

COMMUNITIES

Journal of Cooperative Living

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Fall 1995 (#88)

INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES AND “CULTS”



“The word ‘cult,’ which formerly referred to an organized system of worship, is now a term that slanders any religion that you don’t know about and don’t like.”

— Catherine Wessinger

**What Really Happened
at Waco?**



Now Incorporating *Growing Community* Newsletter



RENAISSANCE



CO



VILLAGE



ONCE UPON A TIME we were all given a dream. May this one awaken yours. I invite you to consider living with us in a community owned renaissance fair surrounded by a straw bale castle. Art studios and shops would be located on the first floor with living quarters above. On weekends neighboring kingdoms shall be invited to come and be merry, dance, feast and purchase our artisan's goods. Ecovillage clusters shall include A Gaia Waldorf School, guest rooms, a healing spa covered by a large greenhouse, and a dinner theatre for dancers, storytellers, musicians and jesters to entertain us. An enchanted forest with secret fairy gardens will be planted for our children's summer camp for the arts.

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GANAS IS EXPANDING INTO THE COUNTRY

— AND WE NEED NEW PEOPLE WHO WANT TO HELP —

WE'RE BUYING 75 beautiful acres of woods, fields, streams, a pond, a pool and a 65 room (& bath) country hotel in the New York State Catskill Mountains

THE PLAN IS TO BUILD A LEARNING CENTER IN THE COUNTRY TO ADD TO GANAS, our 15 year old New York City based intentional community, of about 75 adults.

GANAS' GOALS (in the city and in the country) are inter-personal communication that is conceptually and emotionally truthful; better cooperative problem solving; more loving relationships; and as much personal autonomy as each of us can handle. All of which boils down to happier, more meaningful lives in a reasonably sane society.

WE ARE EXPANDING TO THE CATSKILLS BECAUSE WE WANT THE CHANCE TO LEARN NEW THINGS and we want to teach what we've learned. We want exposure to a far bigger range of people, ideas and experiences than city life alone can offer. It seems a great idea to create new options for the physical, cultural and emotional growth experiences we need to help us make our lives happier and more productive. Opportunity for more varied work choices is also important to us. But mostly we just want easy access to both country and city living and good possibilities for enjoying the best of both worlds.

WE WILL CREATE THREE KINDS OF WORKSHOP PROGRAMS IN THE CATSKILLS CENTER:

1. **PHYSICAL FITNESS AND HEALTH EDUCATION ACTIVITIES** that include instructed exercise
2. **THEATER, MUSIC, ART WORKSHOPS** and other opportunities for cultural development
3. **EMOTIONAL GROWTH PROGRAMS** that include body awareness workshops, meditation, feedback massage, yoga, psychodrama and other learn-by-doing experiences.

GANAS' NYC FACILITIES CONSIST OF eight large residences and four commercial buildings. We renovated them all to suit our pleasure and our needs — and they do. Our houses are attractive, comfortable and well maintained. The gardens are beautiful. We intend to do the same with the Catskills property.

Our retail recycling businesses are productive. They're unique boutiques with thrift shop prices. They consist of a clothing shop, a refinished furniture store, a gallery, a small department store, and a flea market in a tent. Between them our businesses recycle just about everything.

EVERYONE IN THE GANAS COMMUNITY WILL BE INVITED TO WORK IN THE COUNTRY CENTER. Most of the people who work in the Catskills will also live and work at Ganas in NYC.

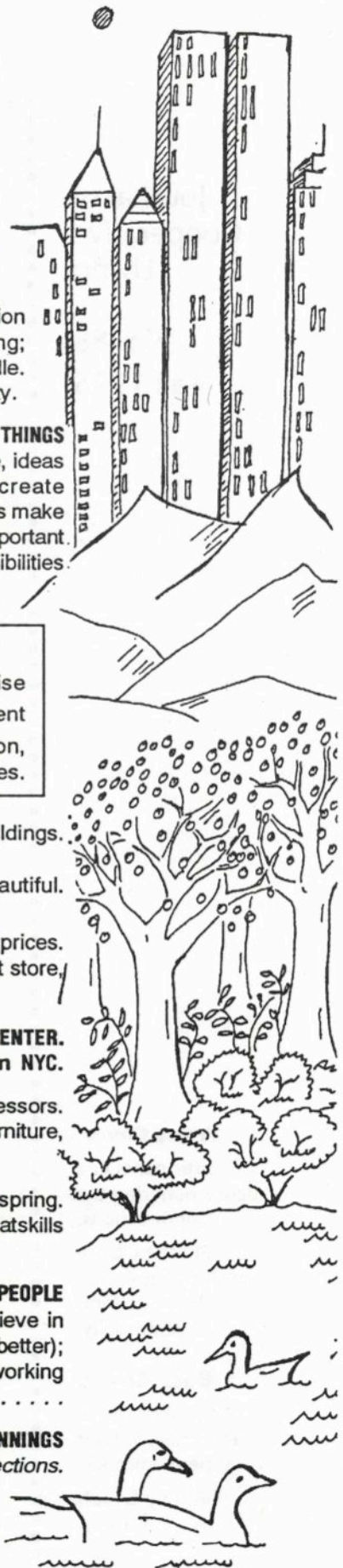
Right now all of our stores need more sales people, managers and merchandise processors. We also need people who can (or would like to learn how to) repair and refinish furniture, sew, or create toys and other products out of scrap wood.

PREPARATIONS (HERE IN NYC) ARE STARTING NOW for work in the country beginning next spring. We expect to start renovating the buildings and preparing for our programs in the Catskills in April or May of 1996.

IF YOU WANT TO LIVE IN CLOSE COMMUNITY WITH INTERESTING AND INTERESTED PEOPLE (in the city, in the country, or both); if you care about effective communication and believe in reasonable problem solving based on good will & truth (& want to learn how to do it better); if you think that useful recycling is a pretty good way to earn a living; and if you really enjoy working productively (or want to learn how to); *if such things feel true and right for you now*

YOU ARE INVITED TO VISIT and PERHAPS TO BECOME PART OF THESE EXCITING BEGINNINGS possibly you will want to develop your own programs and help shape our new directions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, or to arrange for a visit, **CALL** (718) 720-5378 **OR WRITE TO GANAS** 135 Corson Ave. Staten Island, NY 10301-2933



COMMUNITIES

Journal of
Cooperative
Living

No. 88
Fall 1995

Front Cover:

Participants in a
dance honoring the
four directions.

Photo by Dave
Somsky; contributed
by High Wind
community.

Back Cover:

Twin Oakers, large
and small, in their
super-hammock.

Photo by Geoph
Kozeny.

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LETTERS



Send letters to *Communities magazine*, PO Box 169, Masonville, CO 80541-0169. Your letter may be lightly edited or shortened. Thank you!

Praise, Criticism for Love, Romance, & Sex in Community

Dear *Communities*,

Your issue on love, romance, and sex is brilliant. It brings everything together in one voice, while letting every contributor speak in his or her own voice. Thank you!

Susan Bell
London, England

Dear *Communities*,

I was thrilled to discover a magazine about community living—thank you!

I was very excited to read "The Reunion of Souls," by Nfann Emerson Chase in the summer issue, about a community based on spirituality and in which the focus of relationships was to assist each other spiritually. ... As I read I started to get an uncomfortable sense of a lack of humility in the author, but brushed it off in my eagerness to find kindred souls. I've frequently experienced connections with people from other shared lifetimes and was deeply identifying with the words of the author.

Suddenly I read a sentence that stopped me short: "Here we mean someone of the opposite sex, as we believe homosexuality is not of the divine pattern." I've been "out" as a lesbian for 21 years, and though I'm quite familiar with this narrow kind of thinking, it always startles me coming from people who claim to be spiritually "evolved" ...

It's easy to bring our old beliefs about right and wrong to our new spiritual paths without realizing it. I come up against this again and again as I pray for humility, and for Love to be the strongest force in my life. In this society we learned that self-love is wrong, and so we don't want any part of humility because it feels like self-deprecation. It took me many years to realize that this isn't so. It's an aspect of true love of self, ac-

cepting the humanness and fallibility of the ego along with the divinity of each person.

In closing I'd appreciate it if you'd print the address of M.A.I.Z.E., the lesbian country magazine from Serafina, New Mexico.

Mel Long
Brattleboro, Vermont

The address of M.A.I.Z.E. is PO Box 130, Serafina, NM 87569.

Praise for the Communities Directory

Dear *Communities*,

Yippee! It gave me a lift to get our copy of the the *Directory* and once again be inspired by what folks are up to. You all did a phenomenal job on this project, creating a beautiful resource, with integrity and a sense of humor. You should feel proud.

Ellen Hertzman
Berkeley, California

Dear *Communities*,

Got my *Directory*—it was well worth the wait. Wonderful document. Thanks for keeping me posted on its progress ... excellent customer relations.

John Perkins
Seattle, Washington

Dear *Communities*:

The *Directory* is completely awesome—beyond words! You should all feel very proud. It'll take months to read it. It's all so fine. Do you have separate order forms I can leave with people? I want to get our local libraries and bookstores to carry it, as well as the magazine.

Patricia Greene
Gill, Massachusetts

You bet we do, and we'll be glad to send promotional materials to anyone willing to approach libraries and bookstores with our publications. Just write to Communities Directory, Rt. 1, Box 155-M, Rutledge, MO 63563.

Dear *Communities*:

The *Directory* is very exciting, and well-arranged. Everyone whose seen my copy finds it fascinating.

Ann Morris
New York City

NASCO Regional Office

Dear *Communities*,

I wanted to add to my letter in issue #87 that NASCO (North American Students of Cooperation) does have a regional office that it has operated for several years in Santa Barbara. Its address is 6503 Madrid Rd., Suite J, Isla Vista CA, 93117, 805-685-6964.

Deborah Altus
Lawrence, Kansas

Communities and "Earth Changes"?

Dear *Communities*,

I bought your *Communities Directory* and subscribe to your magazine, but nowhere find any information on communities which are aware of and preparing for what is often called "Earth changes." Do you know of any such communities?

Shlomo Arnun
Glendale, Arizona

Under "Earth Changes" in the Index of the Directory (p. 422) you'll find four communities listed: Four Winds Village Great Spirit Retreat (forming) Rt. 1, Box 2120, Tiger, GA 30576; Lothlorien, PO Box 1082, Bloomington, IN 47402-1082; Methow Center of Enlightenment, PO Box 976, Twisp, WA 98856; and The Shilboleth (forming), PO Box 2376, Chino Valley, AZ 86323. You can look these up alphabetically in the Directory for more information and phone numbers. We suspect there are other communities which are interested in this subject, but which do not say so publicly. If you visited such communities as a guest, their members would most likely wait to get to know you first before bringing up the subject.

COMING NEXT ISSUE ...

The Feature Focus of Winter 1995/96 is "Growing Older in Community." Guest Editor Deborah Altus will explore the benefits and drawbacks communities may offer to older people, and older members may offer to communities, including how communities arrange to support older members who may not be able to participate in income-producing work; older members' need for care; and how gender roles, work roles, and political roles may change as members grow older.



What's Left When Balancing Rights?

LET'S TALK RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES. FOR BOTH individuals and groups.

As far as we know the communities movement has never looked at this topic as a whole, and this issue of *Communities* opens the discussion. Our theme is "cults," and one definition of those is groups which interfere with the appropriate rights of individual members.

Discussion of "cults" typically begins with the spotlight on individual rights and community responsibilities, and this issue of the magazine welcomes that examination. However, we don't stop there. We also turn the spotlight around and look at community rights and individual responsibilities.

In the past few years, Amitai Etzioni's Communitarian movement has made a splash in the national media, drawing attention to the idea that American culture has gone overboard in celebrating individual rights, adding a twist to what John Kennedy admonished us to do more than 30 years ago: ask not what your community can do for you; ask what you can do for your community.

Considering all this, we believe it's well worth our time to acknowledge philosophical differences within the communities movement and do our best to clarify what they are. This leads to the challenge of balancing. Looking around we can see that different groups identify different fulcrums, the points at which members agree that rights and responsibilities are in equilibrium. And the differences don't end there—groups with a strong identity often add weight to *both* sides of the seesaw, further complicating the task of understanding fully what others have chosen.

One of the principal ways members of intentional communities differ from people in the mainstream culture is that *community members are prepared to accept additional responsibilities to the community*—whether intentional or otherwise—in exchange for an expansion of individual rights (like health benefits, childcare support, employment opportunities, spiritual nourishment, control of one's time, expansion of options, guaranteed coverage of basic needs, etc).

Noting these complexities, we can make some important observations. First, where the fulcrum point is ambiguous, or there is pressure to accept a balance that is uncomfortable, abuse can occur *within* the group. This is generally what is suspected when a group is labeled "cult."

Second, a different form of abuse can occur, brought by people *outside* the group. The main message of this *Communities* focus on "cults" is that the outside kind of abuse, usually brought by anti-cult activists, is far more common.

Here's how it works. People operating under one set of agree-

ments about rights and responsibilities (who generally live outside community) will often apply their notion of what's balanced to what's happening in another situation (such as inside a particular community). Not liking what they see, the outside observers will label the community a "cult"—without realizing that people living there have freely and clearly chosen a different fulcrum for balancing rights and responsibilities. Hopefully, the accounts we present here will make clear the dangers of carelessly applying the values of one group to the practices of another.

Making this point exactly, our cornerstone article in this issue is an investigative report by Albert Bates and The Natural Rights Center, analyzing the tragic events of the Branch Davidians at Waco. This chilling examination will show that, carried to the extreme, our government will even kill its own law-abiding citizens to impose its own sense of what is right. It will show a pattern of determined refusal on the part of government officials to consider evidence which did not support their taking confrontative, violent action. While thankfully rare, it's sobering to realize that this kind of misunderstanding can happen at all.

Here is a summary of what this issue concludes about "cults."

- There are dangers inherent in "us/them" dynamics. Communities which develop strong identities by labeling all non-members as "other" run the risk of misunderstandings which can end, as in Waco, in tragedy.

- It is much easier to agree on the principle of non-coercion, than to apply that principle with discernment. A community's action—like spanking children—may be clearly out of bounds according to one set of values, yet viewed as loving, necessary discipline in another.

- A community's lack of openness and disclosure often leads to mistrust by outsiders, and discourages them from thoroughly examining the community's perspectives before drawing conclusions. Abuse within communities does occur, but almost certainly less frequently than is claimed by outsiders.

- Mainstream media tends to play up the danger of "cults," yet the evidence shows that the bigger danger is anti-cult activists who often engage in the very practices they condemn—distorting the truth, traumatizing children, making sweeping condemnations unsubstantiated by firm evidence, and otherwise interfering with open communication.

Most articles in this issue of *Communities* focus on groups who suffered under the label of "cult." We offer relatively few accounts of members feeling mistreated by their communities. This mix of articles does not necessarily represent our sense of a balanced picture of *all* that could be said.

Rights and responsibilities affect everyone ... let us hear how our discussion about them affects you.

Laird Sandhill

Communities magazine is published by the nonprofit Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC). Laird Sandhill is the FIC's Publication Manager.



Constructive Criticism

IN VISITING HUNDREDS OF INTENTIONAL communities, I've discovered that they all share one thing in common: each is based on a vision of living a better life, typically including such goals as greater service, growth, fulfillment, sustainability ... whatever. Each group defines for itself just what that means, and no two visions are identical.

It is also true that most members of intentional communities have some additional personal growth to do before they'll be capable of fully living up to their own highest ideals. Although I frequently run across com-

ponent of the second set, the interpersonal feedback process. "Constructive" implies that there's an attitude of goodwill on the part of the giver(s), with intent to provide the receiver(s) with useful information for making choices about future interactions.

By definition, those groups that some would label as "cults" suffer from a lack of feedback from outsiders. It is ironic that many such groups rely heavily on internal feedback to inform and integrate their own members, yet insulate themselves from feedback from external sources. (Unfortunately, this also holds true for nearly all of us, most

of the time.) In many cases these groups have core theories that are based on well-considered and inspiring ideals, yet in implementing their dream they stray from

what is reasonable and healthy. Some supportive yet challenging input from the outside might be exactly what is needed to get things back on track.

Those groups that some would label as "cults" suffer from a lack of feedback from outsiders.

munities with lofty vision statements, what I find most exciting is groups whose philosophy and daily life is designed to foster growth in that direction.

However, neither personal growth nor collective growth can occur without feedback—it must somehow be integrated into our personal and/or collective awareness before old patterns of perceiving, thinking, and acting can be replaced with the new, improved models.

Feedback comes in four primary flavors, intricately intertwined:

- *Physical* (direct experience, such as touching a hot stove);
- *Interpersonal* (information from others, coming in many forms including words, intonations, attention, body language, and "vibes");
- *Paranormal* (the realm of psychic/spiritual communication, including "divine inspiration"); and
- *Personal* (an individual's reflections and beliefs, conscious and otherwise, about what he or she has experienced—integrating the other three).

Constructive criticism is a major com-

Reinventing the Wheel

Although the importance of feedback has been known for ages, most of us seem to be unaware (or forgetful) of the lessons history has to offer. Recently I stumbled across several references that indicate feedback has been consciously (though intermittently) practiced for thousands of years. As noted by Murray Levine and Barbara Benedict Bunker, "*Mutual Criticism* [first published in 1876] is an extraordinary document, striking for its psychological insight, and startling to those who believe that sensitivity training and group encounter are major social inventions of our own times."*

Levine and Bunker point out that the New Testament contains over a dozen references to the need for interpersonal feedback in front of witnesses or in front of the church group, and that some form of mutual criticism was a traditional practice for early Catholic monasteries and convents. Mutual

criticism was also central to the philosophy of the Oneida Community (New York, 1848-1881), and Oneida founder John Humphrey Noyes credits the Congregationalist foreign missionary students at Andover Theological Society for introducing him to the process in 1810.

In the 1950s, Communist China's leader Mao Tse-tung implemented a policy of "Criticism/Self-Criticism" requiring all citizens to publicly confess their shortcomings to a small group of peers who would, in turn, criticize the member. The idea was to help the individuals improve their attitudes about cooperation, and to foster personal growth in a way that added to the health and well-being of the entire community. Unfortunately, the philosophy also required that the individual set aside all personal needs and aspirations in order to selflessly serve what was seen as the greater common good.

In the 1960s, encounter groups and sensitivity training sessions became quite the rage in what was labeled the Human Potential Movement. During this same era, many progressive worker collectives and political action groups adopted a Westernized version of Mao's Criticism/Self-Criticism as a strategy for dealing with the impact of interpersonal dynamics on group morale and effectiveness.

And the experiments continue today—for example, I've visited a half dozen communities with processes based on some version of group feedback; the Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC) Board has informally implemented its own version (see below); and an article by Mildred Gordon in the Spring '95 issue of *Communities* describes the ongoing Feedback Learning Experiment at the Ganas Community in New York City.

So if the idea has been around for several thousand years, why are examples of its conscious practice so few and far between? Could it be that constructive criticism is a very simple concept to articulate, and a very complicated one to implement, full of subtleties and nuances?

Of major importance is the level of trust felt by the person(s) receiving the feedback in those who are offering it. Feedback is easy to dismiss, accurate or otherwise, if the receiver believes or suspects the motives of the sender—and it's a given that people giving feedback are also in need of personal growth, and so may taint their comments with insecurity, anger, jealousy, competition, judgment, punishment, vindictiveness, etc.

Geoph Kozeny has lived in communities of one kind or another for 20 years. He has been on the road for seven years visiting communities of all stripes—getting involved in the daily routine of each group, asking about visions and realities, taking photos and slides, and giving slide shows about the diversity and vitality of the communities movement.

peripatetic (per'i-peh-tet'ik), itinerant; one who travels from place to place.

A Testimonial

In working with community groups that are defining or refining their discussion and decision-making processes, I frequently give glowing accounts of what it's like to work with the board of the Fellowship for Intentional Community (which publishes the *Communities Directory* and this magazine). To my mind, the FIC's most effective and powerful tool is its personal feedback process.

Could it be that constructive criticism is a very simple concept to articulate, and a very complicated one to implement, full of subtleties and nuances?

After an FIC meeting, usually one of us will say "Let's do a debriefing" to initiate a feedback session, an informal process that follows most board meetings. It's done in a peer environment, so we usually go around the circle—and thus no one is exempt from group scrutiny and support. The tradition started very intuitively and spontaneously, evolving from two very different motives.

First, it became clear that some interpersonal work was needed. We found ourselves in a situation where one of our longstanding Board members was talking of leaving the organization because he felt out of synch with the rest of us. Through a feedback session, the group helped him see that his perspective and concerns were essential to the long-range health of the group, and that if he left, the group's balance would swing farther from center. Clouding the issue were some disruptive elements of his meeting behavior which included strolling in and out of meetings at awkward times, straying off on tangents during discussions, and interjecting frequent wisecracks that disrupted the focus (though, granted, at other times he catalyzed with much needed and appreciated comic relief). The process was challenging, yet we somehow communicated all of these concerns in a way that also conveyed our caring and appreciation of his contributions and good intentions. Three years later, he's still with us—very much involved, a better meeting participant, and remarking about how inspiring it is for him to be a member of this "community" of experienced and dedicated activists.

Our second motivation was the need for skills development. Many of our board members had taken some facilitation classes from a gifted teacher within our ranks. To give ourselves hands-on experience, we decided that during our three-day board

meetings we would rotate the facilitator role among us. To get feedback about how our facilitation skills were progressing, we instituted a tradition of gathering all the facilitators after a meeting to share observations about each other's performance in that role. Over time these debriefings expanded to include whichever non-facilitators were present and interested, and somehow the content broadened to include feedback on people's overall participation and interpersonal dynamics. We didn't plan it that way—it just evolved from one meeting to the next.

The net effect has been to boost the group's sense of connection and common purpose, to inspire personal growth and skills development, and to increase group effectiveness. Amazing benefits from a tradition so casually established!

Restating the Obvious?

Looking back, I suspect that our ad hoc group did a lot of things right, intuitively, because we had such a high concentration of community-living veterans with many years of reflecting on what seems to work and what doesn't. The skills we use so effectively are really just the everyday variety—careful listening, "I" statements, affirmations, empathy, compassion, etc. — applied with consideration, care, and wisdom. Yet it's more than mere form: speaking from the heart is the secret to building the necessary base of trust.

In contrast, I remember a decade ago watching in anguish as several groups I knew tried to do mutual criticism. Folks were definitely coming from a place of inspiration and high ideals, but the net effect was psychologically to beat up on each other until there was no group spirit left to hold things together. It was a great and powerful tool they were trying to use, but their understanding was too limited. The critics

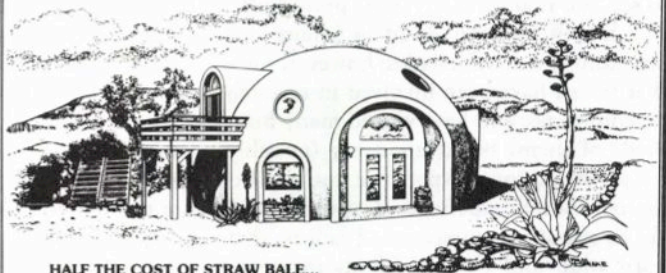
were so proud of their insights that they forgot to notice when the recipient was feeling too overwhelmed to hear any more. Instead of building trust and nurturing personal growth, they fanned the flames of self-doubt, inadequacy, and paranoia.

When the mutual criticism process is working well, everyone benefits. It's good for the subject because, in a caring and supportive environment, he or she gets feedback necessary for personal growth and change. It's good for the critic in that resentments can be vented in a controlled space, with a support group present to help identify and neutralize any barbs imbedded in the feedback. And it's good for the group, because it raises the overall level of skill and understanding, and creates a tradition of success in working through tough interpersonal dynamics.

Ultimately, constructive criticism is an art, and we need to learn the philosophy and the tools if we are to use it to our universal benefit, to make the world a better place. Ω

* From the introduction of *Mutual Criticism*, Syracuse University Press, 1975, Syracuse, New York, 13210 ISBN 0-8156-2170-1. Introduction by Murray Levine & Barbara Benedict Bunker. The original 1876 edition of *Mutual Criticism* was most likely written by John Humphrey Noyes, founder of the Oneida community.

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MY TURN

.....
by Benjamin Zablocki

Proposing a “Bill of Inalienable Rights” for Intentional Communities

In the “My Turn” column readers share ideas, opinions, proposals, critiques, visions, and dreams about any aspect of community. The opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the publisher, staff, or advertisers of Communities magazine.

See the publisher’s response to this column on the facing page.

FOR YEARS, TWO QUESTIONS HAVE been troubled me concerning the responsibilities of intentional communities toward their members and toward their members’ children. Both have to do with “inalienable rights”—those which can never be given away, sold, abrogated, or delegated by a person even voluntarily. Do any such inalienable rights exist for adults who voluntarily join intentional communities? Do any such rights exist for children growing up in intentional communities? If the answer to either question is yes, then does the intentional community movement as a whole have any ethical responsibility to try to see to it that these rights are protected?

I myself have not lived in intentional community since the sixties; however, since that time I have been involved in research on communes and have visited many hundreds of them. Based upon my (possibly outdated) personal experience and my extensive research experience, I would answer Yes to the above questions—I believe that both adult and child residents in intentional communities have certain rights that are inalienable. I believe the movement as a whole has good reasons—ethical as well as self-interested—to attempt to protect these rights.

I realize that these are not simple questions. Even if the existence of individual inalienable rights is acknowledged, these rights may conflict with more important collective inalienable rights. One example of such a

collective right is that of people to peacefully assemble, even in pursuit of ideals that most other people think are crazy or dangerous. Another is the right to absolute freedom of religious expression. Such collective rights help to form the foundation of a free society. They are fragile and precious and very well worth defending. I’m sure some people would argue sincerely that the rights of individuals must be ignored because there is no practical way to protect them without compromising these much more important collective rights. However, I disagree. I am convinced that collective liberty cannot be safeguarded unless it rests upon a foundation of individual liberty.

In addition, it is far from clear that there is really such a thing as an intentional communities movement, with implications of shared ethical responsibility. If there is no such movement, then it could be argued that the individual rights of community residents are the responsibility only of that specific community. Again, I disagree. I am convinced that all people who advocate intentional community bear at least some responsibility for what goes on in even the worst of them.

