf? Aron's "**Free Ourselves**" for one from Times Change Press?

[ed. note: There follows a presentation of evidence that California very possibly will sink into the Pacific, perhaps next spring. We've moved.]

Lloyd A. Kinder

I support both the letters about the Lingo article—I found both the letter of Judith Redwing and Wendy Woman of good thought & feeling. I did not feel that JR was disrespectful of the editors' "basic integrity." I did not like you, the editors, lumping JR's letter in a class with Lingo's article. I also did not like your playing off the one letter against the letter of WW.

It is an unfortunate but inescapable fact that women are compelled to struggle against us men, even in the alternative communities & projects we throw our lives & ideals into.

To JR: the work & play of being an editor, and of being a man, is hard. Trust that we & them want to learn & grow.

Crepps Wickliffe
Madison, WI

**Cosmic, Yeah
or
Around The World
In 80 Tweets**

In which our roving correspondent takes his inimitable brand of sunshine to communal endeavors at the four corners of the globe. Corners of the globe?

I ain't stretchin too much; doing tai chi along with meditation & hatha proved too much while travelling, especially in confines of a motel room in Europe. Yugoslavia is a Paradise & even enjoyed all that art in Italy, Austria. It snowed in Switzerland 9/14 & Amsterdam is an ok city. British commune people unfriendly.

Good news with kibbutzim tho. These people are friendly & have good meals, too. They're offering to help U.S. communes. One suggestion is to publicize U.S. communes & the mag to every volunteer from States who visits a kibbutz. Israel is ok especially the Mediterranean beaches. Have stayed at kibbutzim with 1600 people, 800 folk & now 400. The latter feels better, but they're all ok; visited orthodox settlement yesterday & will stay at small one later. Hope to see Sinai & hang out in Jerusalem.

Hope you guys got #17 done ok. Did you decide to get married or what? Kibbutzim research is uncovering many positive reasons for living communally. My enthusiasm has been reewed by being here; after 7 yrs the cycle begins again—in '68 it was knowing of Kibbutz that got me interested. Cosmic, right?

love, Vince

RESOURCES

CSC Nusletter, PO Box 20163, El Cajon, CA 29021, is an educational publication of Childhood Sensuality Circle, for the liberation of children and youth. . . . **Synergy Newsletter**, PO Box 30103, Terminal Annex, Los Angeles, CA 90030, comes from Family Synergy, "the nation's largest, most active organization devoted to expanded family, open relationships, and communal living" . . . **The Listening Man** is a forum for women and men concerned with redefining sexual roles, published by Men's Liberation of DC, c/o Richard Shell, 807 A Street NE #5, Wahsington, D.C. 20002.

Community Technical Services is a proposed work collective which would make engineering and technical services available to intentional communities at reasonable rates. The collective would operate by receiving requests for services at a central office and referring them to appropriate local members. The fees would be agreed upon by the collective, though contracts would be directly between the technical person and the community involved. Interested technical personnel now include Rus Adams, P.E., Civil Engineering; Mike Corbin of Shannon Farm, Sanitary Engineering; Robert of Twin Oaks, Sanitary Engineering; Stewart of Cedarwood, Architectural Services; and Jim Caid, P.E. Civil Engineer at Arcology Circle in San Francisco, Structural Engineering. Engineers, architects and planners interested in supporting this effort and communities with technical problems should write **Rus Adams, PO Box 154, Uniontown, WA 99179**. . . . **Rural Resources & Information**, PO Box 13, Rice, WA 99176, is an information center for rural areas of the Pacific Northwest. Run a Rural Apprentice Program which refers people to farmers, craftspeople, or new homesteaders who need help & will offer room & board in exchange. These are preferably long-term commitments for the purpose of gaining country living skills. Write telling what skills you need or if you have a country situation. All situations now are in Pacific Northwest, but will refer you elsewhere for other areas. Groups wishing to field requests for their areas should get in touch. Presently building a file of folks wishing to join intentional communities in the NW. If you have land and need new partners, or wish to form a community or join one, let them know what you envision. May be able to help you find land, and are presently forming a community. (see Reach). Have published a 70-page "Directory from a Spring Gathering of Healers" containing many contacts with groups and people into natural healing. For a copy, send \$5.00 or so. . . . **Co-op Contacts**, 9305 SW 12th Dr., Portland, 97210 is a list of people interested in cooperative undertakings in northern Calif., Oregon, Washington, B.C., and is a communications vehicle for exchanging organic farming knowledge and experience. . . . **Rain**, 2270 NW Irving, Portland, OR 97210 is a very useful monthly publication containing lots of short information blurbs and addresses of groups involved in energy/environment/politics/agriculture/etc. Mostly for the Pacific Northwest but probably useful anywhere. \$5.00 a year. . . . **Comnet [formerly OPEN]**, Box 5599 Seattle, WA 98105, is now preparing a Seattle Peoples' Yellow Pages, has info packets on alternative business, ASE, shelter, arts & crafts, changing lifestyles, human potentials, communities, etc.; helps organize conferences & benefits, generally keeps people in touch throughout the Northwest. . . . **Kanthaka Press**, PO Box 696, Brookline Village, MA 02147, produces a new game, "Shanti", which is non-competitive and attempts to educate children and adults in the skills of cooperation. Do-it-yourself set for \$8.50, assembled set for \$12.95. . . . **New World Media Project**, 428 East Berry St., Fort Wayne, IN 46802, provides information about poverty problems and the Third World. Presently promoting 'Lifeline', a concept that would provide the amount of electricity a family needs for basics at a low, fixed, fair price.