But whether or not the intentional community movement as a whole wants to get into the business of protecting individual rights, it certainly ought to be discussing and debating the issue. The very freedom to establish intentional communities is beginning to come under attack in this country. There-

fore, those people who cherish this freedom have an urgent and compelling mandate to debate among themselves whether any measures can be taken to protect that freedom. The kind of measure that makes most sense to me is a voluntary ethical compact—a bill of rights—that would allow the public to be able to distinguish the great majority of intentional communities from any abusive ones which might wreck the reputations of all the rest. Historically, people with ideas considered “strange” or *avant garde* by the rest of society have had the cherished right to form intentional communities. But, in recent years, the actions of a few spiritual or religious communities have led to understandable suspicion that the commune down the road may be stockpiling weapons or contemplating violence. It seems wise to discuss whether or not there may be a means by which intentional communities, both religious and secular, can distinguish themselves in the public mind from extremist groups.

After long thought and discussion, I have come up with a model bill of rights for communities. It is difficult for me to imagine anyone wanting to live in a community, whether religious or secular, that would hesitate to agree to all 10 rights below. However, I would be eager to learn what people currently living in intentional communities think of it, since most of my discussions have been with people like myself who have not lived in community since the 1960s. Perhaps some of the ideas relevant back then are no longer relevant in today’s society. And, most of all, I would be interested in hearing from children and teenagers currently living in intentional community. It is primarily with them in mind that I have drafted this bill of rights.

The proposal that follows is meant to open a discussion on the issues I have raised. I have chosen to jump right in with these very specific suggestions, not out of a belief that I have all the answers, but simply because I think that debates which start out with specific suggestions are more fruitful than those which start out discussing abstract principles. The bill of rights itself is meant to be a purely voluntary agreement with no

(continued on page 10)

.....
Benjamin Zablocki, Ph.D., is professor of sociology and director of the Social Science Research Center at Rutgers University. He is the author of The Joyful Community (University of Chicago Press, 1971), an ethnographic study of the Bruderhof communities, and Alienation and Charisma (The Free Press, 1980), a comparative study of American communes in the 1970s. He is currently researching the life careers of urban commune members over a 20-year period.

To respond to his proposal, write Benjamin Zablocki, Department of Sociology, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ 08903.

Your Turn?

Please send for writers’ guidelines: “My Turn,” Communities magazine, PO Box 169, Masonville, CO 80541-0169.



How Should the Communities Movement Handle Questions of Abuse?

Responding to Benjamin Zablocki's Proposed "Bill of Rights"

The Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC) is organized to promote inter-community communications and support. The FIC publishes this magazine and the Communities Directory.

IN THE "MYTURN" COLUMN (*facing page*), Ben Zablocki brings up an important issue: What do we know about a healthy balance of rights and responsibilities between individuals and communities?

The Fellowship shares the author's perspective that abuses are an infrequent occurrence—and yet a real possibility, well worth talking about, not because one community is responsible for the actions of another, but because the actions of one community affect how other communities are perceived, and because the experiences of one community informs the choices of others.

Ben Zablocki's proposed bill of rights is geared to protect individuals from possible group abuse, and we prefer to widen the discussion to also include the responsibilities of members and the rights of groups. While the overwhelming majority of stories about community living are positive (if not inspiring), some describe unsatisfactory experiences, and a few of those might be considered abusive. Within this last group are reports from people who feel that members were abused by the community, from others who feel the community was abused by individuals, and from those who feel that each abused the other.

It seems to us that the most fruitful approach is to seek information and ideas from as many sources as possible, narrowing the scope only after we've gathered all the important pieces available. With that in mind, we ask everyone with an interest in this discussion to send us their input on the question:

What are appropriate rights and responsibilities for communities and members?

We expressly invite *all* communities to engage in this dialogue, as it is our view that abuse, while rare, is an equal-opportunity dysfunction, and we need to address it evenhandedly.

Where Ben Zablocki has taken several specific concerns and attempted to address them with specific remedies, we propose first gathering a fuller sense of the problems before proceeding to debate possible solutions. We advocate setting aside the particulars of his proposed bill of rights—as well as the question of whether or not there should be a bill of rights at all—until after we hear what people think the issues are. What are the abuses we need to try to prevent and redress?

Ben Zablocki has provided a useful point of departure in this discussion. Clearly he's concerned with rights and responsibilities in the following areas:

- How members and communities sever their connection;
- Appropriate limits on a community's right to restrict members' connections with people and information outside the community;
- The proper balance of what a community requires of its members, and what support its members can expect in return;
- Openness and honesty in disclosing information; and
- Appropriate limits for peer pressure and discipline—at what point does persuasion become coercion?

What other areas need to be discussed

here? The Fellowship Board is willing to wrestle with this question, and invites your perspective.

An Alternate Approach

While Ben Zablocki's proposed bill of rights could be used to pressure a community into changing its practices, the Fellowship for Intentional Community prefers another approach. We suggest the following:

(1) *Molding the responses generated by this discussion into a set of questions about rights and responsibilities which encompass all areas of concern.*

(2) *Asking all communities to consider preparing written answers to these questions, and encouraging them to make those answers available to all prospective members.*

(3) *Advertising that this set of questions exists, and encouraging community members and others interested in community to be concerned about rights and responsibilities.* (If, for example, as a regular part of evaluating a community as a possible home, it becomes common practice to ask that community where it stands on these questions, then we are hopeful that many possible abuses and misunderstandings can be avoided.)

Under this scheme, communities will not be under pressure to rearrange their policies to align with a set of generalized rights. Rather, they can describe their unique context, in their own words. It will then be up to each potential member, as an individual, to decide if this is agreeable or not—and *not* up to the communities movement to decide whether a particular group's policies are satisfactory.

We can assure you that neither the Fellowship nor *Communities* magazine wants the job of being the arbiter of truth in questions of abuse—though we are happy to provide the forum for exploring the issues, and to be a liaison for groups and individuals having trouble communicating.

We'll end our column the same way Ben Zablocki ended his "My Turn" piece—with a solicitation for response. This is *your* movement, and now it's *your* move. ☺

What Are Your Thoughts on This Important Issue?

To respond to the ideas expressed here and in Ben Zablocki's proposed bill of rights, please write: Rights & Responsibilities, Fellowship for Intentional Community, PO Box 814, Langley, WA 98260.

Laird Sandhill is a member of Sandhill Farm in Rutledge, Missouri; Secretary of the Fellowship for Intentional Community; former Managing Editor of *Communities* magazine; and an active member of the Federation of Egalitarian Communities.

My Turn *(continued from page 8)*

status as a legal contract. It is modeled after the voluntary agreements that have sprung up among business firms within a common industry specifying minimum ethical standards prevailing within that industry. If enough communities can reach consensus as to the content of such a bill, perhaps public opinion can then be mobilized to exert pressure, particularly on religious communities, to sign it. The public availability of a list of groups that have signed and a list of groups that have not signed would be of great interest and value to the general public and communitarians alike.

A Proposed Bill of Rights for Intentional Communities

Preamble

In order to preserve two important rights that are often found to be in contradiction, this voluntary contract is proposed. These two rights are: (1) the absolute right to religious (or secular lifestyle) practice according to the dictates of one's own conscience without interference by civil authorities; while at the same time maintaining (2) the right of individuals and their families to some form of recourse when subtle methods of coercive persuasion are used that result in loss of personal autonomy.

Intentional communities would be asked to volunteer to follow the guidelines within this document. By signing, they would certainly *not* in any way be acknowledging that any of the abuses addressed in this bill of rights ever has occurred or would occur within their communities. They would be acknowledging that, because of the actions of a few abusive groups or leaders, a document of this sort has become necessary to protect the inalienable rights of spiritual, religious, and other seekers in community.

It is understood that this agreement is not intended to serve, and would not serve as a legally binding contract, nor would it be introduced in court as evidence. [I would hope that some widely respected organization (*Communities* magazine? Fellowship for Intentional Community?) would serve as repository for these signed documents.]

I propose that three lists would be published and widely distributed to the press and public: (1) a list of those intentional communities that have agreed to all of the provisions of the bill of rights; (2) a list of those that have agreed to some but not all of the provisions; and (3) a list of those that have been offered the opportunity to sign but that have chosen not to sign. Any community choosing not to sign but providing, in writ-

ing, its reasons for not signing would have the right to have these reasons circulated as an appendix to these lists.

It is important to emphasize that this bill of rights is not intended to be an all-or-nothing, take-it-or-leave-it document. It is expected that some sizable number of communities may choose to sign on to some of the articles but exempt themselves from others. This would still be quite useful, particularly if they were up-front about which articles they don't agree with, and if they are willing to state their reasons for exempting themselves from certain of the articles.

Ten Inalienable Rights

The following rights are acknowledged to be inalienable. They can never be waived, delegated, or modified, even at the purely voluntary request of the individual.

I. Right to Leave

Any adult person may leave the community at any time without the need to give a reason and without the need for a waiting period. Where the community is geographically isolated, transportation to the nearest town of 20,000+ population must be provided at the community's expense. Where the community is in a foreign country, transportation to the nearest American consulate or embassy or trade office must be provided instead, if that is the wish of the person leaving. No exception is made to this rule for people in novitiate, retreat, intensive meditation, or any other special status within the community.

II. Right to Maintain Contact with Outside World

(IIa) At least once a year a designated family member from the outside world may meet with any relative living in the community in a neutral location near the community for at least two hours without witnesses to the meeting or electronic surveillance. The designated family member shall be chosen by the family, not the community. If there is conflict within the family, two designated family members may be chosen. Each would then meet with the community member for at least one hour.

(IIb) Incoming and outgoing first-class mail shall not be censored. A community member may never waive the right to have mail received unopened and promptly as it is delivered from the post office. If a community member wishes not to receive first-class mail from a certain source, that member shall mark envelope "return to sender" and initial in his or her own hand. This task may never be delegated to another person in the community even by voluntary wish of the community member.

III. Right of Invalids and the Elderly to Continued Support

Invalids and elderly people who have participated in the productive life of the community for many years are entitled to some degree of economic support when infirmity and/or old age makes continued work life impossible. This document is not an appropriate place to define the level of such support. Instead, the community acknowledges, in general, its responsibility to plan ahead for such support. It further acknowledges the right of its members' close kin (who might otherwise be legally responsible for such support) to be told what plans the community has made for the care of its invalids and elderly. The right to continued support for invalids and the elderly by the community shall be applied even-handedly both to those remaining members in good standing and those who have chosen to leave after a productive lifetime within the community.

IV. Right of Children to a Future with Some Degree of Free Choice

Children being raised within the community because one or both of their parents are members of the community are entitled to special consideration. It must be remembered that, unlike their parents, they have not freely chosen this way of life. Therefore, every effort will be made to assure that these children learn something of the outside world and of how to survive in the outside world so that they are not deprived, upon reaching adulthood, of the ability to choose freely whether to continue in this way of life. It is also acknowledged by the community that it has a special obligation to provide avenues of continuing communication between the child living in the community and concerned family members living outside the community.

V. Right to an Education

Every child growing up in the community is entitled to an education. This education shall not be limited in such a way as to deny the child any effective choice upon reaching adulthood as to whether to stay in the community or to leave. The child's close relatives not living in the community have a right to see the child's educational records at least once a year and to see the results of any standardized tests that the child takes.

VI. Right to Clearly Defined Health Maintenance Procedures and Open Access to Health Records

The community shall define its health maintenance procedures in writing with particular attention to ways in which the community's health philosophy differs from that of the secular society. This document

shall be freely available. Interested third parties, especially relatives not living in the community, have a right to expect community cooperation in their efforts to examine the non-confidential health records of community members or children.

VII. Right to Freedom from Sexual or Marital Compulsion

Community members have the right to refuse to participate in any sexual behavior at any time without giving reasons and without regard to any previous history of participation in such activities. Community members have a right to refuse to get married to any person suggested by the community or its leaders without having to give reasons and without regard to any previous consent or promise. The threat of expulsion from the community, in particular, shall never be used in order to overcome sexual reluctance or reluctance to get married.

VIII. Right to Moderation and Common Sense in the Administration of Discipline

Torture (as defined by Amnesty International) will never be used on any person at any time for any reason.

Corporal punishment (beyond one or two slaps with the hand), if used at all by the com-

munity, shall be subject to the following limitations: (a) never used on a child under the age of three; (b) after the age of three, if not administered by the child's own parents:

- At least one of the child's own parents shall be present for the entire punishment.

- If one of the child's own parents cannot be present, at least two adult witnesses other than the person administering the punishment must be present.

- If one of the parents cannot be present, the date and time of the punishment shall be entered into a log book.

- The person administering the punishment and all of the witnesses shall sign the log book next to the date and time of the event.

- The log book can be freely examined at any time by any of the following: (i) child's close relatives not living in the community; (ii) police and/or representatives of the courts; or (iii) child welfare officer (upon suspicion or cause).

IX. Right to Expect Honesty in Proselytizing

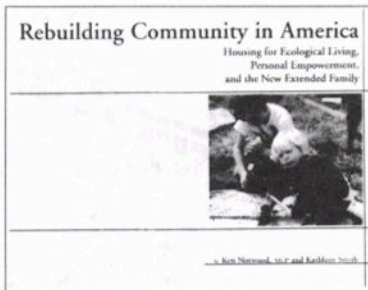
New members or prospective members of the community have a right to expect that they will be told honestly from the very first meeting the aims and procedures of the community. By the same token, members of the community who are asked to do witnessing

and/or proselytizing for the community have both the right and the responsibility to present the aims and procedures honestly to all those to whom they are witnessing.

X. Right to Impartial Investigation of Complaints in order to Verify Compliance

If there is a pattern of complaints that this signed agreement is being violated, the community agrees to cooperate with reasonable efforts of a neutral fact-finding committee to determine whether violations are taking place.

I hope that *Communities* readers currently living in intentional community (spiritual or secular) will consider discussing this bill of rights in their communities. I would like to get as much feedback as possible on this idea. Specifically, I would like to know: Is the idea of the voluntarily subscription to such a bill of rights a good idea in general, regardless of the specific contents of the articles? Should any of the specific articles should be deleted or modified? Are there any other inalienable rights that such a bill should protect? And finally: Would public circulation of a list of signatories to such a bill would constitute undue pressure on some communities that might have good reasons not to wish to sign the bill? Ω



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Learning How to Be an Ecovillage

STARTING AN ECOVILLAGE IS VERY similar to starting other kinds of intentional communities. In fact, several long-standing intentional communities are beginning to identify themselves as ecovillages in process. The Farm (Tennessee), Sirius (Massachusetts), and High Wind (Wisconsin) communities are examples. Hopefully, the coming decade will blur any distinctions between intentional communities and eco-communities.

Intentional ecovillagers are, for the most part, folks who see themselves as learning how to dwell as an "inhabitant" rather than residing on the land. David Orr in his book *Ecological Literacy* (pp. 102-103, State University of New York Press, 1992, \$14.95), reminds us of the difference:

The resident is a temporary and rootless occupant who mostly needs to know where the banks and stores are in order to plug in. The inhabitant and a particular habitat cannot be separated without doing violence to both. ... To reside is to live as a transient and as a stranger to one's place, and inevitably to some part of the self. The inhabitant and place mutually shape each other. Residents, shaped by outside forces, become merely "consumers" supplied by invisible networks that damage their places and those of others ... The life of the inhabitant is governed by the boundaries of sufficiency, organic harmony, and by the discipline of paying attention to minute particulars ... Knowledge for the resident is theoretical and abstract. For inhabitants, knowledge in the art of living aims toward wholeness.

The following steps toward beginning ecovillage processes are based on my experience with the Los Angeles Eco-Village and conversations with other ecovillage activists.

A small core group of friends selects the site. The core group, usually no more than three to 10 persons, shares a common vision for creating a sustainable future in which they and others can demonstrate high-quality, low-consumption living patterns which are conserving, regenerative, and stewardship-oriented. Sometimes one or more members of the core group will already be living on and knowledgeable about the land. The core group seeks out a broad base of knowledge, resources, and networks on sustainable economic, social, and physical systems. The site might be already built or not and can be urban, suburban, or rural.

Folks move onto or close to the land as soon as practical. The home site might be an apartment unit or building, a house or several houses on a block; it might be a tent or trailer or farmhouse or a handmade structure. Although the land and buildings need not be owned initially, a sympathetic owner is preferable, and a strong stewardship ethic among core group members is essential. The group, whose members may change from time to time, explores their relationship to the land beginning with how to maintain, restore to health, or regenerate our basic life support systems of healthy air, soil, and water.

The group explores the overall problems of the bioregion in relation to the ecovillage land. A critical aspect of this exploration, often overlooked among intentional communitarians, is the need to include those persons who already live on or near the land. Building trust and good working relationships are critical to ecovillage processes, whether the neighbors live 10 feet or 10 miles away.

The group explores the related ecological, social, and economic issues in the political jurisdiction with an eye toward

being of public service. By working to include the public sector in the ecovillage processes, friendships and trust can be created with elected officials and representatives in public agencies. Healthy working relationships with public sector officials will prove invaluable as the ecovillage processes accelerate. Health and nutrition, social well-being, soil restoration, building and safety, community economics, affordable housing, art and culture, closed-loop waste-to-resource cycles, bioremediation, pollution prevention, ecological land-use planning, sustainable development, and crime reduction, not to mention "family values" are a few of the areas in which ecovillagers will eventually excel.

The group works to address the bioregional and political problems by maximizing the number of beneficial connections within and between ecological, social, and economic systems within the ecovillage. This is a maxim borrowed from permaculture which many will recognize. Much of the knowledge of how to maximize beneficial connections will be gained and priorities established as the group members begin to work with one another and neighbors who live at or near the ecovillage. In Los Angeles, we have found that the engagement of neighbors, both old and new, working together with the core group and Earth community to identify and solve common problems and establish priorities, is the very foundation of community. Ω

Definition and Vision

An *ecovillage* is a human-scale, full-featured settlement which harmlessly integrates human activities into the natural world in a way that is supportive of healthy human development and can be successfully continued into the indefinite future.

—Robert Gilman, *Context Institute, Bainbridge Island, Washington*

As far as we know, there are no full-fledged ecovillages in contemporary societies, but there are many efforts emerging that we believe will develop into dramatic demonstrations of healthy living patterns.

Lois Arkin lives in and coordinates the activities of Eco-Village at White House and Bimini Place, a neighborhood learning how to be sustainable. She is founder of the 15 year old nonprofit Cooperative Resources and Services Project. For additional ecovillage resources, call or write her at 3551 White House Place, L.A., CA 90004, 21-738-1254, email: crsp@igc.apc.org.



Christian Communities and "Cults"

I RECENTLY READ A DEFINITION OF "cults" (from *Cults in our Midst*, by Margaret Thaler Singer, Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, 1995). "A cultic relationship is one in which a person intentionally induces others to become totally, or nearly totally dependent on him or her for almost all major life decisions, and inculcates in these followers a belief that he or she has some special talent, gift or knowledge." Such relationships involve 1) a leader, 2) a power structure that binds followers to a leader, and 3) a coordinated program of persuasion that requires a major change of life in isolation from other influences.

My first reading of this definition did not just remind me of groups commonly believed to be "cults," such as David Koresh's

ability to love, and knew the answer was not in themselves. For us, following Jesus in community invokes this kind of trust and releases this kind of power.

Deep changes can happen to humans, as Alcoholics Anonymous will testify, when we give over our lives to a higher power. But will the local representatives of this higher power exploit us or lead us to freedom? In many conservative circles, submission to established authority is mistaken for piety because it has this quality of yielding one's life to a higher power. But then we soon become complicit in the sins and injustices of whoever is our established authority. For liberals this higher power often turns out to be the individual ego, its heroic rebellion and creativity. Their self-help books abound as if the one who got us into this mess (oneself) can get us out.

Second, with the power of a spiritual community come some dangers. Looking to God for ultimate guidance is a safety for the community, and for the leaders who don't have to pos-

sess all the answers. In our community we promise to give and receive correction. But having spoken our admonition to a brother or sister, we've learned to add something like this: "Now don't take my word for it. Listen to the Spirit and see if this word comes from God." And when we are reconciled, praising God is a great way to celebrate that doesn't go to anyone's head. Other forms of protection include team leadership and leaders whose personal lives are well known. Outside reviews of community life also help us reckon with blind spots and isolation thinking.

Close communities are especially tempted to resemble "cults" when a member is thinking about leaving. All the force

of personal relationships, history together, and vows of commitment are brought up to try to hold the community together, especially if it is small. But the deeper truth, we believe, is that community is created and held together by God, who gives those who belong there an inner sense of calling to it. Persons who come to community in great need often find some healing and then discover they are capable of living on their own. Their strong felt need to move on from a community that has become their parent is actually a sign of health. Sometimes leaving community is a way for them to establish adult-adult relationships.

Community, in order to be alive, must be deeply voluntary—which is the opposite of prison or boot camp. This means releasing those whose heart is not in it, and caring graciously for their transitional needs. As someone recently said in a recent community retreat, "We can not control people's departures, but we can care for each other's pain in times of leaving." Ω

I have a general concern that we not let our culture's disapproval of "cults" cause us to abandon those aspects of community that have real power to transform lives.

Branch Davidians, but of some more familiar institutions—a prison or a military boot camp, or a country at war. (See "What Really Happened at Waco?" p. 47.)

First, I have a general concern that we not let our culture's disapproval of "cults" cause us to abandon those aspects of community that have real power to transform lives. The two Christian communities I have belonged to attracted people for whom the dominant culture was quickly, or slowly, taking to death. These people were looking for healing of deep hurts and a place where they could give themselves something more worthy of their life's passion than just surviving or making a name for themselves. They wanted to grow in the

David Janzen is a member of Reba Place Fellowship and coordinator of the Shalom Mission Communities.

MOVING?

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Getting Started

solved? Create a plan for resolving conflicts *before* you have any. Hold parties and rituals together to create bonds; for example, celebrate each others' birthdays. Ask around for family counselor references and search out someone who could be a mediator in a dispute or who could help the group make a tough decision.

• *How will records be kept?* Decide who takes notes, how they will be distributed and to whom. If one person doesn't want to be scribe, take turns taking notes. At the end of each meeting be sure to assign any tasks to specific volunteers with dates due, and read quickly through the notes about any decisions made so the notes are accurate and you have a record of all decisions. If you do not write down your agreements and ideas they will be forgotten and you may end up re-making the same decisions again and again.

3. Incorporate. It typically costs little to incorporate and this protects your personal assets from any potential legal encumbrance. Being incorporated also legitimizes your organization in the eyes of banks and other agencies. It is advisable to consult other groups in your state for ideas about how to incorporate and to have the assistance of an attorney. You may be able to get sample documents you can modify to meet your needs.

4. Create bylaws or an agreements document based on the decisions made in step two. These will be changed several times—the purpose is to write down your agreements so you don't forget them and to create a record you can refer to. Keeping a history of what you have already agreed on makes it easier for a new member to get up to speed.

5. Get a bank account. Once you incorporate you will be able to get a tax ID number and a corporate bank account. Use this for all expenditures and put someone responsible in charge of keeping track. Income you generate is taxable, at both state and federal levels in some cases, so keep good records.

6. Collect assessments from members. You will need to start building capital. A small assessment such as \$25 a month, along with an initial \$100 investment, will identify those who are committed, and also will painlessly raise some startup capital for mailing, legal paperwork, advertising, etc.

After you have accomplished these first steps you will be ready to hire your professionals, acquire a site, and move into the reality of developing the physical plans for your community. Ω

ONE OF THE MORE REMARKABLE aspects of cohousing is how many communities have formed in such a short amount of time. It seems as if cohousing groups are popping up like mushrooms all over. The current *Cohousing Journal* insert lists more than 150 groups all around the country. In Washington and Oregon alone, six new groups have formed in the last six months!

Here are suggestions for how to get started—advice which would work equally well for many newly forming *non*-cohousing communities as well.

A cohousing group typically forms with a kick-off meeting, usually held in a library or church or other community center. Flyers are posted in health food stores, co-ops, schools, churches, and other locations where

to Housing Ourselves by Kathryn McCamant and Charles Durrett.

1. Define and write up a vision/goals statement that defines the intentions and directions of the community.

The vision statement should clearly state why you are doing cohousing and what you hope to achieve as a group. This document will change over time, so don't worry about getting it perfect right at first. If you have particular values, such as diversity or ecology, they should be stated here. Give the vision statement to every future member. Producing this document will give you some practice in working together toward a common agreement, something you will be doing a lot of as time goes by.

2. Create group membership, decision, and communications processes. You need to answer the following questions:

• *Who are members?* Many groups require that prospective members attend a certain number of meetings and make some sort of financial contribution before being allowed in the decision-making process.

• *How are decisions made and who gets to make them?* Many groups start with a three-fourths majority vote. Learn how the consensus process works before you decide to use this decision-making process. To gather all the wisdom of the meeting, allow anyone to offer ideas and opinions but restrict actual voting to members. Highly recommended is the book *Building United Judgment: A Handbook for Consensus Decision Making* by the Center for Conflict Resolution. If your group is considering using consensus, read this book first.

• *How will meetings be run?* Having someone in the role of facilitator helps enormously. Practice facilitation by asking everyone for his or her opinions, summarizing ideas, and brainstorming.

• *How will conflicts be handled and re-*

Too much conceptualizing, and not enough real organization, can be fatal to the formation of the community.

.....
community-minded people might gather. Once the kickoff meeting is held, the participants usually start meeting at a monthly potluck to define their goals and dreams. This is a crucial point, where a core group bonds together and the commitment needed to pursue the dream is built.

Some groups seem to fizzle out, while others move ahead and create communities. In examining the early formation of community groups it becomes clear that too much conceptualizing, and not enough real organization, can be fatal to the formation of the community.

The following six steps offer some organizational ideas to consider working on in the first months you spend together. This assumes you have a core group of at least two or three households and have read the book *Cohousing: A Contemporary Approach*

.....
Rob Sandelin, editor of Community Resources newsletter, and compiler of the Cohousing Resource Guide, lives with his family and friends at the Sharingwood Cohousing Community in Snohomish, Washington. Communities magazine thanks Bill Paiss for writing our cohousing column over the past year.



FEDERATION UPDATE

by Alex McGee

Are Federation Communities Aspiritual?

The Federation of Egalitarian Communities (FEC) is a mutual-support organization for a number of egalitarian, income-sharing communities in North America, including Twin Oaks, East Wind, Tekiah, Ganas, Krutsio, Acorn, Blackberry, Sandhill Farm, and Veiled Cliffs.