United Stand has a new branch in Nevada County, CA. The organization works toward helping people deal with county building and sanitation code hassles, and is a good model for other parts of the country where local authorities are getting heavy. **Sam Dardick or Jyotish**, Box 294, North San Juan, CA 95960. . . . **The Alternate Celebrations Catalogue** tries to help make holidays less consumption-oriented and more people-oriented, to generate a more responsible stewardship of the world's natural resources and help families get out from under the financial and emotional burden of commercialized gift-giving. 701 North Eugene St., Greensboro, NC 27401. . . . **The Committee for Self Education**, 11 Garden St., Cambridge, MA 02138 has a self-education package on the politics and economics of the food crisis, containing 20-25 articles analyzing the world food situation. Package is designed for use by college classes, food co-ops, church social action groups, women's organizations, etc.



BOOKSHELF



Here are brief descriptions of five books related to the intentional community movement. Our free brochure contains a complete listing of some 35 books on living and working cooperatively. Write: Community BOOKSHELF, Box 426, Louisa, VA 23093.

Design With Nature Ian McHarg

If you're planning a community or homestead, this book tells you, step by step, how to make the best use of your land, both esthetically and ecologically. Very valuable if you don't want to build mistakes into your environment.

197pp/\$6.95

Finding And Buying Your Place In The Country

Les Scher, a practicing attorney and leading consumer advocate, has researched and written an exhaustive guide to buying land. Eighty-five illustrations, ranging from examples of septic tank arrangements to model land contracts to ways of doing percolation tests, complement the information in the text. The chapter titles should give you some feel for the scope of the book:

- 1) Looking for land;
- 2) Checking out the land;
- 3) The land and the law;
- 4) Deciding on a fair price;
- 5) Financing;
- 6) The contract of sale;
- 7) Going through escrow;
- 8) Using a lawyer.

8½x11/393pp/\$6.95

The Whole Earth Epilog:

Stewart Brand & friends

This sequel to the **Last Whole Earth Catalog** is even more thoroughly researched than the previous catalogs. (Evaluations were made during the summer of 1974.) Most of the entries are books and periodicals deemed especially useful in their given areas. Interesting reviews and excerpts make the **Epilog** fun to read even if you can afford only a few of the articles reviewed. Some of the areas covered are Land Use, Shelter, Crafts, Community, Communications and Learning.

10¼" x 14½" / 319pp./\$4.00

Post Scarcity Anarchism

Murray Bookchin

Bookchin persuasively argues that "What we must create to replace bourgeois society is not only the classless society envisioned by socialism, but also the nonrepressive utopia envisioned by anarchism."

288pp/\$2.95

A Manual For A Simple Burial

Ernest Morgan/Celo Community

Completing the circuit of alternatives from childbirth to the grave, this manual is an excellent resource exploring the ins and outs of the funeral business, procedures for simple services and providing detailed information about Eye Banks, Bone Banks, and donating bodies to the medical profession. Printed by Celo Press, which is operated by the students of Arthur Morgan School in North Carolina.

64pp/\$1.50



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ABOUT OURSELVES:

Communities is produced primarily by two groups, a large one in Virginia and a small one in Oregon. Work is divided roughly along the lines of business in Virginia and production in Oregon, and we take turns doing the editing or finding someone who will. We are seldom paid for our work, which amounts to several hundred hours per issue, and when we are it is at the rate of \$1.00 per hour or less. Our vision of the purpose of the magazine and our editorial roles are constantly undergoing re-evaluation, and that is particularly the case now. We value your comments on how we can make the magazine more relevant to more people, and more efficient.