CHATTING WITH A RECENT VISITOR, I learned that he had lived in two spiritual communities and still follows a spiritual teacher. Meanwhile, he is seeking a nonspiritual community. I was much the same: after living in a Catholic community, I chose a secular community, and at Twin Oaks, I have found a good home. I can think of 10 of our 85 members who have similar histories—including an ex-monk!

Is this a paradox? Does this mean that something is wrong with spiritual commu-

nities? I think the answer is No to both questions. Sometimes spiritually active people find a spiritual community too rigid, so a secular community offers a place to practice one's own spirituality.

Religion is not generally embraced, and often disparaged. But spirituality is blossoming.

So far, none of the communities in the Federation of Egalitarian Communities calls itself spiritual. The values which we state to hold in common are equality, non-violence, participatory government, and environmental responsibility.

I like to distinguish between spirituality and religion. To me, spirituality is a way of exploring the mystery of life; a religion is outlined beliefs and structured rituals. In my year at Twin Oaks, and on visits to FEC communities, I've discovered that religion is not generally embraced, and often disparaged. But spirituality is blossoming.

Because we have a rich variety of backgrounds and because people are accustomed to throwing off custom, we are comfortable with combining traditions.

Thus, at a recent Twin Oaks wedding,

we used the Quaker practice of people speaking spontaneously together with a pagan ritual of a circle song. At Acorn, a Shabbat ritual is held every Friday evening. Although this is a Jewish ritual, most of the people attending aren't Jewish, but each person is there because he or she values the candlelight, bread, and wine, the quiet review of the week, and the gathering with friends and co-workers.

Trying to practice religion in the way I did before I came to community is difficult. All Federation communities are rural, and choices of congregations are limited. My old church in Seattle was largely gay and lesbian and quite casual. Here in Louisa, our congregation of 25 includes both folks who grew up in the church, wearing their best polyester suits, and others, new to Virginia, in their shorts and Teva sandals. Despite our differences, we all manage to find Spirit together.

The up-side of being rural is that we are forced to be creative. Lacking for an Easter service due to our rural location, one may settle for attending the pagan celebration in our meadow. As a result, we learn about each other's faiths and ways of seeing the world and ritualing. One also learns that eggs are part of both Easter and Spring Solstice celebrations!

Those who want to be surrounded by folks who use the same language to refer to God and share in their rituals should not look to an FEC community. We hold a community value that no one has the right to tell anyone else what to do, so practicing one's own religion is accepted, but not necessarily nurtured. Others also have the right to criticize religion and speak freely. Thus, I one day found myself in the hammock shop, hearing someone describe the hypocrisies of Christianity. I chose

to defend Christianity, saying that every major religion is hypocritical. However, the next time I heard such comments, I decided not to spend any energy on it.

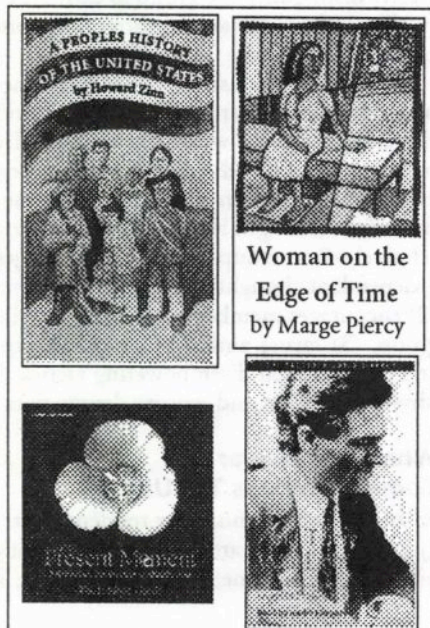
Of course, communities vary. At Acorn and Sandhill, the group gathers around the table before a meal to sing or share silence (you might or might not call this prayer). On the other hand, you could never get all the Twin Oakers or East Winders to agree to such a practice. (However, they wouldn't stand in the way of someone else doing it.)

Life's journeys may lead some to seek a spiritual community. A number of Twin Oakers have left our secular community in search of something more religious, choosing places such as Kripalu, Yogaville, and Catholic convents.

So, I do not believe FEC communities are aspiritual. The FEC brochure states, "We want a better life not just for ourselves but for everyone. We strive to be models of a cooperative, non-violent, egalitarian lifestyle."

Sounds like Jesus ... and Buddha ... and Mohammed, too ... and Lao Tzu and many others, doesn't it? And just like every major religion, sometimes we are goofing up and straying far, with occasional glimpses of making our values a reality. Ω

Alex McGee moved to Twin Oaks last year. She teaches yoga, cooks, does community networking, sewage treatment, and of course, weaves hammocks. She has lived in a Jesuit Volunteer community and studied comparative religions in college.



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FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

by Mike Cummings & Harv Bishop

“Cults” & Communitarians

ARE INTENTIONAL COMMUNITARIANS “cultists”? Let’s look at responses of religious and non-religious communitarians to our 15-page community questionnaire.

Using Terms Like “Cult” and “Extremist”

“What’s Wrong with Cults?” asks a chapter title in *Cults in Our Midst*, by psychologist Margaret Singer. The Peregrine Foundation seeks to “educate the general public regarding intentional communities, utopian sects, cults and millennialist organizations, and encourage their study.” The word “cult,” like the word “extremist,” carries heavy political baggage and is seldom clearly defined by its users. Typically, one who labels another an “extremist” or “cultist” is saying something bad about that person. Beyond the theme of condemnation, however, it is hard to find any consistent set of traits that clearly distinguish one group as extreme or cultlike and another as non-extreme or non-cultlike.

In effect, “extremist” usually means someone extremely different from oneself and therefore “weird,” while “cult” typically means a social or religious group that one especially dislikes. An analytically more useful definition might be to view a cult as any relatively new group that (1) discourages independent thought among its members, (2) encourages members’ submission to the group, (3) favors authoritarian leadership, and (4) uses such disempowering tactics as physical isolation and sensory deprivation.

What Our Secular Communitarians Tell Us

As an Emissary community resident wrote, “Just because you are a spiritual community, [people assume that] you must be a

cult.” A 71-year-old woman argued that people often wrongly believe that negative “social control” is an inherent part of communal life. And indeed cult critics might jump at the importance our intentional communitarians gave to *unity of vision* as a requirement for a successful community. As we reported in our Winter ’94/’95 column: “The single most important internal condition [intentional communitarians] cite as helpful for community living is sharing a value of consensus, including a common sense of purpose.” Does this kind of basic unity imply uniformity or conformity?

Apparently not, since the respondents reported—and favored—considerable diversity in their communities. Communitarians do not “all think the same way,” wrote a 35-year-old woman. Our respondents confirm our own experience in dozens of on-site visits to contemporary communities. A typical non-religious community today exhibits considerable variety in eating, dress, family structure, housing, ownership, education, and work. For instance, though most of our respondents were monogamous and heterosexual, the majority expressed tolerance of open, poly-fidelitous, gay and lesbian relationships within their communities.

Perhaps most strikingly at odds with “cultism” was our respondents’ rejection of authoritarian decision making. “Outsiders often think that someone controls you,” noted a 49-year-old man. “I find that most people have little idea what community is and have even less interest in finding out.” A 65-year-old woman wrote that she is offended by the stereotype that “there must be one strong leader and all the rest are merely

followers.” In terms of community governance, our respondents overwhelmingly favored and practiced either consensus decision-making or a mixture of consensus, majority rule, and democratically delegated authority. Seventy percent thought it important to teach their children when to disobey authority. By a ratio of almost two-to-one, these respondents supported equal rights for children. Coming in for special criticism were community members who tried to manipulate or control others.

Unlike many self-isolating religious communities, most of the communities reflected in our sample send their children to public schools. An interesting example is Emissary communities such as Sunrise Ranch (Colorado), whose growth has re-

The word “cult,” like the word “extremist,” carries heavy political baggage and is seldom clearly defined by its users.

sulted partly from their children’s contacts and impact in public schools. At the spiritual community of Ananda Cooperative Village (California), some children attend the Ananda school, some go to the public school, and some neighboring children attend the Ananda schools.

What Our Bruderhof and Hutterite Ex-Communitarians Tell Us

The old-line Hutterites, like Lutherans and Presbyterians, date from the 16th century. Their recently adopted cousins, the half-dozen Bruderhof communities, date from the 1920s, and in their more recent incarnation, from the early 1960s. (Both are “Anabaptist” communities.) Our co-researcher Ruth Lambach is a former member of Hutterite and Bruderhof communities. The questionnaires she solic-

Want to Participate in This Research?

If you would like to participate in our survey, please contact us c/o Department of Political Science, University of Colorado at Denver, PO Box 173364, Denver, CO 80217. Or call us at 303-556-3556.

Mike Cummings has a B.A. from Princeton and an M.A. and Ph.D. from Stanford in political science. He has been involved in electoral campaigns and community organizing, and has published his research on communal and utopian studies. He chairs the Political Science Department at the University of Colorado, Denver, and enjoys playing ball with his one-year-old, Anthony.

Harv Bishop’s academic background is in journalism and political science. He has worked as a newspaper writer-reporter and recently completed an M.A. in political science at the University of Colorado, Denver, with an emphasis on Green politics and communal studies. He currently is teaching courses in environmental politics at UCD.

ited were from people on the mailing list of Keep in Touch (KIT) newsletter, an informational project of the Peregrine Foundation for former Bruderhof members. (See "The Heart Will Find a Way," p. 57.)

KIT's view of Bruderhof communities is unflattering:

Since its restructuring in the early 1960s, ... techniques used by the [Bruderhof] leaders [have] included ongoing confession and denigration, repeated threats of sanctions, the discouragement of rational thought, perfectionistic demands, the isolation and beating of children, and the obsessive repression and punishment of their natural urges. In 1961, one-third of the membership was judged "unworthy" and ejected from the communities.

Before drawing any conclusions, however, let's listen to some of our ex-Bruderhof respondents. A 45-year-old woman said, of the negative stereotypes she had heard regarding intentional communities, "I don't know; I've found most of them to be accurate." A 46-year-old woman wrote that she considered it an inaccurate stereotype that people in community "are living in true harmony and are there by choice." But a 52-year-old woman identified as the most inaccurate stereotype the belief "that people are in community against their will." A 48-year-old woman rejected a perception that religious communitarians "are not too smart. I have found that most of the people are smart and generally looking for a better way of life and are genuine in their beliefs." A 60-year-old ex-Hutterite woman said she was offended by the stereotype that religious communities reflected "the simple life of a plain people. It is far from simple."

While a number of ex-Bruderhof members criticized their former communities and especially the leaders, others cautioned against overgeneralizing. A 44-year-old ex-Bruderhof woman noted her displeasure with characterizations of religious communes "as cults to be dismissed as such with any and every rumor and gossip in ignorance and blind anger against religious fanatics."

In general, our religious ex-communitarians give a critical but more balanced picture of the communal life they left than do such organizations as KIT or the Cult Awareness Network. Our respondents openly discussed their communities' strengths as well as weaknesses. Some, like this 60-year-old man, attributed the problems mostly to sinful human nature: "Since love is the greatest thing in life, if intentional communities facilitate a quality of love more profound, more costly, more lasting than would otherwise be possible, it is a

great success. [But living in community also] brings you directly into contact with the immaturity and self-centeredness and sinfulness of human beings. If corresponding resources for dealing with this are not present, great destruction can result."

Others, like this 55-year-old woman, found more fault with the oppressive quality of the community itself, in which the most valuable qualities were "keeping your mouth shut, suppressing your conscience, [and] not wanting to make decisions." The most harmful qualities, she added, included "being an independent thinker, a rebel, a nonconformist." A 65-year-old man credited Bruderhof cooperation while faulting its hierarchy. A 62-year-old woman contrasted the "congenial companionship" she had enjoyed with the unpleasant "doctrinal fundamentalism of the Bruderhof." A 35-year-old man compared the comfortable family feeling at his Bruderhof community with an uncomfortable feeling of "being watched all the time and being judged and talked about relating to behavior."

A 50-year-old woman liked "having no financial worries" but complained of having "not too much room for personal convictions." A typical ex-Bruderhof respondent cited "learning to cooperate with other people" as the best feature of communal living but "subjugation of individual conscience to 'group think'" as the worst. "The life of the family suffers since the community needs take preference over the family," cautioned a 62-year-old ex-Bruderhofer. While criticizing his community, a 64-year-old man attributed most of the fault to our flawed natures: "Like most of the other structures of human beings, [our community's] strengths and weaknesses are opposite sides of the same coin." Imperfect beings are unable to create perfect communities, most of these Anabaptist ex-communitarians seemed to agree.

Nevertheless, a sizable minority of them reach the same harsh judgment of the Bruderhof as does KIT. While most ex-members have kept their Christian beliefs, virtually none see themselves ever joining another community. This finding contrasts with that of respondents who are ex-members of non-religious communities, many of whom went on to join other communities after leaving their original one. In general, current communitarians, both religious and non-religious, assess their communities more positively than do ex-communitarians. And the religious ex-communitarians are more

negative than the secular ex-communitarians. But even the ex-Bruderhofers report at least some fond memories of their communal experience.

Is the Bruderhof a "cult"? Our brief times spent in Bruderhof homes and factories didn't make us feel that way. However, relative to secular or New Age spiritual communities, the Bruderhof does (1) discourage the free marketplace of ideas current in the outside world; (2) encourage submission of one's own desires to the will of God and His earthly ministers; (3) operate more oligarchically than democratically; and (4) tend to isolate its less educated and younger members from the outside world. Yet, as a 73-year-old current Bruderhof leader writes, "There are differences between severe communities. The Hutterites forbid music, drawing, photographs, and bright colors, but the [Bruderhof] allows all of these."

Perhaps we should conclude that utopias and 'cults,' like beauty and ugliness, are ultimately in the eye of the beholder.

.....

We have gathered a few questionnaires from current old-line, prairie Hutterites, whose communities are the most traditional of all the intentional communities we have visited. A 32-year-old Hutterite man decried the characterization of Anabaptist communities as "strange" or "cultic":

Speaking for traditional cultural Hutterites, I think this lifestyle is anything but strange. There is also a misperception that the communal lifestyle is somewhat of a utopia. This is not always true. The human condition is no different here. The Hutterite's lifestyle and religious beliefs and practices are not much different from any other predominant Christian society, which includes North America. The main difference is in the communal lifestyle. ... Here's a paradox: the community itself ... is far more capitalist in nature than most average corporations, but for individuals it is a socialist society.

A 71-year-old man who has lived for over 50 years in traditional religious communities said that the characterization of communities as "cults" was inaccurate, "although," he added, "some may be." Perhaps we should conclude that utopias and "cults," like beauty and ugliness, are ultimately in the eye of the beholder. Ω



Finding and Financing Community Land, Part II

by Robert H. Watzke

Bob Watzke has been self-employed since 1958 in the real estate, insurance, and securities industries as an appraiser, broker, and developer/investor. He has served as an officer in various professional associations, and worked as a real estate consultant and fee appraiser for attorneys, lenders, and government agencies. A different version of this article appears in the 1995 edition of the Communities Directory. Reprinted with permission.

Part I, in the Spring '95 issue (#88), focused on learning the local real estate market, looking for property, and creating a financing strategy.

The Banking or Lender Relationship

The banking relationship could also be called "mutual back scratching." Almost every banker wants you to be his or her client, preferably *before* you borrow money. Banks (and by "banks" I include all kinds of lenders) want your repeat business. They want to see your track record. If you are already a client, it is easier for the bank to assess your investments and accumulating assets—most of which you have probably pledged when you signed a "loan guarantee" or a "collateral pledge agreement." (Some of these "guarantees" and/or pledges

can be reduced or eliminated altogether after the loan is closed.)

Banks may ask you to maintain a "compensating balance" if you're borrowing money. (That increases their reserve capacity and their ability to loan more money to others—on as much as a 10:1 basis.) The bank may ask you to keep up to 10 percent of your outstanding loan balance on deposit with them. That's how your local bank creates money. But then, you can create money, too. How? Put a piece of paper in your typewriter and title it "Mortgage," secured by your property (real or personal), and then sell it for cash or trade it for the real estate you want "free and clear," or pledge it as collateral for a loan from ... whomever you will!

This is just another way to raise money or create your own financing. I buy and sell such "pieces of paper"—mortgages—regularly. Does this sound time-consuming? It is. That's why your community members have got to cooperate and share in the work. I don't recommend hiring someone else to do this—the outside person does not have the same vital interests in the project as you do—and it would be expensive!

Your intended property should be appraised *before* you apply for a bank loan. Imagine how confirming it could be to the bank when they see that your appraisal supports your requested loan—and the signature on the bottom is one of its own appraisers. This way the bank can expedite your loan application by simply sending the appraisal out for "recertification" by the appraiser. Of course, you must pay a nominal fee for that sealing or recertification. Sounds like double expenses—double fees? Perhaps, but so what? If you've got your support for the price you've decided to pay and you get the money you want, it's justified. After all, you will have anticipated that

cost when you originally calculated your purchase expenses before making your offer on the property, thereby reducing the purchase price.

When you visit the banker, dress the way he or she dresses (even if you have to buy, rent, or borrow the "costume"). Ask to speak *only* with the Executive Vice President (since that person runs the place) or to the President in the absence of an Executive Vice President. If the Executive Vice President is busy, wait or come back. If a secretary screens you and insists on an appointment, set the date using the Executive Vice President's name as you do so. If the secretary tries to shunt you off to one of the loan officers insist, in a nice way, on seeing the Executive Vice President. Don't discuss your loan in detail with the secretary. Just say you're there about a business loan. Thereafter, whichever of you speaks first after you've politely stated your request loses this small negotiation. State your request politely, but firmly; be still, and wait.

If the interviewing officer sounds encouraging and asks you back, you might consider bringing a rose for the secretary. That person may be far more influential in your final loan approval than you will ever know.

Before you go to the appointment with the Executive Vice President, review the bank's Profit and Loss Statement of the last year and this year-to-date. Examine its size and assets, learn who the directors and operating officers are. Without specifically identifying either your property or yourself, ask one of the other loan officers by phone whether the bank is making loans on the type of property you're interested in buying. Ask about the bank's loan rates, and its lending practices so you'll know its terms, policies,



SPRINGTREE COMMUNITY

Forming Communities in the Nineties

Last December Communities magazine incorporated Growing Community newsletter, a publication which offered practical information on starting new communities now. This new column will feature how-to advice on finance and land development; legal options for land tenure; conflict resolution; decision making; meeting facilitation; getting "off the grid"; permaculture and community-supported agriculture; and affordable, non-toxic housing. It is compiled by Diana Leafe Christian, former publisher of Growing Community newsletter and managing editor of this magazine.

and procedures in advance, using a hypothetical case. Your goal is to make a reasonable loan request from competing banks in the area and get a loan commitment with the least expensive terms available.

Why should you seek out and wait for a top bank official? Because if that person decides the bank wants you, not the loan, but *you*, you're in. A top bank official can usually poll the Loan Committee or the Board by phone on the same day you're there, giving you an answer the next day, if he chooses. Besides, the authorized loan-commitment-limits for a top bank executive are almost always greater (if not unlimited) than those of other loan officers. Further, if a top executive doesn't want to give you a loan, other loan officers aren't going to get your loan approved either, no matter how good you look to them. You want to avoid being thrown against the wall along with the other loan applicants (that which sticks get approved), or thrown into the bag ("Yes" to the first ones that fall out of the bag to meet their quota) at the next regular loan committee meeting—which may be days or weeks away. Finally, if you're requesting a loan from a particular bank and you realize your business is currently not acceptable there, make a graceful exit. Forgive, forget, and get on with it elsewhere.

Recognize that your best source of financing may be seller financing. Explore it first! Be informed of what the current lending terms and norms are. Sellers will usually give you more liberal terms, if you ask for them—and if they have come to know you, by having worked with you from the outset—directly! (Not through a real estate agent.)

The Loan Application

Keep it *simple!* Put loan applications on your letterhead; make one up if you don't have one already. Use a street address or rural route box rather than a post office box, and don't use your community name, no matter how much you like it. You don't want to look like a disembodied phantom with no home, or the airy-fairy creators of a "new age" organization if you want to be taken seriously.

Here's how you create a loan application on your letter let-

Do You Need a Real Estate Lawyer?

You do! Keep your real estate lawyer in the background, unless your seller has one. Ask your attorney to review everything you're supposed to sign *before* you sign it, not after. Your attorney can do little for you if you've inadvertently agreed to give your deal away.

If you feel that you must enter into a contract before the attorney has seen it, then insist on and insert in the contract this clause: "This contract is subject to my/our attorney's review and written approval within forty-eight (48) hours after acceptance or this contract shall become null and void, at the buyer's option." (As stated in Part I, you should take a filled-out contract with you when you first inspect a piece of property.)

Lawyers can be invaluable—use them! Pay your lawyer 30–50 percent in advance and he or she will give you even better service. ☺

terhead. Put the date on the first line, then triple space. On the second line, center the title, "LOAN REQUEST FOR \$____," with the dollar amount. All the headings which follow should be at the left margin and triple spaced. The third line says "Borrower(s):" and your name(s); the fourth line, "Guarantor(s):," that is, the individuals, group or company originating the loan. If you are a company or group, list the names of the individuals who will be personally guaranteeing the loan. On the fifth line type, "Purpose of Loan:" and describe it. Below that, type, "Loan Security:" and give the ad-

dress or location of the property. On line seven, type, "Term" or, "Length of Loan:" and fill it in. On the last line, type "Means of Payback." Keep each statement brief.

You are describing to the bank what you want and under what terms you want it. Because you've called ahead you already know what they will do under normal circumstances. So now it's easy for you to sound knowledgeable and reasonable, even though you might ask for something more than they would normally consider—and you may get it. Make your request with a touch of humility. The "Loan Request" form should take up no more than one triple spaced 8-1/2 by 11-inch page.

If it takes a banker more than 30 seconds to grasp what you want, you may have lost him or her. The Executive Vice President you're

talking to is an expert at "sensing" or "smelling" a deal. That person's objective is to earn the top interest rate and maximum loan fees, and, most especially, to get the bank's principal back quickly so the money can loaned again.

Supporting Documents for Your Loan Request

First, secure a copy of the appraisal which is at least equal to, and preferably greater than, your purchase price. Therefore the ratio of your loan request to appraisal value should be better than what the bank normally requires, thereby adding to their margin of safety. This works psychologically in your favor and could make a substantial difference with the Board or Loan Committee that gives final approval to your request. You should seek to become one of their valued "knowledgeable" customers.

You get maximum appraisal by knowing your values, getting your appraisal ahead of time, and paying the appraiser yourself. This assures that the appraisal is completed in *your* interest, rather than at the behest of the same bank that will be considering your loan. You will still be paying the same price for the appraisal, maybe more, because the bank does have handling costs in getting an appraisal. By the way, nowa-

Sample Loan Request

October 25, 1995

LOAN REQUEST - \$150,000

BORROWERS: John Smith, Mary Smith, Susan Jones

GUARANTORS: John Smith, Mary Smith, Susan Jones,
Bill Jones, Cindy Jones

PURPOSE OF LOAN: To buy property for our healing center

LOAN SECURITY: Property at 2525 Old Mill Lane

LENGTH OF LOAN: Thirty years

MEANS OF PAYBACK: Monthly payments of \$560.00

days a bank is required to give you a copy of its appraisal if you request it.

When you get the appraisal in advance, you have the option of reviewing it. You can make sure the work is documented and supported with comparable properties (from your previously acquired comparable sales studies, which your research indicates are representative of and supportive of your loan request), before the appraiser writes up the report. If the appraisal is not satisfactory, ask the the appraiser to re-do the job or get another appraiser, after paying the first one.

Does this guidance sound overly assertive? Just remember whose money is being spent. Remember, your bank will most likely require that you, your entire community group, and perhaps your family and/or company, co-sign the loan, guaranteeing the repayment. The bank will attach (or legally be able to attach) everything, including the property you are buying, and other property used as collateral, if you for some reason stop making the payments. You owe it

New "Community Land" Q & A Column

If you or your community has questions about locating, financing, or buying property for your community, Bob Watzke would be happy to give you the benefit of his experience. Send questions to "Community Land," PO Box 169, Masonville, CO 80541-0169.

A Word About Banks and Lenders

Please note, since the recent bank and savings and loan debacles throughout the country, many bankers, other bankers, appraisers, and bank examiners have become more cautious. Even some real estate agents are more cautious about risky loans. The bankers now have loan policies based on new 1993 regulations. While they say they have money and are offering loans, the bankers haven't been making a lot of new loans; they have mainly been refinancing existing loans. Some of bankers are loaned out—they are up to or even slightly over their legal loan limits. Others have put in place such strict and cautious guidelines that few borrowers qualify. ☹

to yourself to to tailor the land purchase to your needs and requirements.

Include a brief, concise *curriculum vitae* or resumé for all partners, if you're borrowing the money individually. Describe your backgrounds and professional accomplishments, especially as these might pertain to your work or the purpose of your buying the property. This does *not* mean presenting your community's entire mission statement. That may prove distracting, or worse, it may turn them off. Focus only on your individual strengths and your ability to pay back the loan.

Include copies of your credit reports and net worth statements, and those of other co-guarantors and that of your community corporation or other legal entity. Prepare for this by first acquiring net-worth statement forms from the various banks in your area. There are short, simple forms for individuals and more lengthy, complex forms for corporations. Whichever you use, keep it simple. Remember that whatever you tell your potential bankers will be "public

knowledge." The bank may give these documents to credit agencies for confirmation, and they may be passed around among various agencies.

Find out which credit agency the bank or the bankers in the area generally use (there may be more than one). Get a copy of your credit records from each one of these credit agencies. You can either pay for one at a nominal charge, or get one for nothing if you recently have been denied credit. Be aware that each time a credit agency provides someone with a report on you, that inquiry is listed in your credit file. All of this accumulated information is then provided to subsequent inquirers as long as it remains current. In that way, any agencies or bankers can all know from whom you may have been seeking credit.

Loan Disbursement Schedule

Show the bank, in detail, how you plan to use the loan funds. If you are seeking funds in excess of the amount used to purchase the land and create improvements, show

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the additional monies as a reserve for "contingencies." If you will have funds set aside for contractors, include competing contractors' bids in your loan package—including, perhaps, a bid from your own newly formed contracting company. If you have qualified people in your community group (experienced builders, for example), you can legitimately organize a company expressly to do the development and construction work for your community.

Net Worth Statement

Buy a pre-printed net-worth statement form from a legal supply house, or better yet, get one from the bankers. Don't use the form with a clause which pledges everything you now or ever after may own to the bank. And beware: the bank's form may contain such a statement. If the bank insists on the use of its own form, you may have to use it in order to get the loan. (However, there are ways you can deal with disadvantageous clauses after you've received the loan approval, closed the purchase, and moved onto your land.)

Shopping Your Loan

Armed with these documents, you can negotiate simultaneously with more than one bank. Some dislike this, feeling that they are being "shopped"—and they are. By taking this position of power you are saving perhaps weeks of waiting for loan approval. If your contract on the property has a short fuse on the financing contingency clause, you may have no other choice but to apply for loans from various banks simultaneously. If banks ask who else you're seeking loans from, tell them, but you're under no obligation to volunteer it—it's none of their business!

If you do make multiple loan applications, you can avoid banks knowing for sure whether you are "shopping them" by applying to all on the same date and providing all the documentation that each different bank needs. Banks may accept your documentation without making independent inquiries initially. They will want the originals of all documents provided. Don't, under any conditions, lie. You could go to jail, or at the least lose your credibility—as individuals and as a group.

Back Issues of *Growing Community newsletter* are available for \$5 each. For a complete description of back issues, write *Growing Community*, PO Box 169, Masonville, CO 80541-0169.

Why provide the bank with information which they have to procure on their own? Let's consider credit reports. Wouldn't you like to know what credit agencies are going to say about you before your prospective bank knows? This enables you to correct any discrepancies. Credit collection agencies manage to dredge up 20 percent or more information which may be false, or non-ap-

plicable to you. It's a circular process. If credit investigators or bankers want to know something, they'll ask. If they don't ask, it could be that they don't want to know, don't know what to ask, or forget to ask. Don't volunteer unsolicited information, or else you can talk yourself right out of your own deal. ☛

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Off the Grid! In the Palm of Your Hand

By Dan Drasin

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT WHEN IT COMES to solar power. Put up enough photovoltaic panels and you can power a house, a community, or an industry. Solarex, the largest domestic manufacturer of PV panels, powers most of its own manufacturing plant with the solar panels it produces.

But solar power also lets you think small. Many alternative energy dealers offer neat mini-solar products you can tuck away into your car,

Many alternative energy dealers offer neat mini-solar products you can tuck away into your car, camper-van, hiking pack, or bike pack.

.....

camper-van, hiking pack, bike pack, or earthquake emergency kit that will let you enjoy some of the comforts of home while you're off the grid. Some can serve as useful stopgaps while you're building your heavy-duty PV system in the boonies. They'll also save you money and help save the environment by reducing or eliminating your need for throwaway batteries.

Perhaps the hottest-selling item in this category is the solar/dynamo AM-FM pocket radio, which features a PV panel that charges the radio's internal batteries. This little gem also contains a built-in, miniature hand-cranked generator for rainy days!

Then there are the Solar Cool-Cap and Solar Safari Hat, featuring small top-mounted solar panels and a tiny fan that helps you keep a cool head on hot days. They really work!

For the swamp-buggy crowd, the Solar Mosquito Repeller is just the ticket. Tiny enough to hang on a keychain, this matchbook-sized solar-powered device emits a high-frequency sound that's reputed to be effective in keeping the bloodsuckers at bay.

Another nifty keychain item is the For-

ever Light, a silver-dollar-sized flashlight that will give you weeks of intermittent use for each three-hour exposure to sunlight.

If you commute by bike, consider the Solar Bicycle Light, which clips to your handlebars and can also be used as a handheld flashlight. A day's charge will get you home safely after dark.

Solar battery chargers come in all sizes and capacities. The most popular are the size of one or two cigarette packs and fully recharge four to six AA nicad batteries in one to five days. The tiniest, for charging hearing-aid "button" cells, is credit-card sized and comes with a suction cup for fastening to a windowpane. At the other extreme is a foot-square, 10-watt PV panel with battery clips on the back, that can recharge eight nicad D-cells in one day. Customized versions can power laptop computers, boomboxes, and other small DC appliances.

The real "stars" of portable solar power are a variety of well-designed and ruggedly built fluorescent lanterns. The Solar/Radio 3-Way Light also contains an AM/FM radio, and will give you three hours of light and five hours of radio play for every eight hours of sun. It features a detached solar panel that can be positioned for maximum solar exposure, a built-in emergency flasher and spotlight, and an automatic setting that can switch on the fluorescent light at sundown!

Resources: All the items mentioned above can be ordered from *Jade Mountain*, an alternative energy dealer in Boulder, Colorado. 800-442-1972. ☛

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Supporting Children in Community

OF COURSE WE WANT TO SUPPORT our children—physically, emotionally, spiritually—no one questions that. Yet we also know that it's not quite so simple, and in community settings supporting children can be especially complicated. Turnover, community size, and economics can positively or negatively influence a community's support for children and families in both dramatic and subtle ways.

For example, a high turnover rate often hinders a community in building continuity and stability in a children's program, and is also disruptive of children's significant associations with non-related adults. While turnover can be emotionally draining for anyone, it can be especially frustrating and confusing for children. As one member put it,

Some of the people I'm very fond of, love dearly, and depend on for my support, are mobile-type people. And these people have the free choice to do what they need and wish. Thus, I [as an] adult may sort of see what sends them away or brings them back, but for their children, I'm sure it's mystifying and very beyond their control, and thus very undependable. ... And I find that whenever the house becomes less stable, then the children relate and cling to me more, and at the same time I necessarily feel more responsible for them.

A negative cycle often ensues with high turnover creating instability which then frustrates families who may then leave because of it, which then further fuels the negative cycle. This was especially troubling for one community I visited. One member stated,

Another reason the population is drop-

ping [is that] there's so much turmoil in the child program that we haven't had a lot of pregnancies. I think people are having second thoughts about whether they want to raise children in this turbulent atmosphere. Things are not at peace. Things are not happy.

Of course, this feedback loop can be positive as well. In communities with low turnover, there is the possibility for long-term relationships with children and a stable program that is attractive to families. This does not necessarily mean an absence of conflict, however. In fact, as one communitarian pointed out, it occasionally means the opposite:

I imagine [our community] will always be in the forefront of trying to find peaceful ways to solve conflicts. Unfortunately, as far as children go, one of the main ways that we've solved conflicts in the past has been for the parents and the children to leave instead. So lately it might seem as if we have more conflicts, but I think it's actually a good sign that the parents and the children and staying [and] trying to work it out more than they used to.

Communities that attract and retain families may grow relatively large, and large communities benefit children in several ways. They generally accumulate sizeable peer groups and provide children and their parents diverse opportunities for integration into the community.

Large communities also enjoy an economy of scale, a more efficient use of resources than smaller communities. For example, the same number of adults can look after 10 children almost as easily as they can look after three or four children and, in the process, several parents are enabled to pursue other activities.

Now, many communities seem settled into either positive or negative cycles with regards to children. It is often a mystery how one community is able somehow to bootstrap itself into a positive cycle, while another constantly struggles with child-related issues.

If there is a difference, I believe that it is in the amount and types of support a child-oriented community provides for its families and children—support, in terms of labor, money, and community processes that all work together to create and maintain a positive environment for families and children. Such support attracts more families and leads to a stable children's program and even more community growth.

Unfortunately, support does not materialize out of thin air. There are also economic and ideological factors that determine a community's overall growth and well-being. In addition, these factors affect the amount and type of support a community can offer their children and families.

Economically, it can be a struggle for many communities to create adequate support for their children. The immense amount of resources needed—in terms of facilities and materials, and trained and dedicated people—makes it difficult to create comprehensive childcare or educational programs within intentional communities (especially in the smaller groups).

The struggle to support children is especially hard in communities that have a high turnover rate among families with children. Given that most children leave their communities before they reach their "productive" years, one could claim that there is very little return on the dollars invested in them. Adults who are not interested in having children in their community, or communities struggling to survive, may well ask, "Why put all this effort into children when they end up leaving anyway?" In some communities such cost-benefit analyses can lead to difficult decisions, and result in stern measures. As one member stated,

Close friends of mine have come here and gotten pregnant and had to leave because they hadn't been here long enough. The community [didn't] want to support them because they [didn't] know if they [were] planning to stay or ... if they know them well enough ... to give that much support to them.

Some communities, on the other hand, intuit that by supporting their families and children, they will attract and keep more families that will in turn enhance the community's labor pool and economic base.

In addition to economic considerations,

Daniel Greenberg received his Ph.D in Child Psychology from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. He collected material for his dissertation on children and education in communities by visiting and corresponding with over 200 intentional communities in the United States. He later spent a year working with children and families at the Findhorn Foundation in northern Scotland.

there are also ideological reasons to support or not to support children within a community. At one end of the continuum, many communities simply view having children in their community as conflicting with their primary purpose—political, social, or spiritual. For example, the leader of one spiritual community felt that having children was a big mistake. He observed that the

ral part of life that should not be excluded from community. For example, in one community in which members were divided over the issue of supporting their children, one disgruntled member argued,

You can't expect people to live together in a group like this and for there not to be children around. That's just not a natural way to live. Women get pregnant and people have babies and that's life. To want to have control over that all the time ... is not a good way to live. It's really very out of tune with the life force and pretty unnatural to live without children and to have a lot of constraints and controls over how many children we have, who gets to have children, how many children each person should have, or when to have children.

Some communities, such as those with a feminist egalitarian philosophy even feel an ideological duty to support their children. These communities generally believe that all types of work—from farming to cook-

ing, from building to cleaning, and from car mechanics to childcare—should be considered as having equal value and deserving equal compensation. In some of these communities, the obligation to provide full support is taken so seriously that it preempts having large numbers of children. As one can imagine, support for children is a hotly contested issue in such communities.

So, what does this all mean to intentional communities in general, where support for children and families is a perennial conundrum? The community dynamics described here would imply that a leap of faith is required to start the ball rolling. This means supporting children financially even though they do not bring in income, and socially even though they seem to take time away from “more important” activities. This does not necessitate communities abandoning their “adult” focus be it political, social, or spiritual. Quite the contrary, it means opening ourselves to the gifts, lessons and challenges children constantly offer.

Fully welcoming children and families into the hearts of our communities is a critical step in the maturation of our communal families. By providing care for our children, we are nurturing the ageless child within each of us. Ω

Some communities intuit that by supporting their families and children, they will attract and keep more families that will in turn enhance the community's labor pool and economic base.

community was created to develop “spiritual athletes,” but the focus was lost after children entered the scene. “The kids became more important than the work within the individual or the group or the world.”

Most communities, however, at least theoretically support children. I do know of a community that wants fewer children; but most say they want more. The most commonly stated ideology for supporting children is that children are simply a natu-

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The Need for a Synthesis of Hierarchy and Democracy

This is the fifth column in a series on the emergence of a new cooperative political paradigm.

SYNTHESIZING THE PRINCIPLES OF hierarchy and democracy was perhaps the most important lesson I learned about leadership at Sirius, the community I co-founded in Massachusetts. Having previously experienced only oppressive, top-down hierarchies in my life, I naturally became involved in the iconoclastic, anti-leader politics of the 1960s. At first I refused to assume or acknowledge my own leadership, trying instead to distribute power equally among all members, even when newly arrived. But through painful experiences of holding too high an expectation of others' abilities and their willingness to shoulder responsibility, I finally began to learn the necessity for a balance of hierarchy and democracy.

I recognized that although we all may be theoretically equal in potential, not all of us are at the same level of actually manifesting our full potential. This perception avoids burdening people with unrealistic expectations that can cause guilt, anger, and resentment if they are not able to live up to them. An obsession with equality can come from a lack of self-worth, as it is a subtle demand for reassurance that we are just as good as anyone else. It also can come from a fear of accepting our own leadership responsibilities. Overemphasis on equality can lead to a lack of motivation for developing our own potential, as no greater rewards accrue for this, and others tend to view greater abilities with jealousy. This can lead to what's often called "the tyranny of the structureless group," where no one is empowered to take initiative on behalf of the group, and there is an anti-

leadership bias leading to stagnation.

On the other hand, as we are all well aware, overemphasis on hierarchy can lead to arrogance and abuse of power, as well as missed opportunities for new creative impulses. The limitations of the leader or leadership group can become the limitations of the entire organization. This can lead to immense frustration, with a continued threat of rebellion or at least passive resistance and subtle sabotage.

Applying a transformational synthesis to this age-old conflict of hierarchy vs. democracy takes the best aspects of hierarchy—love and responsibility (rather than power and dominance)—and the best aspects of democracy—participatory inclusiveness (rather than the lowest common denominator)—and raises them to a transcendent level. The principle of hierarchy acknowledges current abilities, quality, and excellence (*actualized potential*). Authority is matched with skill, energy, and ability to take responsibility. The principle of democracy acknowledges *future* potential and empowers its development. Equal opportunity, political rights, and decision-making power are bestowed on all so that individuals may develop their full potential.

In the new synthesis of hierarchy and democracy, as individuals take more responsibility for the good of all, they are then given commensurate authority and power—not the reverse. This approach takes the best of democracy—giving people the maximum freedom to grow and develop—and the best of hierarchy—providing models of the high-

est expression of what people are striving to become. Democracy provides opportunity and encouragement; hierarchy recognizes ability and accomplishment. Democracy provides the container to hold and nourish people's development; hierarchy provides the direction to grow into. Democracy values inclusiveness, relationship, listening, compassion. Hierarchy values leadership, purpose, direction, vision, efficiency. Each of us must learn to recognize whom we can serve (recognizing responsibility) and whom we can learn from (developing humility), by recognizing those who are more advanced than we are in a particular area.

Where there is a good synthesis of hierarchy and democracy, leaders accept only as much authority as people are willing to give them. Work gets done through inspiring people with vision or purpose, rather than bossing or dominating them. There is an encouragement rather than a suppression of feedback, since good leaders know how to listen and will invest a great deal of en-

Democracy provides opportunity and encouragement; hierarchy recognizes ability and accomplishment.

ergy in developing good relations with all members of the group.

The transformation approach creates "power with" rather than "power over"—a cooperative blend of leadership and empowered equality, where leadership relates to function and to "focalizing energy," rather than to personality. Individual learning and responsibility are fostered, as is a sense of team spirit and ownership by all members. The new type of leadership is educative rather than directive. It inspires responsibility rather than creating dependence. Based on the assumption that people already have the potential wisdom and creativity within them, the task of leadership is mainly to encourage and draw this out, helping people to develop their skills and sense of self-worth. Organizations and processes are structured so that people are inspired to do things for themselves and others, to make their own decisions, and to take on more responsibility. They are helped to develop self-confidence and a sense of self-worth. Negotiation rather than pure authority is the basis of relationships. As the ancient Chinese sage Lao Tzu said, "Leadership is best when the people say, 'We have done this ourselves!'"

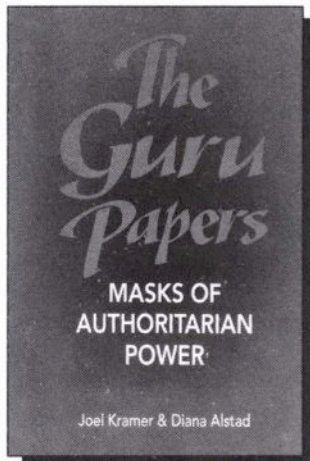
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Corinne McLaughlin is a co-author of Spiritual Politics: Changing the World from the Inside Out (Ballantine Books, 1994) and Builders of the Dawn (The Book Publishing Company, 1985), co-founder of Sirius Community in Massachusetts, and a former member of the Findhorn Community in Scotland. This article is excerpted with permission from Spiritual Politics, which can be ordered for \$14.95 postpaid from Sirius Educational Resources, 56F Crescent Rd., Greenbelt, MD 20770. Corinne can be reached at 301-441-3809.



REVIEWS

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by Diana Leafé
Christian



The Guru Papers: Masks of Authoritarian Power

By Joel Kramer & Diana Alstad

1993, Frog, Ltd./North Atlantic Books,
Berkeley. 385 pp. Paperback. \$14.95.

WITH LASER CLARITY KRAMER AND Alstad examine authoritarianism, its relationship to power and hierarchy—and why some of us give away our power, why we get seduced.

An “authoritarian” belief system, they say, is one which is unchallengeable, and in which someone or something other than the individual knows “what’s best” for someone else. They assert that the ideologies of new (and old) religions, and the belief systems and practices of most societal institutions are intrinsically authoritarian *if there is no way to take issue with their basic suppositions*. This is not only harmful to individuals, they say but to our society as well.

They carefully distinguish between power—“the capacity of an individual or system to influence in any way other individuals or systems”—and the authoritarian abuse of power. They also distinguish between hierarchy—which occurs naturally in physical, biological, and social levels—and the *authoritarian use* of hierarchy.

While strongly disliking authoritarian hierarchies, the authors don’t want to do away with hierarchy itself. “Any attempt

to do so can only succeed by supplanting one for another,” they write. “This is because the nature of power is that it never stays equally distributed, and *any attempt* to force equality of power itself becomes hierarchical.”

Kramer and Alstad say that hierarchy is a way of structuring power, authority a way of exercising power, and authoritarianism a way of protecting and ensuring one’s power. Authority may be invested in a position, a role, or some perceived capacity within an individual—such as, in the case of a spiritual leader, with presumed special knowledge.

The authors dissect spiritual groups and new religions (which they unfortunately term “cults”)—the most extreme examples of one person giving power to another—because these groups sharply illuminate the issues surrounding authoritarian power.

Spiritual leaders, generically termed “gurus,” are authoritarian when they expect to be obeyed without question, and either punish or refuse to deal with those who do not. However, authority based on a leadership role, or even on special spiritual knowledge, does not have to be authoritarian. Experts, counselors, and teachers can share their expertise without expecting either agreement or obedience.

Part One, “Personal Masks,” offers fascinating insights into the leader/follower relationship and explains why we sometimes mistrust ourselves and seek exterior authority. Topics include the seduction of surrender; authoritarian ploys—inducing surrender and maintaining dominance; the stages of spiritual groups—proselytizing to paranoia; the attractions of hierarchy; sexual manipulation—the betrayal of trust, spiritual hedonism; the traps of spiritual leadership—narcissism and adulation, deceit and corruption; channelling disembodied authorities; “do we create our own reality?”; and healing crippled self-trust.

In Part Two, “Ideological Masks,” Kramer and Alstad turn to the usually veiled authoritarianism imbedded in the worldviews and values of Western society—in fundamentalist religion as well as Eastern spiritual traditions, intimate relationships, and addictions. If we want to survive as a species, given the mess we’ve gotten ourselves into, they argue, we must grow up and refuse to either surrender to, or indulge in, authoritarianism.

One of the most compelling, “can’t put it down” books I’ve read in a long time, *The Guru Papers* offers challenging concepts—for both egalitarian communities attempting to erase all power differences, and high-demand spiritual communities alike.

Strange Gods: The Great American Cult Scare

By David G. Bromley
& Anson D. Shupe, Jr.

1981, Beacon Press, Boston.
249 pp. Hardback. (Out of print
in July; available in libraries.)

BROMLEY AND SHUPE OFFER A RADICALLY different perspective. While not advocating authoritarianism, neither do they believe authoritarian new religions are guilty of the charges anticultists accuse them of.

The authors insist, on the basis of hard data, that much of the ’70s-era controversy over “cults” was a hoax—a deliberate attempt to anger and horrify the public—promoted by well-meaning but misinformed parents and ardent but untrained “deprogrammers.”

On the one hand, observe the authors, virtually all new religions of the time—miscalled “cults”—were not particularly likeable. They condemned and rejected the values, lifestyles, and aspirations of mainstream society. They sought to recruit and reshape anyone who would listen. Their belief systems would be considered by most to be distasteful or non-credible. The new religions showed limited concern for individual members’ past ties and obligations to families and friends. Most treated outsiders with a mixture of pity and contempt. Some acted unscrupulously. Zealous, the groups presumed to know what was best for everyone. They took advantage of laws and constitutional protections to further their own ends. Their demands on their followers could be total and consuming.

At the same time, say the authors, the media grossly exaggerated the size of these groups, and by 1981 almost all had long since passed their peak. Moreover, the turnover was quite high; the vast majority of new converts walked away after a brief stay. There was—and is—no mysterious brainwashing process used to trap and enslave people, say the authors. (None of these groups confined people physically against their will tortured them, withheld food and water, as with prisoners of war in Korea, for example.) There was no convincing evidence that all new religions were out to make a fast buck, as most people believed. There was no evidence that their leaders, while authoritarian in their approach, were in fact complete charlatans. And there was—and is—no bonafide mental health therapy called deprogramming.

After an in-depth study of the beliefs, practices, recruitment methods, and lifestyles of several new religions, Bromley and Shupe

concluded that the most practical, insightful way to understand the controversy generated by these and other groups—and by the anticult activists—is to see it as a conflict of interest.

In a conflict of interest *two parties desire very different outcomes in the same situation, but one gains only at the expense of the other.* Thus, in the case of nonmainstream religions, young adult converts, seeking meaning in their lives, wanted the freedom to pursue their religious beliefs and practices, to sacrifice and commit themselves as deeply as they wished. At the same time, many parents, seeking to continue family ties with their adult children—and sometimes, to alleviate the social embarrassment of raising individuals who had become “strange”—wanted to stop their sons and daughters from pursuing those beliefs and practices.

Parties in conflicts of interest, say the authors, tend to pull their ranks together, enlist powerful allies, and use propaganda to try to discredit their opponents’ motives and actions. So the new converts zealously committed to their new lifestyles, and accepted the “propaganda” of their leaders. Meanwhile parents banded together with anticult activists, generated powerful media attention and government concern, and ac-

cepted the “propaganda” of anticult activists. Sometimes they used force to kidnap and physically confine their adult sons and daughters.

The authors, who continue to research new religions and their opponents today, say not much has changed. (See Anson Shupe’s “Covenantal Societies and Charges of Abuse,” p. 47.)

Bromley and Shupe also put this controversy in perspective by giving the historical context for new religions in the West. Virtually *all* mainstream religions started out in broiling controversy, with zealous converts battling equally zealous, powerful adherents of the religious status quo.

(A “cult” is defined non-derogatorily by anthropologists and religious scholars as an organized set of beliefs and rituals surrounding some object of worship, such as the “cult of the Virgin Mary,” and by scholars and sociologists as the starting point of any religion—with a single charismatic leader and a small band of devoted followers.)

So, just as Jesus and his Disciples enraged the Jewish Sanhedrin, early Christians outraged the Romans. As Martin Luther infuriated the Holy Mother Church, so Puritans, Quakers, and Shakers maddened the Protestants. Once on our shores, Quaker paci-

fists so outraged Puritans that they promptly hanged four of them. In the early 1800s Roman Catholic immigrants so incensed Protestants that they looted and burned convents. The Mormons infuriated them even more, so God-fearin’ Americans assassinated Joseph Smith, chased the Mormons all the way to Utah, and attacked them with the U.S. Army. Mennonites, Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and Christian Scientists have ran the same gauntlet on the way to respectability.

But were historic fears ever realistic? Was the Quaker opposition to military service ever really a treasonous act which threatened national security? Was it ever plausible that the Pope was masterminding a plot to foment a Catholic revolution in the United States? And do adherents of today’s new religious—who may accept unusual (and to many, ludicrous) belief systems; follow improbable (and, to many, irrational) leaders; and accept uncomfortable (and to many, unwholesome) lifestyles—really pose a threat to our North American way of life?

The authors address deprogramming: the reasons why kidnapped converts often fake “cures” and then escape; why deprogramming sometimes appears to work; why

Leaving the Fold

A Guide for Former Fundamentalists and Others Leaving Their Religion

by Marlene Winell, Ph.D.

“This new book . . . provides valuable insights into the dangers of religious indoctrination and outlines what therapists and victims can do to reclaim a healthier human spirit.”

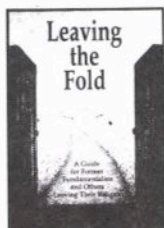
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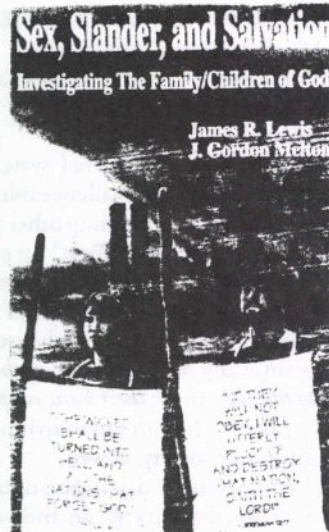
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we rarely hear from the large number of disillusioned ex-members who simply walked away; and why "deprogrammed" ex-members sometimes claim they were brainwashed. (See "Deprogramming" Our Members," p. 43.)

However, Bromley and Shupe reserve their most urgent message for last. We dare

not let anticult activists persuade government officials to legislate against people's belief systems, they say; this would create a dangerous precedent for the violation of religious liberty. We dare not let courts rule that parents can legally kidnap and detain adult children who joined nonmainstream religions, or worse, go after nonmainstream

religious with misinformation, paranoia, outright lies—or tanks and guns.

As we relinquish the rights of some of our citizens, the authors warn, we relinquish the rights of all.

(See "What Really Happened at Waco?," p. 50.)

More Books and Videos on "Cults"

Insight: Experts Comment on The Family and New Religious Movements (1993, 60-minute video, \$12.00. *The Family*, 2020 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, #102, Washington D.C. 20006-1846. 202-365-0622.)

The Family (formerly the Children of God), an international network of nonmainstream Christian intentional communities, invited a group of sociologists, psychologists, legal experts, and religious scholars from Britain, Australia, and the US to study their communities and comment on them and new religions in general. While not addressing The Family's beliefs or practices, the scholars on this video observed: The Family is more sexually open than most religious groups. They've created strong communities. There are no signs of child abuse; the children are bright, well-educated, loved, and well-cared for.

Further, the new religions convert and affect many more people than actually join them. New religions have extremely high turnover rates. Anticult activists attack the belief systems, not the conduct, of new religions. After decades of research it is widely known by psychologists (but not by the public) that unless people are physically confined, there is no such thing as "brainwashing" or "mind control." Currently there are 3,000 to 4,000 deprogramming attempts a year internationally (1,000 in the United States; 2,000 in Japan). Many U.S. deprogrammers earn \$400,000 to \$500,000 dollars annually.