NEWS FROM READERS: READBACK is composed of our most interesting or representative letters to the editors; **REACH** is a service whereby readers can

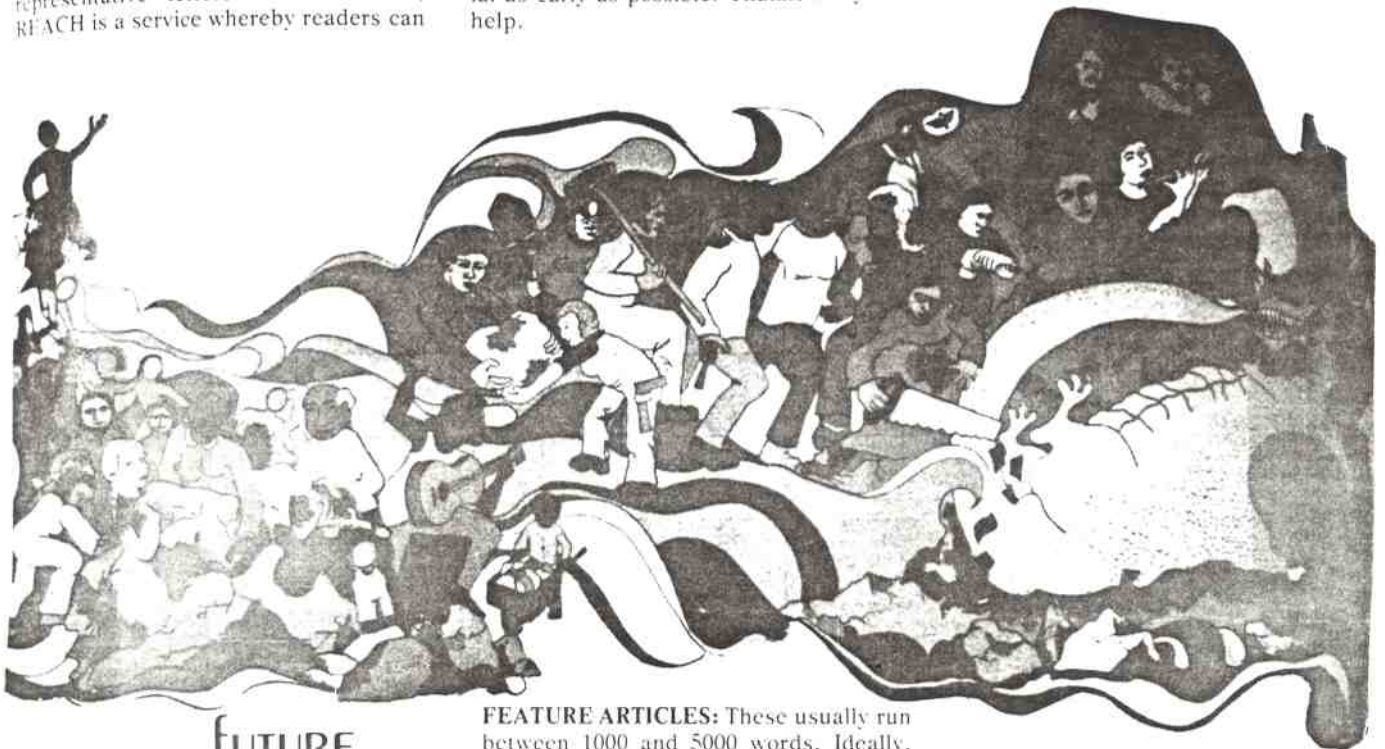
appeal for contacts, new members for their groups, new groups for themselves, etc. **GRAPEVINE** consists of letters or newsletters from existing communities.

GRAPHICS: We have a chronic shortage of photographs and artwork depicting communal life. Get your picture in the paper: send it in!

RATES & DATES: The magazine's finances continue to hover near the break-even point, so the only pay we offer contributors is a free subscription. Advertising is accepted at \$100 per page and pro rata. Announcements in *Reach* are printed without charge. Due to editing, printing, and mailing schedules, there is usually a five-to-eight week lag between our submission deadline and the distribution date, so send us your material as early as possible. Thanks for your help.

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FUTURE FEATURES IN COOPERATIVE LIVING

OUR NEXT ISSUE will be guest-edited by East Wind Community in Missouri and will focus on government and decision making. It will also feature our annual Directory of Communities.

FEATURE ARTICLES: These usually run between 1000 and 5000 words. Ideally, they relate to the theme of the issue.

ISSUE #19 is being edited by Paul Freundlich, and will concentrate on Urban Communities. The biggest need is for groups in cities around the country to provide bios for Grapevine, and to help fill out a chart on what the best starting points should be in your town if you wanted to find community. Material should go to Paul at Training for Urban Alternatives, PO Box 753, New Haven, CT 06503.