And unfortunately, the U.S. government listens to and believes anticult activist groups, such as the Cult Awareness Network (CAN) and the American Family Foundation.

Torches Extinguished: Memories of a Communal Childhood in Paraguay, Europe, and the USA, by Elizabeth Boblken-Zumpe (1993, 300+ pp., Pb.) and **Free From Bondage, After Forty Years in Bruderhof Communities on Three Continents**, by Nadine Moonje Pleil, (1994, 368 pp., Pb., published by Carrier Pigeon Press, San Francisco.)

These autobiographies trace the lives of former members of the Bruderhof, a group of German Anabaptist communities founded in 1920. Both authors describe childhoods of hard discipline, pioneering austerities and courage, and the unique challenges and opportunities of living in this high-demand fundamentalist group—and how community leaders made major decisions for their families, which often caused great suffering.

Zumpe described how, after her father's expulsion from the community, for the several decades until he died the leadership authorities never accepted his pleas for forgiveness or allowed him to communicate with his wife.

Pleil tells how the leadership asserted that her children behaved badly—proof that she and her husband failed to uphold the group's values—and repeatedly demanded that they punish the children severely. Pleil and her husband complied, with anguish and fear, because questioning their leadership's judgment was considered a

sin, and grounds for expulsion from the community. After they were expelled, they recovered from their grief and desolation, and even thrived—a result of their strong faith and devotion, and the love and kindness of strangers in the long-feared "outside."

(See "The Heart Will Find a Way," p. 61, and "The Bruderhof Responds," p. 62.)

Church Universal and Triumphant, in Scholarly Perspective, James R. Lewis and J. Gordon Melton, Eds. (1994, Center for Academic Publication, Stanford, California. 160 pp., Pb., \$9.95. Available from Summit University Press, Box 5000, Livingston, MT 59047. 800-245-5445.)

After this new age Theosophically oriented religion established an intentional community in Montana in the early '80s, they made headlines for allegedly purchasing illegal weapons and building controversial fallout shelters. More recently, they have been sensationalized by anticult activists as "the next Waco."

In 1993 the church also invited a team of sociologists, psychologists, and religious scholars to study their community. This anthology of their results first describes the church's history, doctrines, and its various conflicts since moving to Montana. After a sociological survey and a battery of psychological tests the scholars concluded that Church Universal and Triumphant are "more like a denomination than a 'cult'"; that the members had higher IQs than average; and their children were, again, smart, loved, well-cared for, and well-educated. They found that most of the church's many legal cases, reviewed in the context of litigation involving other nonmainstream religions, were either unfounded rumors or exaggerated misrepresentations, and that abuses, when they occurred, were perpetrated by immature "middle managers" rather than church leadership.

Leaving the Fold: A Guide for Former Fundamentalists and Others Leaving Their Religion, by Marlene Winell, Ph.D. (1993, New Harbinger Publications. 297 pp., Pb., \$13.95.)

According to Dr. Winell, a former fundamentalist, in dogmatic religions doubt about the belief system is considered sinful, contradicting information is screened out, the Divine is seen as outside oneself, and there is no recognition of inner wisdom, strength, or joy. Moreover, she believes, like Kramer and Alstad above, that such belief systems can take on a life of their own and hurt people.

Through case histories and exercises, Dr. Winell examines the damage people have experienced through involvement in dogmatic groups. Topics include religious indoctrination; how religions can attract (and manipulate) people into adherence; why people leave fundamentalism and how painful the leaving process can be; the characteristics of a fundamentalist family; how growing up in one can influence an adult; and techniques for healing from the disillusionment of leaving such a group.

(See "Leaving the 'Hare Krishnas,'" p. 39.) Ω

Diana Leafé Christian is Editor of *Communities* magazine.

“Benevolent Dictators” in Community?

Kat and Mildred Debate Strong Central Government vs. Decision by Dialogue, Part I

by Kat Kinkade of Twin Oaks and Mildred Gordon of Ganas

Mildred Gordon and Kat Kinkade have each given a good deal of thought to systems of community government and, though agreeing on many issues, differ sharply on the question of strong central decision making. Kat, co-founder of Twin Oaks, East Wind, and Acorn communities, with 23 years of cooperative government in her background and a strong commitment to egalitarian systems, admits to a wistful longing for some aspects of central decision making. Mildred originated Feedback Learning and founded Ganas community. Herself a strong leader, Mildred finds much fault with egalitarianism, but holds that strong central leadership is ineffective in a cooperative community and potentially quite damaging.

Although their debate, or perhaps “Socratic dialogue,” took place in various forms, oral and written, over an eight-week period at Ganas, it is presented as one conversation. Part II will follow in the Winter ’95/’96 issue.

KAT: I HAVE PARTICIPATED IN various kinds of government. At East Wind we had voting democracy; at Twin Oaks the planner system. Acorn uses consensus. I’ve served on committees, councils, boards, and teams. Throughout the countless meetings I have attended, I notice over and over again that most decisions are made by a very few people, and quite frequently by only one. By this I mean that most of the essential functions in the process either were handled by one person, or could have been. We might

I say, appoint good decision-makers and then get out of the way and let them work. ... I have always thought of this person as a “benevolent dictator.” —Kat

.....

have a meeting of six people, four of whom are vocally active and three quite able, but the final decision is frequently the one proposed by a single individual. It will probably be more or less in the form proposed by that person in the first place, and the whole committee will agree that it makes sense. The result is a good decision coming out of a sensible proposal, a discussion, and group agreement. Who could find fault with that?

I can, and I do. I object to the time and energy of the other five people being spent on this meeting. I think they have more useful things to do. I would prefer this: one capable, trusted, sensitive person takes the issue on, researches any technical information needed, publicizes all the relevant information for the whole community, talks to anyone who has input or opinion, makes intelligent guesses at the probable long- and short-run consequences of various decisions that could be made, and then decides. Of course the group would retain the power to overrule.

Mildred: I object to the waste as much as you do. The quality of participation in community dialogues and committee work in general doesn’t tend to be great. Yet everybody involved could be uniquely valuable if they knew how. Group interaction is the only way for everyone to assess everyone else’s ideas, affect each other’s thinking, and arrive at workable compromises in some reasonable time span. Overruling decisions after the work is all done is the real time waster, and it can be disastrous to the process itself and to the whole situation.

Kat: I’m afraid you are right about the overrule; it’s a flaw in my suggested system, but let me set it aside for a minute to discuss the core issue.

You are comparing my wise, effective, and good-intentioned one-person committee to a pie-in-the-sky committee of thinking participants that in 26 years of community experience I have never seen an

example of. What I see are committees of people who mean well but have little to contribute except pre-formed opinions, if that. Solutions of committee-level decisions are usually pretty obvious, once the facts are in, and we don’t need six people to figure that out. I acknowledge that in your dream committee of thinkers, you will get even better decisions than my hypothetical wise person can come up with. Nevertheless, I think my rather drastic, undemocratic approach comes closer to fitting the actual situations in our scattered, poorly-populated, over-extended communities than your exciting dream does. I say, appoint good decision-makers and then get out of their way and let them work.

My theory goes on to say that, given one or two seriously capable people who could handle it, the whole of community government could be efficiently handled by one person or a small committee, using these same guidelines. In my fantasy, I have always thought of this person as a “benevolent dictator.”

Mildred: I don’t think the word “dictator,” benevolent or not, is what we’re talking about. Dictators have coercive powers. They

When leaders (or followers) manipulate, misinform, or too easily persuade non-thinking members, the short term effect can often look pretty good. But, long term, the open or hidden coercive influence of either leaders or followers creates a net power loss for everybody.

—Mildred

.....

not only make decisions but force them on other people, willing or unwilling. Franco was a dictator; he had an army. For our community situations, I think the term "strong central leader" is more appropriate.

Kat: I don't know why people will never let me use those powerful, attention-getting, provocative terms, just because they're not accurate. How are you going to wake up the sleepy reader with a phrase like "strong central leader?" (Sigh.) Well, all right. Have it your way.

Anyway, the essence of my argument is that decision making is a specialty, like auto mechanics, house building, or accounting. Good decisions are important. They affect people who live in the community now and those who will be here in the future; they affect who will be attracted or repelled; they can make or break a community economically. Communities cannot afford very many bad decisions. When groups of people try to decide things together, they settle for any decision that can be agreed upon, and agreement, influenced by undeclared agendas, poorly thought-out ideologies and "isms," and the popularity or unpopularity of the proposers, opposers, or facilitators, is as likely to generate a bad decision as a good one.

Mildred: Much more likely a bad one, I think.

Kat: Good decision making, though it includes agreement seeking, must go beyond it. It requires wisdom. If a group is lucky enough to have a member who has this wisdom and this skill, plus the trust of the community members, it is downright wasteful not to use it.

Mostly, communities don't have anybody who is quite that good and that wholly trusted, so the strong central leader system of government isn't an option for most of us. What is an option is to use the less sweeping wisdom and skill of the people we do have, get out of their way, and let them decide matters within their capabilities and their areas of knowledge. If they decide badly, teach them; if they won't learn, replace them.

Mildred: Who will teach them? How? Replace them with whom? How?

Kat: By the crude methods already in our repertoire. By approval and disapproval, encouragement, adding an "assistant" who will tactfully take over, by ouster if necessary. None of this is ideal, but it is no worse than committee decision making and a

whole lot less wasteful.

Now I know perfectly well that this "recommendation" of mine will not be accepted by anybody, no matter how persuasively I might present it. I have tried (with no noticeable success) to convince people of much milder, watered down versions of the notion, and I have pretty well memorized the standard replies. I'll briefly summarize them, along with my equally brief counter-arguments:

(1) *The central leader might leave or die, and then there would be nobody trained to take on the important leadership functions.* I reply: The longevity of groups that follow a charismatic leader is not noticeably shorter than more democratic groups.

(2) *Power necessarily and always corrupts. The temptations to the leader to abuse the group's trust are overwhelming.* I reply: Power does not always corrupt, only frequently. There are exceptions, and it is the exceptions I am talking about.

(3) *The other communitarians would like to have a turn at the interesting business of decision making.* I reply: There is only one appropriate motive for the desire to govern, and that is the desire and ability to produce good decisions that are good for the community. The desire to be a governor is early evidence of the tendency to corruption.

(4) *If people don't own a decision, they will never be satisfied with it.* I reply: Good information-gathering and persuasive political swaps on the part of the leader will leave the people feeling that they "own" the decisions (or at least made a pretty good deal) as much as any other method.

(5) *The time invested in group government is not wasted. It pays off in the education and general maturity of the people doing it.* I reply: It may, but I wonder about the proportion of education to time spent. Vast amounts of good time are wasted by people who do not use the meeting time to increase their skills but to show off, defeat other people, enjoy the government show, and hang out with "important" people. Some learning does take place, but the cost is too high.

(6) *No one person can think of all the options, and someone in the group could have a good idea the leader has not thought of.* I reply: This is true, but the idea can easily be communicated to the leader, personally or in writing, during the information gather-

ing stage. I see no necessity to meet in groups for discussion and debate. I am not suggesting that a central leader can be permitted to govern without consulting the community as a whole, but merely that the group does not have to sit around in meetings in order to contribute.

Mildred: You leave out the importance of interaction between the members. We need

(Group) agreement, influenced by undeclared agendas, poorly thought-out ideologies and "isms," and the popularity or unpopularity of the proposers, opposers, or facilitators, is as likely to generate a bad decision as a good one. —Kat

to know each other's agendas, personal as well as community. Just as important, we need the chance to respond right then, when ideas are in formation.

Kat: Yes, my argument grows weak at this point. I suppose it is because I am so personally irritated by the many people who don't listen to each other anyway that I have come to believe we needn't bother with giving them the opportunity.

But alas! The more I write in defense of the central leader idea, the weaker it seems to me. I can see all kinds of holes in the arguments I just summarized, and as I read them over, I grow uncomfortable at their transparent flaws. Part of my discomfort lies in the fact that the wise, charismatic central leader of my fantasy is largely a creature of my imagination. With the possible (ironic) exception of yourself, Mildred, I have not seen such people in action and cannot personally vouch for their efficacy. I also notice that no community thinker I respect seems to agree with my position. My strong feelings on the subject may be merely my reaction to the bad decision-making I have seen take place in a democratic framework. All that aside, what do you say to my arguments?

Mildred: Of course, my experience of most democratic committee work is similar to yours. Isn't everybody's? I also agree with most of the arguments you cited earlier against rule by centralized leadership, but these are not my most compelling reasons for rejecting it as a method of choice. I am convinced that there is no acceptable replacement for powerful individuals cooperating

to share power intelligently and with good will. What's more, I think that it can be done, so of course I believe that we have to learn how to do it.

Probably the most basic disagreement between us is expressed in my conviction that nobody can wisely determine another person's objectives. I think that's a practical consideration, not a moral issue. You simply must consult with the people you're trying to serve often enough to take changes into account. Alone, or in one-to-one en-

Mildred: I consider the physics definition of power—the use of energy to move in a determined direction. If we cooperate on what we agree is a desirable direction and on a good way to get there, we create a power gain that increases possibilities for accomplishing anything we decide to do—more power not just for the whole group but also for every individual in it. This option seems at least worth exploring.

When leaders (or followers) manipulate, misinform, or too easily persuade non-thinking members, the short-term effect can often look pretty good. But, long term, the open or hidden coercive influence of either leaders or followers creates a net power loss for everybody. Dictatorial rule is tough, but I find voluntary submission harder to resist, more difficult to overcome, and more

ingredient of good government. The fact is, we don't know how to interact well, and we'll just have to try to learn. There are lots of good reasons for the failures so far.

For example, since we haven't yet learned to dialogue, "good leaders" are usually deprived of intelligent, well-intentioned dissent. In the absence of thoughtful opposition, it is very easy to fall in love with illusions of personal infallibility, invincibility, or even immortality. One's own perception of reality can seem to be all there is. Lack of mental exercise creates a flabbiness that allows such absurdities to seem believable. Flabbiness easily leads to corruption, or just to well-meaning megalomania.

Unchecked authority breeds passive-aggression in devoted followers with alarming consistency. How many adoring, obedient, willing puppets does it take to weaken a leader? How many turn-arounds and backstabbing betrayals (when the leader stumbles a little) before even the best leaders learn to watch their backs, expect the worst, and know that such things go with the territory? How long before reality-based paranoia sets in? These things are just what happens without the safeguard of strong people and good group dialogue. There are simply too many people willing (even eager) to submit without reason or oppose without understanding what they're against. For me it is just too hard to live with the awareness of people surrendering their own adulthood to another—any other—without trying to do something about it. I believe that it is simply not possible to surrender autonomy without creating too much dependence, too much destructive, competitive drive for the leader's approval, together with corresponding terror of disapproval or criticism. Perhaps these perverse things happen because relationships with leaders tend to hark back to the love/hate feelings for parents with whom we all have so much unfinished business. In any event, all this craziness easily frustrates the best-intentioned attempts to exchange the current information on which good problem solving rests. Ω

Kat Kinkade co-founded Twin Oaks and East Wind communities, and helped start Acorn community. She is author of A Walden Two Experiment (William Morrow, 1972), and Is It Utopia Yet? An Insider's View of Twin Oaks Community in its 26th Year (Twin Oaks, 1994). Mildred Gordon has an extensive background in group facilitation and training of group leaders. She founded the Foundation for Feedback Learning in 1974, and Ganas Community in 1980.

Unchecked authority breeds passive-aggression in devoted followers with alarming consistency. How many adoring, obedient, willing puppets does it take to weaken a leader? ... There are simply too many people willing to submit without reason or oppose without understanding what they're against. —Mildred

counters, leaders can only guess at what is dynamically going on. Insecurity distorts perceptions too easily. Without information sources that are updated and interactively processed regularly, conclusions are too faulty to become the good decisions that take care of individual desires without sacrificing the long-term good of the group.


Kat: Many community people feel a concern about "power"—who has it, and how much, how it is distributed, and the like. My notions of frank, up-front centralized government seem very dangerous to them. How does your idea of interactive decision-making deal with those concerns?

controlling than active domination. I consider passivity, rebellious negativity, and indifference born of overcautious security seeking to be the most common destroyers of good governing. The truth is that minority or arbitrary rule, imposed by the strong or the weak, just doesn't work well enough. It clogs the wheels of reason, and nothing moves easily. What's worse, it also hampers possibilities for caring about each other.

Everyone agrees that self-empowerment is the way to go. But can we agree that protective catering to weakness rewards self-disempowerment? Increased personal strength is a do-it-yourself job. Leaders just can't do it for us. Neither can non-coercive disempowerment be imposed for long without the consent and cooperation of the disempowered. Armed subjugation certainly does happen, but Gandhi demonstrated that without the compliance of the oppressed, even guns can't maintain control.

Kat: Wait a minute. Let's make sure we don't fall into the error of basing this discussion on the conventional picture of a dictatorial "leader" who overpowers, manipulates, or perhaps just goes mad. That's too feeble a straw man, easily blown away, and it's not my scenario. My central leader is a good guy.

Mildred: So is mine. But "good guys" can't replace good group interaction as a basic

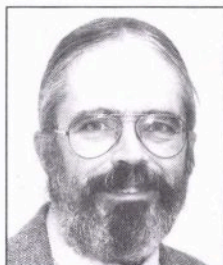


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Intentional Communities & "Cults"



FROM THE GUEST EDITOR
.....
Tim Miller

"Cult" as a Useless Word

PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN COMMUNITY ARE NATURALLY SUSPECT IN America today. They live differently than the majority do, and they by definition live in groups, not as individuals or in nuclear families. A lot of Americans worry about "cults," and community people often find themselves identified as potential "cultis:s."

Even beyond the world of intentional community people often want a bill of health for a given group: Is it a "cult," or is it okay? But the very fact that such a question is widely asked means that a judgment has been rendered before the evidence has been heard. In the interest of leveling the playing field I wish, impossibly, that we could somehow simply quit using the term "cult" altogether.

The fundamental problem here is that the word "cult," as it is popularly used in the United States, no longer has any descriptive value. It doesn't communicate any clear, focused concept, but rather simply indicates a prejudgment of disapproval.

That's too bad, because in certain circumstances the word could have real meaning. Sociologists, for example, have a fairly clear sense of what they mean by "cult," so they can use the word in a valuable way. Catholic theologians use the term to mean worship activities. In many other countries the term remains useful: in France the Ministry of Cults is the division of government that deals with religious affairs. Historically the word comes from the same root as "agriculture" and reminds us that religion is importantly rooted in agricultural fertility rituals.

But such real content is utterly missing from the most common use of "cult" in American society today. For us "cult" simply means a group we don't like.

It's okay not to like some people or groups, of course. As a

student of nonmainstream religions I could easily produce a list of groups I really don't care for at all. But that's not the point. When the word "cult" enters the typical American conversation, the jury has already returned. From that point on we're discussing the sentence, not the verdict.

The closest analogue to the standard use of "cult" today is "nigger," a word certainly out of bounds in polite discourse. Nigger doesn't provide any useful information beyond the identification of an individual's skin color, a trivial datum; it simply indicates that the speaker is putting down a person, or a class or group of people, in an insulting way. And that is exactly what "cult" does.

The use of a word might not matter, except that when a society tolerates pejorative language, it announces that some people are marginal, even subhuman. That marginalization opens a Pandora's box: as Catherine Wessinger argues elsewhere in this issue, hateful speech has a direct connection to actual physical as well as psychological abuse of persons.

I've let the c-word into in the theme title for this issue partly so that I could bash it here, and partly to ensure that contributors and readers instantly understood what we were talking about. But as a means of conveying content—which is what language is all about—I really do think the word is washed up. People who don't say "nigger" to refer to an African American or "bitch" to refer to a woman would promote civility in our society by avoiding "cult" as well. Ω

*Guest Editor Tim Miller teaches about American religion at the University of Kansas. His academic speciality is the study of non-mainstream religious groups, and especially communal groups. He recently published the edited volume, *America's Alternative Religions* (SUNY Press, 1995), and is currently working on a survey history of communal living in the twentieth century. His leisure activities range from visiting intentional communities to doing needlepoint.*



Religious Intolerance—Not “Cults”— Is the Problem

by Catherine Wessinger

AT THE END OF JUNE 1994 *TIME* magazine came under criticism for altering O. J. Simpson's mug shot to make his skin appear darker and then using that altered photo on its cover. African Americans rightly pointed out that this *Time* cover promoted racism by perpetuating the stereotype that dark-skinned men, particularly African-American men, commit violent crimes. Most people, however, do not realize that much of the news reporting on alternative religions perpetuates prejudice by labeling them “cults.” Nor do most people realize that the current popular use of the word “cult” is pejorative and expresses religious prejudice. Racism is the belief that certain races are better than other races. Sexism is the belief that one sex is better than the other. Homophobia is heterosexual prejudice against gays and lesbians. These forms of prejudice are widely recognized. We need to realize that there is also religious prejudice, the belief that certain religions are legitimate and other religions are not. The recognition of all forms of prejudice is important, because prejudice dehumanizes the stigmatized group so that violence against

its members becomes socially acceptable.

Many news reports and discussions of alternative religions are guilty of gross simplification and of spreading fear by lumping together many different types of religions and calling them “cults.” Not uncommonly, very diverse groups such as the Branch Davidians, Jews for Jesus, Church Universal and Triumphant, the Unification Church (Moonies), the Hare Krishnas, Bible study circles, Ramtha devotees, meditation and yoga classes, UFO believers, and Santería initiates get branded with the label “cult.” Persons affiliated with the anti-cult movement want us to believe that there are hundreds of cults (illegitimate religions) threatening to snatch up and brainwash unsuspecting young, middle-aged, and elderly persons. But the only thing these groups have in common is the prejudice directed against them by the wider public.

The theory of brainwashing that is advocated by the anti-cult movement has been

rejected by the two academic and professional associations competent to evaluate the theory. The American Psychological Association and the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion reject the theory that a religious group can brainwash its members and reduce them to uncritical zombies. Further, the methods used by alternative religions are not significantly different from

The word “cult,” which formerly referred to an organized system of worship, is now a term that slanders any religion that you don't know about and don't like.

recruitment methods used by mainstream religions.¹ Christian denominations send missionaries to non-Christian countries to convert people; Christian evangelists hold revivals so unconverted people can be “born again”; all Christian denominations instruct their children and young people in Sunday Schools, Bible schools, and catechism.

It has not been long ago that white Americans acting in mobs seized and lynched black men. No one today would justify mob execution without due process of the law. When the news media portray African Americans in a way that perpetuates racial stereotypes, nowadays, the African-American community is well organized and socially accepted enough to voice a protest that will be heard by white Americans.

But the unreasoning prejudice against religions that are perceived as not being mainstream is still not widely questioned. When the news media vilify a religious group and its leader, no one outside the group no-

my opinion—and many people would disagree—any group that discourages intellectual inquiry, or encourages total obedience to an authority figure, or condones criminal activities, is probably not healthy. This is true for mainstream as well as nonmainstream groups. We know very well that child abuse, sexual abuse, abuse of authority, and coercing people to give money are found in socially accepted mainstream religions as well as in some nonmainstream groups. These problems need to be addressed in all their complexity. The answer is not in simplistically vilifying a religion and spreading religious prejudice based on inaccurate stereotypes.

The two separate government assaults in

1993 against the Branch Davidian community that resulted in over 80 deaths demonstrate that religious prejudice poses a greater danger to the lives of ordinary people than the alternative religions that are pejoratively termed "cults." Ω

¹ Anthony, Dick, "Religious Movements and Brainwashing Litigation: Evaluating Key Testimony," in *In Gods We Trust: New Patterns of Religious Pluralism in America*, Thomas Robbins and Dick Anthony, Editors, second edition (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1990), pp. 295-344.

Catherine Wessinger is an Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Loyola University, New Orleans.

The American Psychological Association and the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion reject the theory that a religious group can brainwash its members and reduce them to uncritical zombies.

... tices or cares. When unnecessary and dangerous force is used against a nonmainstream group, the prejudiced assumption is that they deserved what happened to them.

We know that prejudice motivates violence. Prejudice condoned the lynching of black men, saying that they got what they deserved. Prejudice against women condones and sanctions wife-beating as "a family matter." Where there is prejudice against women, a woman who has been raped will be judged and condemned more than her attacker. In cases of wife-beating or rape, prejudice says that the woman got what she deserved. Prejudice against religions condones unnecessarily aggressive actions against a group that results in deaths of innocent children, women, and men.

The word "cult," which formerly referred to an organized system of worship, is now a term that slanders any religion that you don't know about and don't like. The term "cult" is pejoratively applied to many different types of groups, and its use dehumanizes people, and thus sanctions violence against them, the way "nigger" dehumanized African Americans and sanctioned violence against them.

Without eliminating anyone's freedom of religion, it is fair for individuals to ask if a religion or worldview is healthy or not. In



Taking Our Children, Part I Messianic Communities, Sociologists, and the Law

by Jean Swantko and Ed Wiseman



JEAN SWANTKO, COMMUNITY AT ISLAND POND

Photo, 10 years later, of children taken in the 1984 raid at Island Pond Community.

The association of 20 Messianic communities—the Community at Island Pond, the Community at Hyannis, the Community at Rutland, and the others in the United States and abroad—has long dealt with being labeled a “cult” and specifically being accused of abusing children. The communities have successfully defended themselves in repeated court cases.

“Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles ... A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. ... So then, you will know them by their fruits.” (Matthew 7:15-20.)

IN OUR MESSIANIC COMMUNITIES we focus on obeying the Gospel. We live together as did the first-century church in Jerusalem; we believe that the true church must be as it was in the beginning, when it was pure. (Acts 2:37-47, 4:32-36.)

Ezekiel foretold that birds of every feather from all races and all nations will flock together to find shelter in God’s mighty tree. Since our Master, Yahshua (His Hebrew Name) said that the world would know that the Father sent Him because His followers would be perfected in unity and in love, we have devoted ourselves to being those followers, every day.

We marry and raise our children to be

respectful and obedient, educating them at home and spanking them when necessary. We strive to love God and to be good neighbors, working with our hands to earn an honest living. We love all that God has created and want to see the Earth and all of mankind restored to the life we were created for.

When Jesus Christ walked the Earth some 2,000 years ago he was accused of being a cult leader and of proclaiming himself a false messiah. He said that many false prophets would arise in the last years of this age and warned his disciples not to be misled by them. (Matthew 24:4-5, 11.)

We believe we are living in those times of which our Master spoke. So we can expect that there will be His disciples—loving as He loved, being in unity as He was in unity with His Father, and being treated as He was treated. There will also be disciples of false prophets and false messiahs, some of whom will be in the mainstream and others on the fringes.

How are we to tell them apart? By looking at their fruits. But despite our continual invitations, the anti-cult people don’t do this. In the 25-year history of our communities, only one such person has ever visited us to check us out, and he changed his mind when he did.

The anti-cult movement has a vested in-

terest in deciding who has the light and who doesn’t. Our Messianic communities are on the anti-cult activist’s lists and these organizations have been lying about us for about 20 years now, falsely accusing us of child abuse. When we tell them the truth, they ignore it and continue to disseminate lies. Why does it seem like the anti-cult movement primarily targets those groups which actively claim to pursue God?

...

IN 1982 ONE OF OUR MEMBERS, whose wife accused him of pedophilia, left our Community in Island Pond, Vermont. When his wife would not leave with him or give him custody of their five children, he vowed to “destroy” the community. He sought advice from anti-cult activists, who apparently suggested that he spread lies in the media and among local government officials.

The media predictably fell in line; his accusations made “good copy.” Vermont social service agencies readily believed tales of child abuse and other atrocities of astounding proportions. Because 1984 was an election year, many public officials, apparently wanting to advance their careers, cooperated with the anti-cult activists. One nearby resident also vociferously—and effectively—screamed “Abuse!” to the press.

On June 22, 1984, a squadron of 90 Vermont state troopers and 50 social workers seized 112 of our children from their homes at the Island Pond Community. Down the road at a local ski resort, a battalion of psychologists waited to give a battery of tests and a professional assessment to these "victims." The state of Vermont claimed that all 112 children were in a high-risk situation justifying immediate action.

Thanks to the U.S. Constitution and a conscientious local judge who believed in it enough to obey it, by nightfall over 40 individual detention hearings had been held. When the state could produce no evidence of abuse, the judge observed the children, then ordered all of them returned to their parents at Island Pond. He later commented that Vermont had committed "the worst state-sanctioned violation of children since Herod."

The deprogrammer who instigated the above actions against Island Pond in 1984 had been ordered by the court in 1993 to stop his anti-cult activities, and in fact was serving a federal prison term for kidnapping (on unrelated charges). Not many know the role this deprogrammer played, yet the aftermath of his accusations lives on.

Many innocent people have been, and continue to be, damaged by the widespread fear of "cults." Parents have had unjustified fears raised and have wasted tens of thousands of dollars trying to "save" their children, creating irreconcilable family breakdowns and wounds that don't heal. Judges, law-enforcement personnel, social workers, and citizens have been duped by the hundreds into taking action on behalf of taxpayers—at great expense to them—action not warranted by the truth.

Ask the five families of our new Messianic Community in Hyannis, Massachusetts. In 1994, 10 parents spent six months in and out of court defending themselves and their infant children against the same old lies. When the story of what happened in Vermont was described to Massachusetts social workers, their response was, "This is different. They blew it in Vermont; we'll do it right." This theme recurs among government bureaucrats and law enforcement personnel who, deceived by lies, continue to fear "cultic" and abusive activity, having been convinced by the press that it exists. The chief Family Court judge in Massachusetts dismissed all the Hyannis cases for lack of evidence.

Also in 1994, four little girls were hijacked from their mother, who had custody, after she joined the Messianic Community in Rutland, Vermont. Their

father, who did not have custody, feared abuse by community members and refused to return the girls after a visit. In order to conduct an assessment—and without cause or evidence—the court permitted the girls to be isolated from their mother's home for six months. The psychologist's finding:

The judge later commented that Vermont had committed "the worst state-sanctioned violation of children since Herod."

.....

there had been no harm to the girls in the Rutland Community; it was a safe place for children. The parents agreed to joint custody, but within a few months, the three oldest girls returned to their mother in the community of their own choosing and with the father's consent.

In the early 1980s three mothers in our communities lost, by court order, 11 children to their husbands, who had previously left those communities. Today, 10 out of those 11 children are back in their communities by their own choice and without the objection of their fathers. There are other similar stories; unfortunately some cases remain unresolved. (See "My Son Michael, p. 34.)

OUR RESPONSE IS to be who we are and to continue to grow in love, establishing Messianic communities wherever people respond to God's Word. We want to be like the Messiah and demonstrate His life to the world.

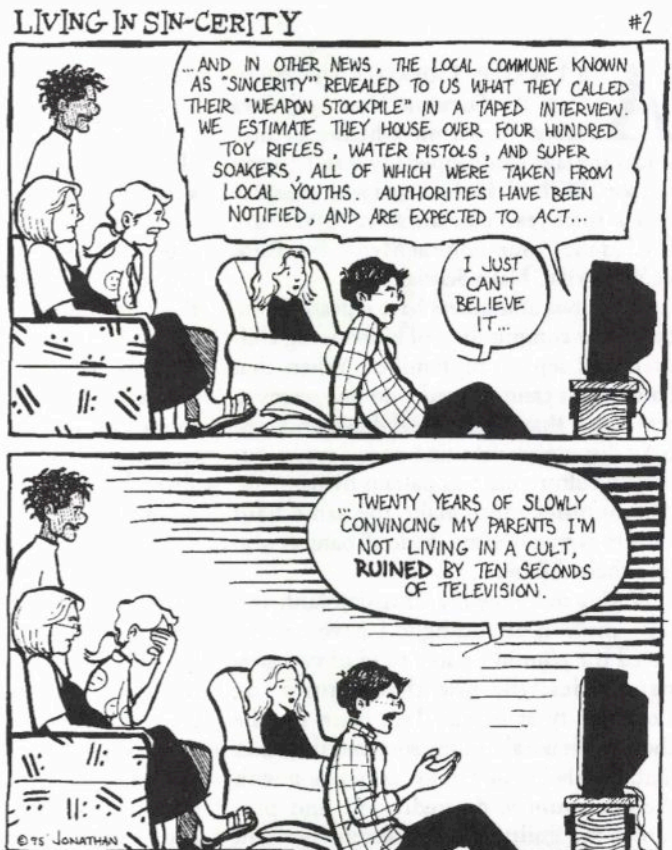
We constantly invite people to visit our communities to see for themselves what we are all about. We have nothing to hide. We want everyone, everywhere to experience a taste of the new social order that Yahshua,

the Messiah, is raising up in these confusing and alienating times. Every Friday night we gather to celebrate and welcome guests into our homes. We contact public officials, go to neighborhood meetings, and publish literature telling the truth about ourselves. We have a list of friends, neighbors, and business associates willing to testify on our behalf.

We live an open and accessible life, just as our Master Yahshua did. He also lived with the label of being a cult leader, as well as a false messiah. We know that we, too, will never be accepted by everyone. There will always be those who revile us for what we do *not* do and what we do *not* believe.

The fact that some tell lies does not change the reality of the Word that, "If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of mine; and you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free." (John 8:31-32.) That is where we take our stand, by the grace of our God. Come visit us and see for yourself. Ω

Jean Swantko, a lawyer, and Ed Wisemann, a teacher, are a married couple who live at the Community at Island Pond, one of the Messianic communities described in this article.



JONATHAN ROTH

Taking Our Children, Part II

My Son Michael

by Isaac Dawson



JEAN SWANTKO, THE COMMUNITY AT ISLAND POND

Isaac Dawson and his son, Michael (1990): "his usual smiling, bubbly self."

AS I WRITE, I AWAIT A DECISION from the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia to tell me whether or not, under the law, I kidnapped my own 12-year-old son, Michael. He has lived with me since he was three years old, and since 1986 I have lived in the Community at Myrtle Tree Farm in Waterville, Nova Scotia.

The press and others have repeatedly accused our communities of kidnapping children and separating families. When that flamboyant claim is made, no one seems to remember that family breakdown and custody disputes are routine nowadays in our broken culture and that parents living in our communities must make the same hard choices as anyone else—as do all parents who love their children.

Trying to follow my Christian faith and raise my son accordingly, I have experienced the painful double bind of two persistent lies: the one that blames the Community at Myrtle Tree Farm for the choices I make about my son, and the other that, simply because of my association with the community, discredits me and presumes me guilty. The persistent lies and inaccuracies reported in the press have

nothing to do with me or with our beliefs as a community.

Almost a decade ago I left the life I had always known for the life I had always desired. My then four-year-old son loved his life in the Community at Myrtle Tree Farm. One sunny fall day in 1987 a sedan and a police cruiser drove up the long driveway to the farmhouse we shared with 25 other members. My son and I were in the yard feeding the chickens. Two women approached us. They informed me that they were investigating a complaint of child abuse. My son was his usual smiling bubbly self; I assumed that the women would quickly be able to discern that we were fine. They said, however, that they were going to take Michael to the hospital for a complete examination. I was stunned. In the more affluent neighborhood where I grew up this would never have happened.

I soon realized that my new beliefs and way of living had put me in a vulnerable position. The examination went well and the doctor gave my son a clean bill of health. Several days later, however, I was served with

a notice to appear in the local Family Court. It turned out that the doctor had been given some newspaper articles about the community, and he had signed an affidavit written by a social worker reacting to those articles. The affidavit bore no relation to what the doctor had observed of my son or to the truth of our lives.

Working from the affidavit, the judge gave the local social services agency author-

Two officers literally pried my son's hands from around my neck, ripping him off me as he screamed "No! No! No!"

ity to investigate. The judge assured me that she just wanted "a window on our life" to make sure nothing was amiss. That "window" turned into a five-month ordeal that eventually took us to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia.

One evening during the course of the Family Court proceedings, five police cruisers and no fewer than 10 officers, accompa-

nied by social workers, came to the farm to apprehend my then four-year-old son. Michael was helping with chores in the barn when they arrived. It was a scene I will never forget. Although I didn't resist the authorities, I could not consent to them taking my son either. The officers pleaded with me and tried to intimidate me. Michael was clinging to me with all his might. An intimate, but divided crowd—our household and some neighbors amidst social workers and Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers—hovered intensely in our small barn. Two officers literally pried my son's hands from around my neck, ripping him off me as he screamed "No! No! No!"

They lowered Michael into the back seat of one of the cruisers and whisked him off into the night with lights flashing. When asked, one of the social workers ashamedly acknowledged with a nod of her head that what was happening to my son at that very moment was itself child abuse. The officers were clearly uncomfortable, but they were under orders—orders from the social workers. Our neighbors, a dentist and high school French teacher, in utter disbelief, watched helplessly.

Michael didn't see me or anybody he knew until a higher court returned him to me 44 days later. He had been taken to numerous psychologists and was extensively

grilled about my beliefs and the philosophy of our community. His foster mother kept copious notes on everything he did and said. It was almost as if they had captured an alien from another planet and wanted to know what made him tick. Michael held his own, and they were amazed at his loyalty. They called him "brainwashed," yet gave totally favorable reports of his personality.

The social service personnel were indignant and bitter about the decision to let Michael go home and immediately appealed to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia. Meanwhile, as we continued in the lower court, the Family Court judge again ordered me to produce my son. I couldn't do it and

The "Cult" Scare is Nothing New

O THERWISE INTELLIGENT PEOPLE JUST "KNOW" THAT certain groups are bad. They've probably never met a member, visited a temple, or read a word of the movement's publications. It's a cult; case closed.

It's interesting to note, in a community context, that there's nothing new about this kind of stereotyping. Some of the groups most beloved to students of historic communal societies were the targets of savage antagonism and stereotyping in years past. The passage of time has oddly changed our perspective; believers who once were dangerous cultists are now warm and cuddly.

The Harmony Society, the community of Pietist Christians whose life spanned the nineteenth century, survived and prospered despite experiencing some of the most demeaning stereotypes and outright attacks. Although it was a family movement in its early years, the Harmony Society eventually turned to celibacy and was duly attacked for denying its members sexual expression. The society was wealthy, so wealthy, in fact, that once it guaranteed a loan for a strapped federal government. That led, naturally, to accusations that community leaders were enriching themselves at the expense of the obedient grunts who did all the work. And on and on: the stereotypes were all there. The Harmonists even had to endure lawsuits full of outlandish allegations.

Even more did the Shakers endure hassles brought on by vicious stereotyping. People were jealous of their prosperity (the product of good minds and hard work) and skeptical of their decidedly unusual religion. People often seemed not to mind dumping their unwanted children on the generous Shakers, but their attempts to redress perceived grievances sometimes led to violence, up to and including murder of Shakers who were really guilty of nothing more than unconventional beliefs and behavior. The atrocity tales that ex-"cult" members tell today had their

Shaker counterpart; former members (or relatives or friends of former members) could often make good money on the lecture circuit telling lurid tales about these people who dared to live in conditions of community and celibacy.

The Mormons, whose United Order was one of the most substantial experiments in intentional community during the nineteenth century, were perhaps the most reviled religious group in America for most of that century. Their founder, Joseph Smith, was at various times tarred and feathered, threatened with castration, and finally murdered by hostile mobs. Nineteenth-century propaganda against Mormons was some of vilest literature to see print in its time, making the Mormons out to be violent fanatics, horse thieves, sexual outlaws, and statutory rapists. Why did the Mormons end up in Utah? Because they were being terminally harassed everywhere they went, and they finally found a place that was so unpopulated that they were finally left alone.

What these groups had in common, apart from a commitment to intentional community, was that they were victims of stereotyping. They were "different," and therefore obviously evil.

Sadly, this kind of stereotyping that leads to prejudice and even to violence is alive and well today. Literature put out by the ream by major anticult groups today does to contemporary religious and communal movements what their earlier counterparts did to the Harmonists, Shakers, Mormons, and others. The antidiversity lobby has been alive and well for centuries, committed to the principle that different equals evil and that those in error have no rights. Many of the major anti-cult groups keep files on communal groups today, including a fair number with whom readers of this magazine are familiar. Friends of community would do well to be very careful about believing—much less supporting—what these folks have to say. —Tim Miller Ω

didn't do it. I was jailed for contempt and ordered to stay in custody until I divulged his whereabouts. Twenty-six days later, after the appeal was heard, the Supreme Court released me and upheld the decision returning Michael to me. We were elated.

How is it then that here I am now, years later, still having to defend myself, my son, my chosen life, and the community of which we are a part? One reason is that media reports of charges of child abuse in the Island Pond Community in Vermont—charges which they had been cleared of years earlier—were spread by newspapers and TV in Nova Scotia. It has only been in the last year or so that our community has come to understand that a network of so-called "cult" experts are committed to destroying groups who choose to live outside of the mainstream. It has become abundantly clear that there is a deliberate plan at work that incites government agencies, police authorities, and courts into actions that are neither based on truth nor founded in law. Often the actions that we have been accused of are the very actions that have been used against us—kidnapping, brainwashing, separating families, and outright child abuse.

As a part of this agenda, in March 1992, another attempt was made to take Michael from me. Down the same driveway came a police car driven by an officer whom we all knew and liked. He handed me a stack of court documents; once again my son was on the line. Before I could even gather my thoughts, another car sped up the driveway. Michael's mother got out. She had travelled



JEAN SWANTKO, THE COMMUNITY AT ISLAND POND

According to his father, Michael (second from left) loved his life at Myrtle Tree Farm.

A network of so-called "cult" experts are committed to destroying groups who choose to live outside of the mainstream ... inciting government agencies, police authorities, and courts into actions that are neither based on truth nor founded in law.

over a thousand miles and hadn't told us she was coming.

Who had put her up to this? She was always welcome to visit or stay anytime she wanted. Something was wrong. It turned out that a hearing had been held in the same Family Court earlier that week—without my being there. The court had issued an order for Michael's mother to have weekend access to him without my being informed about it.

After consulting with my friends at the Myrtle Tree Farm and talking to my lawyer friend in Vermont, a fellow disciple, I agreed to allow supervised access but not to let Michael out of my custody until I had the opportunity to be heard. Michael's mother refused the supervised access. Given everything that Michael had been through at the hands of the Family Court, I couldn't see putting him through the whole thing again, and acquiesced.

Michael's mother had abduction charges laid against me. On February 4, 1994, I was arrested by the FBI in California, where we had been living for some time. Again, without notice or hearing, the authorities took my son. After two months in jail, I was released on bail. In September, 1994, I was tried for abduction and found innocent. The judge said I had lawful custody and possession of my son the whole time. I was so

happy and so relieved!

But within a few weeks time, again I was served papers. The Province of Nova Scotia had appealed my acquittal! Because I am confined to the province as I await the decision of the Nova Scotia Court of Appeals, I find myself without my community, my son, or my freedom.

The times we live in are not easy. At the appeal of my acquittal, my lawyer told the

court, "If Isaac Dawson were not a member of the Myrtle Tree Farm Community, I do not believe he would even be charged." I believe that to be the truth.

At this time in history, it seems to me that with the future of humankind in such question, there might be some room for individuals to seek the truth. "From one man He made every nation of man, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us." (Acts 17:26-27.)

I am thankful for the new life I have come to know and glad to be part of a community that is committed to one another in love. It has cost me everything to follow my God—even my son. One day Michael will be free to choose what he will do with his life. I believe that, regardless of the lies and other activities of the anti-cult movement, he will join me in the community—and that he will choose the truth. Ω

Isaac Dawson was a member of the Community at Myrtle Tree Farm, which moved to Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1993

In July 1995 the Appeals Court of Nova Scotia overturned Isaac's conviction for disobeying a court order. Though acquitted of abduction charges at his first trial, because this ruling was overturned (permitted in Canada), Isaac awaits a second trial for this charge. He remains separated from Michael.



BILLIE MIRACLE

On Leaving the "Hare Krishnas"

by Steven J. Gelberg (Subhananda Das)

Probably no religious movement in twentieth-century America has been more vilified as a "cult" than the International Society for Krishna Consciousness—ISKCON or the Krishna movement for short, or in popular parlance, the "Hare Krishnas." ISKCON has remained more determinedly Asian than most movements transplanted to Western shores, emphasizing traditional Indian diet, dress, and decor. That emphatic Indianization of Western, American devotees has undoubtedly contributed to the Krishna movement's "cult" stigmatization: clearly these people diverge from the American norm, and that is the essence of "cultishness."

ISKCON, now active in the United States for 30 years, has held up some of the highest ideals to be found in any religion in America. Steven Gelberg was immersed in that idealism for the better part of two decades, but gradually began to see that this movement, like all others, was populated by fallible humans and as a human organization did not fully embody its noble aspirations. He shares with us his progressive disenchantment with a community of believers that for so long was his very life. —T.M.

IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE AN EXPERIENCE more wrenching, more potentially disorienting, than leaving a spiritual community or tradition to which one has devoted years of one's life. To lose faith in a comprehensive system of ideas that have shaped one's consciousness and guided one's actions, to leave a community that has constituted one's social world and defined one's social identity, to renounce a way of life that is an entire mode of being, is an experience of momentous implications.

Especially when the community or tradition being left defines itself as the repository and bastion of all goodness, all meaning, all truth, all decency, all meaningful human attainment, it may require a major psychological effort to reorient oneself both to one's own self and to the wider world. Internally, one must work to rediscover and reclaim one's own unique, personal sources of meaning, truth, and spirituality and to live authentically from out of those inner depths. Externally, one must learn how to deal with the outer world, the vast territory lying beyond the gates of the spiritual en-

clave—that place that has for so long been viewed as a dark and evil abode unfit for human habitation.

Though I've had little to do with the Krishna movement for nearly eight years now, I still feel a certain kinship with devotees, both past and present. How could I not? I devoted fully 17 years of my life (ages 18 to 35) to a life of Krishna consciousness in the association of similarly committed devotees. Virtually all my friends and acquaintan-

The larger world, as it turns out, is not an unrelieved chamber of horrors.

ces were devotees. For most of those 17 years I had not the slightest doubt that I'd die while still in the Krishna movement. I absorbed the teachings of A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, our spiritual master, into the depths of my being and preached them with an enthusiasm born of serene confidence in their absolute truth and efficacy.

I entered the movement because I desperately wanted to know what is going on

in the universe, to find order in this madness, to be touched and transformed by Truth, to experience peace and joy, to crawl out of my skin and mind and rise into some sublime Transcendence. I felt an inexplicable attraction to the supernally beautiful, blue-skinned boy Krishna, to the strangely beautiful music of the Hare Krishna mantra, to a felt sense of progression toward liberation from this highly imperfect material world. I was blessed with tastes, now and then, of spiritual bliss—feelings not easily expressed in words.

Nevertheless, my then wife, Sitarani and I, after years of service (25 years between us), one day left the Krishna movement.

Where are the Pure Devotees?

As I think back, it seems to me that the factor that initially set in motion my gradual disillusionment with the Krishna movement was my growing awareness that, judging by its own criteria for success, the Hare Krishnas had, quite simply, failed as a spiritual movement. It became increasingly and inescapably obvious that the movement was simply not fulfilling its own stated primary goal: to create "pure devotees"—to successfully guide serious practitioners to sublime states of spiritual consciousness.

Some few, highly self-motivated, highly disciplined, spiritually gifted devotees do

apply themselves to the principles of *bhakti* (devotional) yoga and taste the fruits of their efforts. But for most devotees, spiritual life in the Hare Krishnas is little more than a perpetual struggle against base attachment, pride, greed, and lust. One goes on, year after year, hoping against hope that, "One day, yes, one day, a day far off in the future, one magic and wonderful day, I shall become a pure devotee."

After many years I came to the conclusion that whatever other success the Krishna movement may enjoy—whatever the numbers of new recruits, temples opened, books distributed, celebrity endorsements procured—in the absence of the creation of highly evolved Krishna conscious persons, it's all an empty show.

Ethical Failure and Intellectual Dishonesty

Over the course of my years in the Hare Krishnas I became alarmed at the extent to which people (myself included) who joined the movement—in part as a reaction against the pervasive dishonesty in interpersonal dealings in mainstream society—permitted themselves to become clever, sneaky, and two-faced in the name of promulgating Truth. Though this attitude may appear justified from the point of view of a certain self-serving, contrived "spiritual" ethic, in

practice it encourages a fundamental disrespect and superior attitude toward those for whom it claims feelings of compassion, and a manipulative, controlling attitude towards those it claims to liberate.

Another kind of dishonesty fundamental to the movement is an intellectual one: a learned orientation by which one's chief philosophical project ceases to be to make sincere and disciplined effort to open oneself to truth, but instead to study, memorize, internalize, preach, and defend an already defined, pre-digested, pre-packaged "Truth." Instead of dedicating one's faculties of awareness to the fearless quest for truth through reflective openness to all that presents itself to experience and scrutiny, one simply waves the banner of received "Truth."

Hard Hearts

I can recall, throughout my years in the Hare Krishnas, often being disappointed with the behavior of high- and low-level leaders in the movement who seemed to care little for the personhood of the devotees under their authority. I think the lesson to be learned from the Krishna movement is that a certain hardness of heart comes from subordinating people to principles, from defining the institution itself as pre-eminent and its members as merely its humble servants.

The Procession of Bigotry

IN THE 1840S IT WAS GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE IN POLITE AMERICAN society to hate Catholics, and the climate of hatred led to many cases of violence against Catholics. After all, they were aliens who threatened the (Protestant) American Way of Life.

In the 1880s it was generally acceptable in polite American society to hate Jews, especially the newly-arrived ones who wore funny clothes and spoke a weird language, Yiddish. Antisemitic stereotypes were widely accepted until well into the twentieth century.

In the 1920s it was generally acceptable in polite American society to hate African Americans (commonly known as "niggers") who were flooding from the rural South into northern cities. After all, they were almost completely uneducated and in fact just barely human.

In the 1940s it was generally acceptable in polite American society to hate Hispanics. After all, they were lazy and culturally inferior to people of northern European extraction. As a US Senator would later comment, they were built low to the ground and therefore best suited for picking crops.

In the 1960s it was generally acceptable in polite American society to hate women, at least in the sense of not taking them seriously and using derogatory terms like "dumb broad" to describe them. After all, women had their own roles to play in society and were not emotionally strong enough to make it in the world of men.

In the 1970s it was generally acceptable in polite American society to hate homosexuals, more popularly known as "queers" and "faggots." After all, their sexual preferences were unnatural and homosexuals were usually child molesters anyway.

In the 1990s it remains generally acceptable in polite American society to hate members of religions unlike one's own, as long as one labels them "cultists." After all, anyone who adopts weird beliefs and is devoted enough to commit a lot of time and money to a religious group has obviously been brainwashed and is under the hypnotic spell of some satanic guru. If they've added communal living to the equation the pathology is all the more complete.

Who's next? —Tim Miller Ω

This rhetoric of submission has, of course, a certain ring of loftiness to it: the idea of devotees striving together, pooling their energies and skills, sacrificing personal independence and comforts in order to serve the Glorious Mission. The trouble is, in effect it creates a social/interpersonal environment in which the particular needs of individuals are downplayed, devalued, postponed indefinitely, and generally ignored—leaving the individual devotee sooner or later feeling neglected, not listened to, not taken seriously, exploited.

This hard-nosed, hard-hearted attitude, this insensitive disregard for the individual, this almost cynical exalting of the principles of humility and surrender to ensure that the floors get swept and the bills paid, leaves many devotees, especially those low on the institutional totem-pole, feeling used and abused. Many of these devotees, when the frustration, sadness, and anxiety reach a high enough level, simply leave—and become, understandably, bitter and vindictive.

Sex and Celibacy

Most devotees will acknowledge that the Hare Krishnas' prohibition against "illicit sex"—any sexual activity other than to conceive children in marriage—is the hardest of its rules to follow, the cause of the greatest difficulty among devotees, and a common cause of "fall-down" from Krishna consciousness.

Without debating the merits of celibacy in spiritual life, it's fair to say that the typical devotee, over time, is going to violate the celibacy rule at least once, if not multiple times. This rather obvious fact isn't openly acknowledged in the movement because it's a source of significant embarrassment to devotees, who view indulgence in sex as disgusting, disgraceful, and a sign of personal failure—and, further, because they're forever boasting to non-devotees that their enjoyment of a "higher" spiritual life is evidenced most conclusively by their disinterest in mundane sense gratification. Granted, some few devotees have a gift (if that is what it is) for serene, contented celibacy. But most simply do not.