ISSUE #20 will focus on groups that preserve some middle class values while ridding themselves of negative middle class values destructive to Human growth. It will again be geared toward

problems of urban communal life, including conflict resolution, child-rearing, couples, open relationships, decision-making, how to buy a house together, structure, goals and values. Send material to Eric Raimy, Pooh's Corner, 1861 Drake Drive, Oakland, CA 94611.

DEADLINES: For #19, November 25. For #20, tentatively Jan. 25.

DEPARTMENTS: We have semi-regular columns dealing with health, farm & garden, social science, helpful hints, book reviews, resources, and international news. These columns will continue only so long as we get good material for them.

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no. 11

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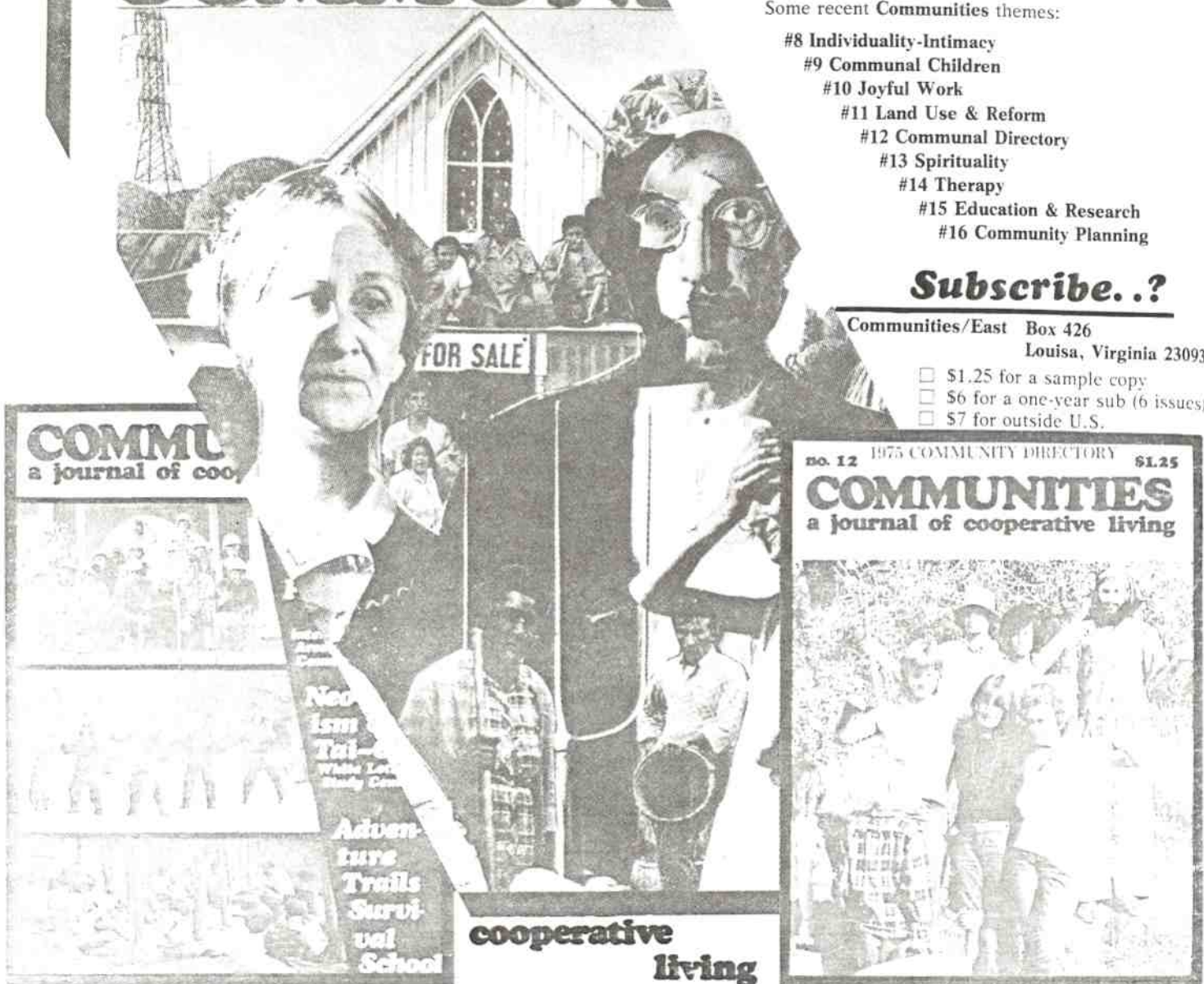
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