The result of the imposition of absolute celibacy upon those not sufficiently disassociated from their bodies is, as we've seen, the generation of great amounts of guilt, self-loathing, dishonesty, and denial. "One day," we assure ourselves, "I shall be sufficiently Krishna-conscious to be free from sex desire." Meanwhile, we remain within a physical body which, by its very nature, and in spite of chanting and the rest, desires to

touch and be touched, to physically nurture and be nurtured, to feel the soothing embrace of a lover.

My purpose here is not to advertise the glories of sex (glorious though it can be), but to remind us of the problems associated with outlawing it—and also to make the radical suggestion that perhaps it is possible to be a spiritual person, a God-conscious or cosmos-loving person, a person of goodness and compassion, of wisdom, sensitivity, and awareness—under whatever spiritual banner—without denying and repressing one's natural sexuality.

Disrespect for Women

If ISKCON had fully been the glorious spiritual movement it advertises itself to be, with its only defect being its offensive attitudes and discriminatory policies toward women, Sitarani and I still would have felt fully justified in abandoning the organization to which we had devoted so much of our lives. It became increasingly difficult for us to tolerate the official, insulting view of women as childlike, irrational, irresponsible, emotional, and, unless controlled by a man, wanton and wild.

A movement that can allow a brand new male recruit to feel utterly comfortable in viewing himself as superior—by the sheer fact that he's male—to a seasoned woman devotee who's been refining her consciousness for decades; a movement that can allow a husband to feel perfectly at ease bossing his wife around as if he were a Maharaja and she a coolie, as if she were put on Earth simply to serve and satisfy him—as if Krishna must be pleased by such a display of proper hierarchical dealings between humans—is going to invite the ridicule of outsiders, as well as incite pangs of conscience in its own thoughtful members. It's a wonder that self-respecting women devotees can tolerate such attitudes and treatment, and it's to their credit, I suppose, that they tolerate such insult and abuse so as to remain connected to a spiritual tradition that they feel, or hope, is wiser and grander than that.

While devotees pay occasional lip-service to worthy feminine qualities, in practice it's the cherished male qualities of tough-mindedness, aggressiveness, and the power to dominate and manipulate others that the Hare Krishna establishment promotes and rewards. The Krishna movement is, clearly, an institutional environment that is innately hostile to women and to the spiritual attributes and principles that they embody and exemplify.

Spiritual Depersonalization

A final factor in my decision to leave the Hare Krishnas was a philosophical one: a growing awareness that however much wisdom and beauty may be found in a particular religious tradition, no one tradition, no one system, can speak fully for any one individual. I began to have a sense that there was something artificial and forced about the very idea of my having to completely supplant my own thoughts, reflections, insights, and intuitions about myself, the world, and my own experience, with a pre-packaged, pre-approved system of ideas and doctrines which, whatever its origins, has evolved through countless hands and been refracted through many minds and sensibilities through the centuries. I began to feel (though it took a long time to admit it to myself) that this is an unrealistic and unfair demand to be made upon any of us, however "imperfect" we may be, because it dishonors the integrity and particularity of who we are.

I began to feel strongly that religion is not a corporate matter—that of gathering in all manner of minds and hearts into a common, undifferentiated, regimented view of immediate and ultimate reality—but



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rather of honoring and trusting the individual spirit enough to allow it to seek its own path, make its own mistakes, find its own way by listening, intently and conscientiously, to its own inner knowledge and to whatever voices of wisdom present themselves on one's journey through life.

Being outside the Krishna movement and its mind-set, becoming intellectually and spiritually open-minded and adventurous,

I think the lesson to be learned is that a certain hardness of heart comes from subordinating people to principles.

.....
has been, for me, an exhilarating liberation: a far more genuine freedom than that promised by the commanding, disembodied Voice of "Vedic Authority."

Is there Life after the Krishna Movement?

The larger world, as it turns out, is not an unrelieved chamber of horrors. It's a mixed

bag, just like the Krishna movement. Granted, a thoughtful and sensitive person has to acknowledge that the world is a place pervaded by suffering and illusion. But in the midst of all that craziness and suffering there is good as well. There are people whose hearts contain benevolence and compassion and who try to relieve others of their pain, who sincerely come to the aid of those who are misunderstood, disadvantaged, persecuted, and mistreated. Out here,

beyond the gates of the Krishna movement, one encounters good people and bad (just as in the movement), generous and selfish people (just like in the movement), sensitive and insensitive people (ditto), geniuses and fools (ditto), spiritual and unspiritual people (likewise), and, of course, all combinations of the above. Ex-devotees will find people "outside" who are good and decent, who share their values, and whose friendship will prove nourishing and deepening.

Once devotees step outside the Krishna movement, they'll discover that they are, simply, who they are. Whether one resides in a temple, at home, or in a ditch, it's the qual-

ity of one's consciousness that determines what sort of person one is going to be and what sort of life one is going to live.

Because Krishna consciousness provided a powerful and consuming sense of meaning and purpose, one may feel depressed when one leaves—temporarily let down from the considerable excitement entailed in attaining perfection and saving the world. But one finds meaning and purpose in life, sooner or later, through other spiritual practices, through pursuit of personal interests, through career, through helping people, and through friendship and love.

There are also, by the way, parks to wander, trees to climb, sunsets to watch, friends to be made, lovers to love, places to visit, authors to read. There are films, concerts, art museums, lectures, camping trips, parties—and a myriad of other interesting, engaging, edifying and enjoyable experiences to be had. A life to be lived. Ω

Steven J. Gelberg is a writer who now lives in Massachusetts. This article was excerpted from his essay, "On Leaving ISKCON." (Available from him at 12 Westminster St., Somerville, Massachusetts 02144.)

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JONATHAN ROTH

"Deprogramming" Our Members

An account of events in the Love Israel Family, as told to Diana Leafe Christian by Serious Israel

ONE MORNING IN 1973, 20-YEAR-old Kathy Crampton and her mother were jogging down a Seattle street. Kathy, also called "Dedication," was a member of the Love Israel Family, a non-mainstream Christian community then based in Seattle. Her mother was visiting Kathy at the community for a few days.

Suddenly two vans pulled up. Several men leapt out and forcibly pulled Kathy/Dedication into their van. At the same time a film crew jumped out of the second van and inconspicuously began filming the abduction.

As Kathy's mother watched she was not frightened, nor did she call out for help. Desperate to save her daughter from what appeared to be a dangerous "cult," she had paid to have her kidnapped by the then-fa-

groups recommended deprogramming as an effective way to rid adult children of their unorthodox beliefs. In 1973 Ted Patrick was in the media limelight. A former official under California's Governor Reagan, Patrick had conducted many deprogrammings, claimed success, had been indicted and arrested repeatedly for kidnapping, and was exonerated every time. FreeCog told Kathy's mother about her daughter's membership in the Love Israel Family, and recommended Ted Patrick as the cure.

• • •

However, for Kathy—Dedication—the kidnapping was a terrifying experience. Captive, she rode in darkness as her abductors drove south to Los Angeles. Several times she escaped in small towns along the way.

Each time she called out to townspeople that she'd been kidnapped and implored them to call the police. Each time she was recaptured, and passersby were told

the young woman was being rescued from a mind-controlling cult. Once, in Kelso, Washington, she ran to the police. "What about my civil rights?" she pleaded. "I'm a free adult in America! I'm being held against my will!" The Kelso police refused to help, staunchly supporting the kidnappers.

• • •

Serious Israel believes that parents, courts, and police condoned such blatant lawlessness for several reasons. In the late '60s and early '70s, he observed, many young people were already alienated from their parents and from society, well before they joined any groups. The appeal of the new groups was strong—they offered structure and a more wholesome environment than the street scene (most groups were drug-free), and more importantly, they offered a sense of meaning and purpose to life. "Most of these young people became very gung ho for the first few years in their new groups," said Serious, "and their initial, rather forceful zeal alarmed many parents."

And some parents of Love Israel Family

members were alarmed. Its founder, Love Israel, inspired by the vision of God's family, united in love, invited a small band of followers to live with him, at first in his small house in Seattle. The group believed they had a calling from God to create a new culture. They wore robes. They all changed their first names to desirable qualities, and their last names to "Israel." Because they wanted to identify with their eternal, rather than mortal existence, they stopped having ages or birthdays—and were repeatedly arrested for having no IDs or drivers' licenses. Rejecting conventional medicine, they applied faith to heal illnesses. They ate brown rice and vegetables. Once, when especially poor, they lived on mostly carrots for three months. "It wasn't hard to see why some would think we'd gone off the deep end," recalled Serious.

More importantly, however, Love Israel Family members had a strong sense of unity, which some parents found frightening. It appeared to be a sameness, a conformity, a yielding to their leader. Would this unity lead to a mass suicide, like Jonestown?

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After several days the van reached Los Angeles, where Dedication was transferred to a motel room, where she met Patrick and his deprogrammers. While the TV cameras whirred, the deprogrammers railed for hours against her community and entreated her to reject it. She was deprived of sleep and subjected to more harangues. Again she implored, this time to the film crew, "What about my civil rights? I'm a legal *adult!* I've been kidnapped against my will!"

After several days of this, tension was high. The deprogramming was not going well. Eventually, frustrated by his lack of success, Patrick shut down the filming. The last shot in this sequence is of Patrick losing his temper and striking the cameraman.

The deprogrammers concluded their subject must be possessed, and brought in a professional exorcist. The film next shows deprogrammers outside the room explaining that exorcism was a highly sensitive process which could not be filmed. Inside, Dedication decided to go along with her captors and pretended to change

Again she implored, this time to the film crew, "What about my civil rights? I'm a legal *adult!* I've been kidnapped against my will!"

amous deprogrammer, Ted "Black Lightning" Patrick. And, convinced by Patrick that a public record of the anticipated deprogramming would benefit other families, Kathy's mother gave permission that the entire process—abduction, imprisonment, and long hours of haranguing and sleep deprivation, called "deprogramming"—could be filmed for a CBS TV documentary.

• • •

"In the early 1970s the deprogramming movement was initially directed at the Children of God group," recalled Serious Israel, a longtime member of the Love Israel Family. Concerned parents formed FreeCog to alert other parents and help them capture their grown children and attempt to change their minds and hearts. Eventually FreeCog targeted other non-mainstream groups as dangerous cults. According to Serious Israel, FreeCog was ill-informed; for example, they claimed to be experts on the Love Israel Family but had never visited them or talked with any members.

FreeCog and other, similar anti-cult

her mind. In the next shot the exorcist explained to the camera that the exorcism had been successful—she had cast at least 17 demons out of the young woman.

Soon after, Dedication escaped and hitchhiked north to Seattle, returning to the community.

As a result of this case, federal authorities indicted Patrick for kidnapping and arrested him again. However, the Seattle federal judge acquitted Patrick of all charges, comparing his actions to those of parents who jaywalked to save a child from onrushing traffic.

• • •

According to Serious, the aggressive anti-cult activists in the 1970s often exaggerated and outright lied as they sought out parents and fanned their concerns into full-blown fears. For example, Patrick (who had never visited the Love Israel family and apparently knew nothing about them), lied to parents that members regularly said, "We hate our parents!" or "We would KILL for Love Israel!"

Jewish parents were often particularly vulnerable to the claims of the anti-cult activists. The parents of one Jewish community member, a young man named "Sure," abducted their son three times. The first time a team of young men grabbed him in Seattle and forcibly took him to his parent's house in Massachusetts. There a group of deprogrammers put him through rigorous ordeals, including long harangues, sleep deprivation, slapping him around, tying him down and cutting off his long hair, and shooting him with water pistols whenever he gave what they considered the wrong answer. Finally Sure escaped out a window and hitchhiked across the country to rejoin his companions.

Sometime later, another Jewish member, "Consideration," traveled home to Cleveland to be with his father, who, he was told, was scheduled for surgery at a local hospital. Consideration's parents had him captured and committed to the hospital's mental ward as incompetent. They ordered shock treatments to induce him to renounce his convictions. The repeated shock treatments,

wrenching and violent, made the young man temporarily lose his memory each time. He began hiding the community's phone number on scraps of paper around the hospital room so he could remember how to call home.

Serious and Sure flew to Cleveland to help him. When they walked into the hospital in Cleveland, a group of deprogrammers sitting in the lobby recognized Serious. Many believed that "cult" members had a strange instant hypnotic power and could influence people with just one look. "Don't look at his eyes! Don't look at his eyes!" they warned.

Sure recognized the deprogrammers as those who had worked on him earlier. And they recognized him. Soon after, as Serious and Sure walked outside, other young men (hired by Sure's parents) jumped them in the parking lot, abducted Sure, beat Serious up, and left him lying on the ground.

This time Sure's parents shipped him, captive, all the way to Israel. They enrolled him in a special school which helped young people who had strayed rediscover their Jewish faith. They took away his wallet and passport.

Serious mailed Sure his extra passport.

Sure then left the school, stowed away on a Greek freighter, hitchhiked from Athens to southern France, worked for several months in a vineyard to earn plane fare to New York, and thumbed his way back to Seattle and his community.

In 1975 Sure's parents went after him again, this time at a remote homestead in the Alaskan bush. When a planeload of proclaimed "federal agents" landed on the beach Sure took off and hid in the hills. His parents got a court order, and Alaska State police tracked Sure down, arrested him, and shipped him back to Massachusetts. The Love Israel Family, working through the Massachusetts court system, finally got him released.

• • •

Dedication, Consideration, and Sure did not ultimately stay in the Love Israel Family. Consideration, for example, was released from the Cleveland mental hospital to a residential treatment center, and later was reconciled with his parents. He remained a Christian and returned to the community several times to visit.

The Love Israel Family is now 27 years old. Most current members have also reconciled with their parents. After the first few years the members became less zealous and the parents more accepting, especially when grandchildren were born. Serious says that over the years most parents have even come to respect the beliefs and ideals of their grown children. The group has also built positive relationships with officials where they now live, near Seattle, Washington. Local police, growing tired of arresting community members for lack of identification, even issued the Family special "no-birthdate" ID cards.

• • •

In the mid-'70s Ted Patrick was arrested for unlawful imprisonment of a Hare Krishna devotee, was convicted, and went to jail. Ω

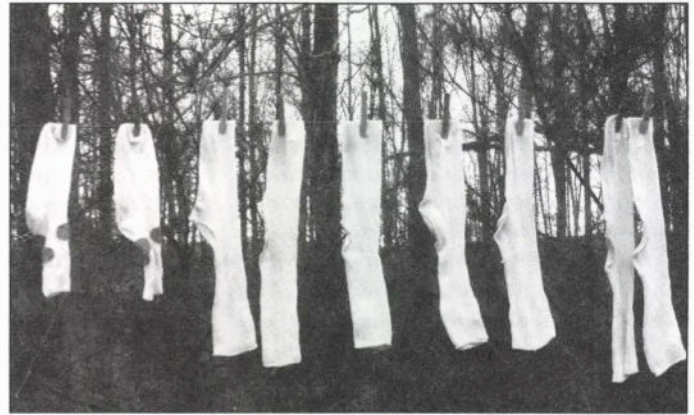
Serious Israel has been a member of the Love Israel Family since 1970. Diana Leafé Christian is editor of this magazine.



Identifying "Cults"

Those Lists of Generalizations

by Tim Miller



SPRINGTREE COMMUNITY

IN THE WORLD OF ANTI-CULTISM it has become popular to help people identify "cults" by circulating lists of "signs of cults" to watch out for. If a group tends to exhibit these kinds of features, you just know it's at least borderline pathological.

The problem with most of those lists is that they really don't provide useful benchmarks. The items on most of the lists are simply characteristic of most religious groups, not uniquely the property of bad ones. In fact, most such lists I have seen describe perfectly the religious intentional communities, or religious orders, of the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches.

Let me provide some examples of that. Here I will reproduce, and comment on item by item, a list (utterly typical of the genre) assembled by anti-cult activist

to whom its members appear to be extraordinarily committed. That describes no group better than the Catholic Church, whose pyramid of power focuses in a single individual held to be infallible on matters of faith and morals, and who regularly tells his flock that his pronouncements are to be obeyed, not questioned. (Of course many members disobey him anyway, but that's true of members of "cults" as well.)

2. The group focuses heavily on recruiting new members. I've yet to encounter a religion not interested in attracting new members. Some are low-key about it, but a great many put that commitment at the center of their efforts. Evangelical Protestantism, America's largest religious grouping with tens of millions of followers (zombie-like cultists?), is out to convert the world and makes evangelism its absolutely top priority and therefore a multi-billion-a-year enterprise.

3. The group focuses heavily on making money. Okay, show me a religion not preoccupied with money. No matter how much they get, they all wail that they don't have enough, that members have to give ever more and that gifts from outsiders would advance the holy

cause. I think one of the fundamental flaws in American society, one that will in the long run prove fatal, is its enshrining of money as the Holy Grail in life. A few communarians reject moneytheism. But, in my opinion, 99 percent of Americans, including members of every religion, do not.

4. Members who question, doubt, or dissent with the group's beliefs are discouraged or punished. Evangelical Protestantism says that its interpretation of the Bible

is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and the believer's obligation is to absorb it, not doubt it. The Catholic Church may no longer execute its dissenters, but it still clamps down on them: ask Father Matthew Fox, who was silenced and then expelled from his religious community, or Father Charles Curran, who was fired from his Catholic University of America teaching position for ideas that were at best mildly liberal, just how much dissent is allowed in their church today.

5. The group uses techniques that numb the mind to suppress doubts about the group and its leader. These include long work routines, denunciation sessions, meditating, chanting, or speaking in tongues. These kinds of "mind-numbing techniques" are used in religions everywhere. Millions of Americans meditate, chant, and speak in tongues. Criticism sessions are considered essential in many intentional communities. Hard work has been regarded as worship in groups ranging from the Catholic religious communities to the Shakers to the Rajneeshees. Are these procedures used as doubt suppressants? The answer to that is inescapably in the eye of the beholder. All we can objectively examine here is the techniques themselves; they are regarded as spiritually valuable by very large numbers of believers.

6. The group's leaders tell members how they should act, think, and feel. For example, members must get their love life and jobs okayed; leaders may tell them what kind of clothes to wear, where to live, how to raise their children, etc. Everything here would apply perfectly to any Catholic religious community, and a good many other groups as well. Sometimes you freely give up some of your individual preferences in favor of community values and discipline. Most Americans wouldn't go for

The items on most of the lists are simply characteristic of most religious groups, not uniquely the property of bad ones. Most lists describe perfectly the religious orders of the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches.

Michael Langone, first published as "Checklist of Cult Characteristics," in the book *Captive Hearts, Captive Minds: Freedom and Recovery from Cults and Abusive Relationships*, by Madeleine Tobias and Janja Lalich (Hunter House, 1994). *Communities* reprinted Langone's list in the Winter '94/'95 (#85) issue as a thought-provoker, and it got my attention in 48-point letters. Here it is, paraphrased:

1. The group focuses on a living leader,

it, but most Americans don't join intentional communities. Devotion to community ideals rather than naked self-interest is not pathological.

7. *The group sees itself as especially and uniquely blessed; for example, the leader is believed to be a Messiah or avatar, or the leader and the group have special orders to save the world.* Very few religious leaders proclaim themselves Messiahs, although if Cyrus the Great of Persia was a Messiah, as the Bible suggests, then the title could be legitimately applied to quite a few individuals. Few leaders of Asian-oriented religions claim to be avatars, or incarnations of Vishnu, but those who have (Meher Baba, for example) have not typically been accused of pathological behavior. What committed religious group does not see itself as having a special mission to save humanity?

8. *The group has an us-versus-them outlook, which puts it in conflict with mainstream culture.* I'm guilty of this one, even though the closest thing to a "cult" I've ever been involved in is my local Unitarian church, which promotes inclusiveness, not polarization. I think American society is se-

riously misdirected right now, with naked greed and religious intolerance flying high, and to me seeing oneself in conflict with the people running the show these days is just plain healthy. Intentional community by its nature sees itself as different from society's rulers, and it should.

9. *The group's leaders are accountable only to themselves, and are not guided by or disciplined by any higher authorities, as are, for example, military officers, and the ministers, priests, and rabbis of mainstream religions. The group believes its goals justify methods that members would have considered unethical before joining, such as raising money for fake charities.* I'm with Langone here, except that he's wrong that mainstream groups are all accountable. The Catholic Church is a closed-book operation; its finances are never disclosed or subject to public audit. The American understanding of separation of church and state gives religions a blanket exemption from disclosure, and I think sunshine would be much healthier than darkness. But rules that apply to one should apply to all. As for collecting money for bogus charities, the manipulations performed by the advertising industry are so sophisticatedly successful in getting us separated from our money that I think religious-movement solicitors who say that they're collecting for youth activities when in fact the money will go to support their own (largely youthful) group are guilty of, by prevailing standards, at worst mild deception. Trying to get other people's money is as American as cherry pie; these folks are penny-ante players. If it's truly fraudulent, call the district attorney, because we have laws to control such behavior.

10. *The leaders manipulate the members into feeling guilty in order to maintain control.* Did anyone reading this grow up Catholic?

11. *Because members become subservient to the group, they cut ties to friends, families, and the personal goals and activities they had before joining.* Jesus advised his followers to cut their ties even with their own families. The perfect model here is, again, the Catholic religious communities, which demand a total reorientation of life. Most "cultists" who cut their ties with their families and friends do so only when they think they are going to be kidnapped and subjected to the psychological abuse known as deprogramming or exit counseling. As for changing personal goals and activities, that's what religious conversion is all about.

12. *The group expects its members to devote inordinate amounts of time to it.* What's inordinate? Are we not supposed to give generously of our time and money to causes we wholeheartedly believe in? If this behavior is dangerous, then every communitarian is in trouble.

13. *The group encourages or requires its members to live or socialize only with each other.* Few groups try to enforce an absolute severing of outside ties, but many think one is better off being influenced mainly by like-minded people. I don't hang out much with Republicans, and I like to spend discretionary time with a relatively few close friends. What's the problem?

SOME OF THE THINGS ON LISTS LIKE Langone's do identify real problems to be concerned with. My problem is with selective application of those lists. If some little marginal group trying to hack out a communal existence at odds with the rest of society is going to be harassed, even criminally victimized, for its patterns of belief and behavior, then the huge numbers of members of other religions who believe and behave in similar fashion should get the same treatment. Why should only the underdog get the third degree?

One other parting note: there is an undertone to the list that implies that "cult" members are somehow being forced to engage in the described behaviors, which in turn raises the tired old charge that people who join nonmainstream groups are somehow "brainwashed." Extensive research conclusively refutes the brainwashing myth, and in my own wide contacts with members of nonmainstream groups (including more than a few intentional communities) I have yet to meet a single one who seems to have been psychologically coerced into his or her path. It's just possible that someone can voluntarily believe differently than you or I do.

So what do we do about the very real abusive situations that certainly do exist in thousands of group settings in society? I think the only real answer is to take refuge in the law. If people are breaking the law, arrest them. If the situation doesn't rise to the level of outright illegality—if you simply disagree with behaviors in some particular group setting, friendly dialogue is usually possible if you don't come on like a mortal enemy. Sometimes you may be morally aggrieved but have no legal recourse—a bitter situation to be in, here as elsewhere in society. For better or worse, it's still a free country and within broad limits people have the right to do as they please. Ω

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In the early '70s busloads of JPUSA members travelled nationally, performing skits and songs and witnessing for their faith.

Covenantal Groups and Charges of Abuse

The Case of Jesus People USA

by Anson Shupe

"Cultishness" is inevitably in the eye of the beholder—as much as it is in the actual groups accused of deviant behavior. The following case study presents a richly ironic case in which a group dedicated to exposing "cults" suddenly found itself accused of "cult-like" behavior itself. Can one draw an accurate line between committed but wholesome groups and "cults"? Here Anson Shupe suggests that the line in fact is hard to draw, because what is to one observer "cultish" behavior is to another merely deep commitment. —T.M.

"COVENANTAL" COMMUNITIES have become anomalies in our densely populated, urban, impersonal societies. Covenantal communities are in many ways typical of the style of hu-

man relationships of the past. Such groups, whether villages or small towns, typically make diffuse, high-intensity, emotional demands on loyalties as well as on personal time and energies. Like families, they are supportive and nurturing of members but also exact a price of demanded conformity. Great utopian communes, such as the nineteenth century Oneida experiment, are classic examples.

"Contractual" societies, on the other hand, value limited, rational, and more role-oriented relationships, based on their participants' limited, clearly specified obligations. By their emphasis on recording negotiated agreements and enforcing them in the courts, contractual societies tend to minimize the importance of covenantal re-

lationships except in cases of intimacy (as with marriage or prolonged friendship—and even these are not totally removed from the shadow of contractual logic). If a handshake and unlocked doors in the rural village were once accepted signs of a trusting, covenantal understanding, then a lawyer and prenuptial agreements represent the contractual world, where every relationship and bond has its designated prerogative and limits.

In their purest form these two styles of cultural understanding and social interaction are like oil and water. People who voluntarily live a strictly covenantal lifestyle—with so many assumptions of trust, obedience, sacrifice, and group social control—seem alien to people operating in the larger contractual world, which stresses individual au-

tonomy and freedom. The tension between these two forms of human organization is a persistent theme in American religion, past and present.

Jesus People USA

In 1972 a Jesus movement group, later to be called Jesus People USA (now known by its acronym JPUSA, pronounced *Jah-poo-sah*), was founded in Milwaukee. It began as busloads of enthusiastic young "Jesus freaks" organized into nationally traveling teams that performed skits and songs and witnessed for their faith in communities they encountered. By 1974 the group had settled permanently in downtown Chicago with a vision of an urban mission to the poor and neglected and a commitment to living literally the lifestyle of first-century Christians as depicted in the

all of whom it rented a number of rooms at relatively inexpensive rates). JPUSA operated, among other missions, a soup kitchen for the hungry, a shelter for homeless women and children, a crisis pregnancy center, and chaplaincies to the Cook County Jail and a local juvenile detention center. They also offered urban internship opportunities for suburban church youth ministries, and ran several contemporary music ministries (rock, rap, and punk) that recorded albums under their own record label. Furthermore, JPUSA had its own roofing, carpentry, painting, and graphics businesses.

JPUSA also published a glossy, high-quality magazine, *Cornerstone*, heavily infused with Christian rock/Jesus movement imagery, and music and book reviews that reflected its countercultural origins. *Cornerstone* resembled a spiritual version of *Rolling Stone* or *Spy* magazine, with its quality journalistic coverage, albeit heavily infused with modern American evangelism. One JPUSA brochure stated that 60,000 copies were printed six times a year. Ironically, as we shall see, the thematic emphasis of *Cornerstone* was new religious movements, or commonly called "cults," focusing on investigation, clarification, and debunking. During the early 1990s the magazine revealed a number of fraudulent claims and dubious ministerial activities within the Christian evangelical community.

In sum, JPUSA members, to all appearances, were indeed continuing the modest lifestyle of the first generation of apostles reported on the Book of Acts, as well as attempting to fulfill the what they call the "Great Commission" (converting new souls to Christianity) in the Midwest.

In sum, JPUSA members, to all appearances, were indeed continuing the modest lifestyle of the first generation of apostles reported on the Book of Acts, as well as attempting to fulfill the what they call the "Great Commission" (converting new souls to Christianity) in the Midwest.

The Accusations

On June 16, 1993, Professor Ronald Enroth, a Christian sociologist at California's Westmont College, author of *Youth, Brainwashing, and the Extremist Cults* and *The Lure of the Cults*, wrote to the Superintendent of the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC), a denomination which JPUSA had joined in 1989. Enroth claimed to have interviewed approximately two dozen ex-members of JPUSA who told him numerous stories of administrative and personal abuse by JPUSA leaders. Enroth said the abuses resulted in the following:

• Emotional damage. The ex-members in his limited sample were, he claimed, "as messed-up psychologically and spiritually as any of the literally hundreds of former cultists I have met in the course of my research."

• Confusion, guilt, excessive dependency, fear, doubts, spiritual disillusionment, uncertainty of Christian identity, low self-esteem, feelings of abandonment, and lack of decision-making initiative.

• Financial irregularities, involving JPUSA leadership.

• Privileged lifestyle standards for leaders, including clothing and diets for their children.

• Harsh discipline of children, occasionally bordering on child abuse.

• Poor educational standards for children.

• Minimal and often inadequate medical and dental care.

Enroth wrote the ECC superintendent that he had discovered these accusations in the course of researching his book, *Recovering from Churches That Abuse*, the sequel to his best-selling *Churches That Abuse* (Zondervan, 1992). He said he received this information from ex-JPUSA members who called him and volunteered their stories.

The Acrimonious Dialogue

Enroth initially told the ECC superintendent that he would be inclined to discuss the specifics of his findings *after* he completed his book (due to Zondervan's tight publishing deadline), but could not possibly meet before the end of summer 1993. However, "as a Christian brother," he wrote, he "felt impelled" to alert the superintendent.

Enroth's letter set off a firestorm, or more precisely, a considerable volley of correspondence between him and both JPUSA representatives and ECC officials. His secondhand charges were particularly distressing for JPUSA since that community had always considered itself in the forefront of opposing abusive activity while demonstrating positive communitarian behaviors. Indeed, one of *Cornerstone's* editors had been head of the Evangelical Ministries to New Religions organization, in which Enroth was also active, for two years. Enroth's charges were a patent embarrassment; JPUSA now stood accused of the very abuses it had opposed for years.

JPUSA consistently asked for specifics in Enroth's charges: who were the accusers? When did the alleged incidences of abuse take place? What corroborative evidence did Enroth possess? Enroth, in turn, defended the practice of preserving the

People who voluntarily live a strictly covenantal lifestyle—with so many assumptions of trust, obedience, sacrifice, and group social control—seem alien to people operating in the larger contractual world.

Book of Acts. They were not simply to live as if they were poor; they were to *be* poor, pooling resources and living in classic communitarian fashion. At the same time, members were not total ascetics; they simply eliminated social class distinctions (i.e., resources) within the group.

By the mid-1990s many of the JPUSA members had become parents, were entering middle age, and had settled permanently into the Midwestern scene. Like some conservative church groups, they experimented with the ill-fated shepherding concept (in which more experienced members keep close tabs on the everyday lives of newer members) but (also like many) rejected it eventually as excessively authoritative and a spiritual dead end. They established a formal Covenant of Membership and evolved a quasi-familial group structure headed by a nine-member council of deacons, or elders. The rank-and-file were organized into several parallel faith "families" of which all biological families were members.

By 1994, when I first visited it, the group had purchased an old hotel in a declining area of Chicago adjacent to Lake Michigan that it renovated for its 500-plus member families, other poor families struggling to break free of welfare, and elderly citizens (to

anonymity of his informants on professional grounds. In fact he really had no corroborative evidence at all to present beyond the ex-members' testimonies.

After a lengthy, testy dialogue among Enroth and ECC/JPUSA representatives, a representative of Zondervan Press met with JPUSA leaders and ECC denominational officials. (For a convoluted set of reasons, Enroth and JPUSA were never able to schedule a mutually convenient meeting.)

JPUSA enlisted a number of academics (myself included) to evaluate the conflict, as well as the group's entire Chicago operation, and published a special issue of *Cornerstone* on spiritual accountability. It featured a historical portrait of JPUSA as well as outside professional critiques of Enroth's methodology—e.g., his sole reliance on angry, anonymous apostate (ex-member) testimony for his charges. In the meantime, the evangelical magazine *Christianity Today* caught wind of the controversy and published an article on it. In its neutral but rather non-aggressive coverage, Enroth was interviewed; he denounced *Cornerstone*, JPUSA, and its academic allies.

At the same time, the evangelical world that paid any attention to JPUSA was in a serious state of confusion. How could this flagship example of communal Christian commitment, itself a major exposé of abusive religions, be labeled an "abusive church" by a leading evangelical social scientist?

The Inherent Conflict Between Contractual & Covenantal Societies

There is no reason to think that Enroth, his informants, or any of the dedicated persons who make up JPUSA acted in bad faith in this matter. Most of the accusations of "abuse" Enroth reported seem in retrospect

use for whatever purpose. One leader's child, on occasion, wore newly purchased shoes while another member's child wore older shoes and was aware of the contrast. Accusations of leadership or insider favoritism towards children were later made. Such examples abound in Enroth's informants' accusations of abuse against JPUSA.) Hurt feelings and misperceptions seem inevitable within groups whose first generation adult members, never reared in covenantal conditions, are still working out their living conditions as an experiment on a daily basis. Bitterness over larger issues tends to call forth from angry ex-members a retrospective avalanche of minor complaints. This is as true of divorce as it is of religious departure.

However, it is important to remember two very important points about communities, community living, and how the realities of community living are often misinterpreted by people living in the contractual world, unfamiliar with a predominantly covenantal culture.

First, the testimonies of angry, disillusioned, formerly committed ex-members of intense covenantal groups must always be taken with a grain of salt as accurate interpretations of events—a methodological point that Enroth basically ignored.

Second, the premises of covenantal communities are based on completely different assumptions, promises, and understandings from those of contractual relationships. Actions that are part of the discipline and sharing of resources in a covenantal community like JPUSA can be made to sound abusive when viewed in the light of solely contractual criteria.

To illustrate this point, some years ago the sociologist David Bromley and I published a description of a group we called the "Tnevnoc Cult." Tnevnoc recruited young female virgins before they meaningfully understood the nature of their lifetime commitments. It required that their heads be shaved and made them wear sexless uniforms. It gave them new names in a foreign language. It required them to sleep on hard pallets and keep no personal possessions. Moreover, it forbade them to see their parental families, at least during their initiate phase. Worse, it made them ritually marry the dead cult leader and in rituals symbolically practice cannibalism (i.e., drink his blood and eat his flesh).

Tnevnoc is "convent" spelled backwards,

and we were originally inspired to write about Tnevnoc by one of us watching the movie *The Nun's Story*. We found it very telling that many colleagues contacted us requesting more information on this supposedly abusive cult.

The point, of course, is that viewing covenantal groups through the lenses of contractual society can make the former seem odd, deviant, even dangerous, because their

JPUSA consistently asked for specifics in Enroth's charges: who were the accusers? When did the alleged incidences of abuse take place?

basic premises for organizing daily life are considerably different. From my first-hand observations, JPUSA does not seem to be an internally dangerous or abusive group. It works well for the majority of its members. JPUSA performs a number of valuable functions for the wider secular community, as Enroth admitted in his initial letter to the superintendent, though it is undoubtedly subject to the usual petty power skirmishes and office politics that afflict every organization of any size.

Accusations of abuse, particularly serious charges involving children, can often be investigated and resolved. JPUSA as well as secular authorities have investigated these claims on the only occasion when JPUSA actually had such a case. This was years ago, and involved a rank-and-file father, not a leader. The more subtle claims of misuse of spiritual authority are less easily established, disproved, or interpreted. Perhaps many alleged abuses can never be fit into a single "social reality" with which all participants agree. Angry or disillusioned ex-members reentering a contractual culture are hardly unbiased informants. And certainly those persons on the contractual society "outside" operate from a weak position to clearly ascertain what goes on "inside" covenantal truth.

Contractual and covenantal groups are two conflicting models of human society. That the proponents of one will suspect or misinterpret the other is natural. Anger and suspicion, unfortunately, seem inevitable byproducts of this age-old conflict. Ω

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The testimonies of angry, disillusioned, formerly committed ex-members of intense covenantal groups must always be taken with a grain of salt.

to represent snippets of communal living that can be embellished or "spun" to appear outrageous only to someone unfamiliar with the realities of communitarian life, or for someone who possesses an unhappy memory of times spent in such a group. (Case in point: JPUSA's covenant provides for each family to receive periodically a modest allowance of discretionary cash to



PHOTOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION FROM VIDEO NATURAL RIGHTS CENTER

As fire engines and state police were kept away, army tanks driven by FBI agents bulldozed the fire into a central pyre. Texas Rangers who witnessed the scene later testified in court that AFT agents, roaming freely over the scene, had planted bogus evidence on the grounds and loaded a dumpster with items they didn't want found.

What Really Happened at Waco? "Cult" or Set-up?

by Albert K. Bates and the staff of the Natural Rights Center

At the July/August joint congressional hearings on Waco, information emerged for the first time that corroborated the findings of Albert K. Bates and his staff. Albert incorporated new testimony into this article right up through press time in early August. He (and our staff) apologize to readers for any subsequent new revelations about Waco which do not appear here because of our press deadline. Also, this article contains graphic scenes of violence and may not be suitable for younger readers. Your discretion is advised.

LIKE MANY SUNDAYS AT MT. Carmel, morning prayers on February 28, 1993 were followed by breakfast. Victoria Hollingsworth had been cleaning up when asked to go to the room where they met for Bible study and worship. She waited there with the other women and many of the children until David Koresh came in. There was silence. He said, "They're coming. Get back to your rooms and watch. Don't do anything stupid. We can work this out."

For months he had been telling them that the Apocalypse was imminent. It was to be

the fulfillment of the prophecies they had studied all their lives—the hour when the seals would be broken, the wicked would die by fire, and Yeshua (Jesus) would come again in Glory.

Back in her room on the second floor, Hollingsworth, a 59-year old black woman from England, told her four children to put their shoes on and get dressed. She looked out the window and saw two cattle trailers pulling up to the front of the building.

"A lot of men were jumping out in dark suits, dark uniforms," she later remembered. "Almost immediately I heard shots." Hollingsworth and her children fled out into the hall and lay down. As frightened and weeping women and children hid, concussion grenades exploded inside.

In her room, Kathy Schroeder was helping her son, Jake, finish dressing her youngest child, Brian, when the shots came through her window. She and the children dropped to the floor and slid under a bed, where they remained, frightened and weeping, for two hours.

In the next room, Sheila Martin had been combing the curly hair of her six-year-old, Daniel, when she glanced out the window and heard the shots. She grabbed Daniel and her four-year-old, Kimmie, and knelt on the floor. Bullets smashed her window, sending shards of glass cascading over her 11-year-old, Jamie, who screamed as he bled from a cut over his left eye. Blind and crippled from infantile meningitis, Jamie could not see what was happening. He was terrified but Martin could not reach him because of the gunfire from outside.

On the third floor, 75-year-old Margaret Lawson and 77-year-old Catherine Matteson gathered children in a schoolroom to get them away from the gunfire and bombs going off below. Suddenly the ceiling erupted with a burst of machine-gun fire from helicopter gunships. The elderly women shielded the children with their own bodies. Miraculously, none of the machine-gun fire struck anyone in the crowded room. Elsewhere, the steel rain killed Peter Gent, Peter Hipsman as he lay in bed, and Winston Blake as he sat

on the edge of his bed, eating French toast.

One of the mothers crouching in the hall, listening to Jamie Martin screaming, decided to take the law into her own hands. Jaydean Wendell, 34-year-old mother of four, had been a police officer before coming to Mt. Carmel. She picked up a rifle, went into her room, climbed onto a bunk bed, and took aim on her attackers. After the firing stopped, she was found in that position, a bullet through the top of her skull.

David Koresh had known what was going to happen for over an hour before the ATF arrived. He was called from Bible study by fellow church member Perry Jones, whose son, David, had just come in from Old Mexia Road, where at 8:30 a.m., he had stopped his truck to assist a newsman who had become lost looking for the Seven Seals church. David Jones, a government postal carrier driving his yellow Buick with "U.S. Mail" painted on the door, pointed to the Mt. Carmel complex, and asked what was happening. The newsman warned that some kind of law enforcement action was about to take place, and that there would likely be shooting. Just then, the two had to step back from the road to avoid a speeding car going by, packed with armor-clad ATF snipers.

When Koresh returned to Bible study from his talk with Jones, he was so upset he couldn't speak. His Bible slipped from his grip. One of his parishioners, ATF undercover agent Robert Rodriguez, came forward to catch it. David looked at him and said, "The Kingdom of God is at hand, Robert." He walked to the window and looked out. "They're coming, Robert, the time has come."

Rodriguez was shocked. Perhaps David had seen agents outside, converging on the building more than an hour before the planned assault. As an excuse to leave, he said he had to meet someone for breakfast. Just then, other parishioners entered the room, blocking the doorway. His heartbeat pounding in his ears, Rodriguez contemplated jumping through the window to escape. He repeated that he had to leave for a breakfast appointment. David approached him and, in a manner the agent believed highly uncharacteristic, clasped his hand. He said, "Good luck, Robert." Rodriguez stammered, "What do you mean?"

Koresh said, "You know what I mean. We know they're coming, Robert..." and David paused for effect, staring into the agent's eyes, "it's up to you now."

Rodriguez drove hastily to the nearby undercover house which the ATF had rented two months earlier, blinking his headlights as he raced along the dirt road. Pulling up

in a cloud of dust, he scolded the agents inside for leaving the windows open in broad daylight. He told them he could see a camera lens all the way from Mt. Carmel. He phoned the Special Agent in Charge, Chuck Sarabyn, who was operational commander for the raid, and reported that David Koresh knew an ATF raid was coming. He thought Sarabyn understood and would call off the raid. Sarabyn asked what the people inside were doing when he left. "They were praying," Rodriguez said.

The Cult Awareness Network (CAN) defines a "cult" as a group that: regularly utilizes deception; systematically uses thought reform techniques; has an authoritarian structure; claims to be the repository of Ultimate Truths; divides the population between "us" and "them"; and demands excessive amounts of time, money, and energy from members.

The Christian worshippers headed by David Koresh—and the federal agents who attacked them—both meet that definition of a cult. In the spring of 1992, members of CAN persuaded at least one congressman that the Waco group was dangerous. Allegations included child abuse, multiple marriage, sex with teenagers, mind control, and large quantities of illegal automatic weapons and explosives. ATF was already investigating the group because of a UPS driver's report that a package he was delivering had broken open, revealing hand grenade parts. Seizing the opportunity to garner favor with Congress, ATF stepped up its investigation in July 1992.

Several government agencies had already conducted investigations into the charges of illegal weapons possession, child abuse and statutory rape, but cleared the group on all counts. The charges apparently came from a venomous child custody dispute between a church member and her former spouse.

After failing to supplant David Koresh as

Mt. Carmel's minister, parishioner Marc Breault quit the Seven Seals group at the end of 1989 and moved to Australia. He then threw himself into a campaign to discredit his former mentor, in the process leading away most of the Australian members of the church.

The Australians hired a private detective and signed affidavits alleging that Koresh was guilty of the statutory rape of two teenage girls, tax fraud, immigration violations, harboring weapons, child abuse, and exposing children to explicit talk about sex and violence. However, apostate visits to California and Texas local police, the Texas Department of Public Safety, the Immigration and Naturalization

The Christian worshippers headed by David Koresh—and the federal agents who attacked them—both meet the Cult Awareness Network's definition of a cult.

Service, and the Internal Revenue Service resulted in no action. Breault and his wife's visits to California and Waco in 1991 were also fruitless. County Sheriff Gene Barber said that "Breault's complaints, along with the others, stemmed from 'sour grapes.'"

Church members admit Koresh devised various "tests" of his followers' faith in God and his prophecies—from long study sessions, to communion twice a day, to food deprivation, to relinquishing wives to the exclusive sexual favors of David Koresh. Still, they assert Breault's claims are exaggerations or lies that he concocted to subvert Koresh and take control of the group.

In his 1993 book, *Inside the Cult*, Breault says he "became a cult buster," devoted to the destruction of the Seven Seals church. Breault's statements, in his book and elsewhere, reinforce the view that his motives were less than altruistic.

Breault brought his allegations about Koresh and his followers to the Australian television producers of *A Current Affair*. Reporter Martin King, who co-wrote Breault's book, visited Mount Carmel and interviewed Koresh in January 1992. The program that eventually aired portrayed Koresh as a sex-crazed, gun-loving religious fanatic.

Breault also informed David Jewell that his daughter, Kiri, then living at Mt. Carmel with her mother, was slated to become one of Koresh's wives. Jewell sued for custody and in January, 1992, Breault and other former members testified at the custody hearing in

ATF, FBI, & CAN

ATF: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (governmental agency)

FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation (governmental agency)

CAN: Cult Awareness Network (nongovernmental organization)

Michigan. Kiri Jewell, in poignant testimony later to be repeated on national television, described a sexual liaison with David Koresh when she was only 10 years old.

Allegations of child abuse are a common tactic in child-custody disputes, and as a result of Jewell's and Breault's efforts, local authorities began an investigation. Officials of Child Protective Services and the Sheriff's Dept. visited Mt. Carmel in February and March 1992. They found no evidence of child abuse, but examinations of the children served to alert caseworker Joyce Sparks to the extent to which Koresh controlled the group and held the allegiance of members and their children through peer pressure. Sparks undertook to study the group to better understand their complex philosophy and the dangers it might hold.

Breault contacted the FBI, accusing Koresh of a number of other crimes besides child abuse. Many of the Mt. Carmel "defectors" gathered by Breault eagerly cooperated with BATF and FBI investigators. That a number of former members were willing to make these allegations certainly suggests that there were problems with Koresh's leadership of the group. However, a February 23, 1993 FBI memo, obtained later by the *Dallas Morning News*, stated that no information had been developed to verify the allegations of "child abuse and neglect, tax evasion, slavery, and reports of possible mass destruction."

Despite the familiarity of the Sheriff's Department with the Mt. Carmel group, the ATF raid planners did not inquire about the possibility of peaceful arrest. They did not attempt to arrest Koresh when he left Mt. Carmel to go shopping in Waco or jogging four days each week along Double EE Ranch Road. They did, however, talk to Joyce Sparks, and she had a warning for the agents.

Sparks warned that the Millennialist group had a deep mistrust of "Babylon" and were prepared to resist attack if forceful entry was attempted. Later she explained her thinking to Congress. "I think the raid was a mistake. Once the raid started, the end was inevitable. So once that happened, children were going to die. We recovered an arsenal of weapons but we lost 20 children. So I think there is a flaw in that thinking." Sparks lamented that she had warned the agents, and they had understood the implications.

For ATF upper echelons, with budget

hearings coming up and their agency under the microscope of a fiscally conservative but "hard-on-crime" Congress, a "resistance" scenario couldn't be better if it had been scripted by Hollywood.

The apocalyptic church at Mt. Carmel made their living by selling weapons. They were licensed to own, sell, and buy any type of gun, even fully automatic machine guns (legal possession of a machine gun only requires completing a form and paying a \$200 tax). Church members obtained all required licenses and permits and cooperated fully with authorities during repeated investigations. In May 1992, when they learned of ATF inter-



Before the raid, Branch Davidian leader David Koresh was demonized by the Waco press.

est, David Koresh telephoned the ATF office and invited them to come out and talk.

While many of us find the trade in assault-style weapons repugnant and the juxtaposition with Christianity incongruous, numerous examples in American history make this the rule, not the exception. The Mormon Church financed settlements in Utah, world missions, and its great Tabernacle partly on the patent fortunes of the Browning family, inventors of the breech-loading Winchester, the repeating rifle, the box-magazine rifle, the machine gun, and the automatic rifle—all standard equipment of the U.S. Army from Wounded Knee to the Mekong Delta.

David Koresh gave away harmless hand grenade casings at gun shows in order to attract business to his booth—the same casings "uncovered" by the UPS.

Moreover, only a day before the fateful February raid, ATF site commanders received a fax from ATF experts in San Francisco saying that all of the weapons were

legal. The entire Mt. Carmel gun inventory was less than half the per capita ownership of an average Texas household.

There were 48 fully automatic assault rifles in Mt. Carmel, built by David Koresh as part of a legal contract with Hewitt Handguns, a local dealer. Using money the church put up, David Koresh assembled AR-15s from parts which had been bought by Hewitt. The finished rifles were restricted to resale to licensed owners or dealers. In 1993, there were more than 234,000 private Americans licensed to own fully-automatic machine guns, a significant niche market for Hewitt.

The parts cost Hewitt \$400 and the finished weapons sold for up to \$1400. Had Koresh completed the 100 weapons called for in the contract, his profit share would have been \$50,000. But when ATF paid a visit to Hewitt Handguns in July 1992, the company got nervous and canceled the contract, leaving Koresh holding an inventory of 48 completed AR-15s which he was neither licensed to own nor sell.

Clash of Destinies

That fateful Sunday, when Sarabyn took the call from Rodriguez, he looked around his command center at Texas State Technical College. On the tarmac three helicopters—a Blackhawk and two Jet Rangers—were warming up. ATF had

obtained the helicopters and several Bradley fighting vehicles by concocting a phony story about a methamphetamine lab (the drug connection was necessary for a civilian police agency to obtain use of military weapons and personnel).

Their search warrant would expire on Sunday. Sarabyn had reserved 153 Waco hotel rooms for Sunday night and ordered 30 dozen donuts for the Civic Center, where 80 late-model, four-door black sedans with extra antennas had arrived, putting the assault force nine miles from Mt. Carmel. The heavily armed, "Death Squad"-suited agents were milling around the parking lot in full view of the highway. A half dozen reporters were en route to the site of the raid. It was now or never. Despite the warning from Rodriguez, Sarabyn gave the go-ahead. The code-word for the operation was "Showtime."

The command team flew to the Civic Center where Sarabyn told the agents that Koresh was expecting them and they had to hurry. The assault force loaded into two

cattle trailers and headed for their date with destiny. In the truck pulling the first trailer, Sarabyn kept radio contact with his second-in-command, James Cavanaugh, in the undercover house. The two cattle trucks passed two press vehicles parked about a quarter of a mile from the ranch. The press vehicles followed the ATF convoy up to the front of the center.

What occurred in Waco was a collision between two passionately held violent world views; one based in biblical prophecy, the other in the myth of the American West. Neither understood the basic symbols and values of the other.

David Koresh dialed 911. After consulting the police, the operator advised him that federal agents were coming; he should step outside and surrender. He hung up. As the agents inched closer to the front of the building, the door opened and Koresh stepped out. He was unarmed and holding his left hand upraised. He said: "What's going on? There are women and children here." A shot was heard. Koresh ducked back in the steel door as the front of the ATF line erupted with gunfire.

The first shot may have been the ATF shooting itself in the foot. As the assault team climbed to the roof, the lead agent on one ladder reached for his pistol and accidentally discharged it while still in the holster, wounding himself in the leg. The shot may have sounded to agents and reporters in the front of the building as if it had come from within the compound. After the ATF riddled the steel front door with armor-piercing bullets, they paused to allow agents to advance, break the first floor windows and throw in concussion grenades.

After the explosions, some church members began returning fire. They had rifles, shotguns and pistols, but videotape makes clear they had no automatic weapons and no grenades. Several of the agents wounded in the initial barrage were struck by friendly fire. One agent crouched behind a truck was struck in the head by a shot probably fired from the undercover house, 260 yards away. Three others were wounded after they entered the upstairs gun locker and found themselves in an empty room, all of the guns having been taken to a gun show. They saw what they thought was a figure

in the shadows and fired. Hearing the gunfire, the agent behind them tossed a grenade into the small space and then shot his rifle into the room without looking, striking one of the agents inside. He was then hit in the head by fully automatic fire coming back from the three agents inside.

Some of the agents in the front of the building recalled that they first thought bullets were coming from the building, but then realized they were coming from all directions. ATF agent Rick Cook said, "It was surreal." Wayne Martin, a 42-year-old black lawyer in Waco who knew many of those in the Sheriff's Department, redialed 911.

"There are men, 75 men around our building shooting at us," said Martin. "Tell them there are children and women in here and to call it off." Lt. Larry Lynch, of the county sheriff's department, apparently unsure of what was unfolding, came to the telephone. "Hello, I hear gunfire. Oh shit, hello, who is this? Hello?"

Martin: "Call it off!"

Lynch: "Who is this? Hello? Hello? God Almighty!"

Martin: "Help! We're being attacked! This is the Mt. Carmel Center! We're under attack!"

The 911 operator disconnected them. A few minutes later, Koresh redialed 911, noting that he had been trying to call in.

"This is who?" asked a dispatcher.

"David Koresh, Mount Carmel Center. We're being shot up all out here," Koresh said, as Lynch returned to the telephone. "You killed some of my children. We told you we wanted to talk... There is a bunch of us dead and a bunch of you guys dead. Now, now, that's your fault."

Lynch: "Okay, let's try to resolve this now. Tell me this, now, you have casualties, how many casualties, do you want to try to work something out? ATF is pulling back, we're trying to, uhm ..."

Koresh: "Why didn't you do that first?"

Lynch: "Okay, all I'm, all I'm doing is handling communications. I can't give you that answer, David ..."

Koresh: "Yeah, well, really, let me tell you something."

Lynch: "Okay."

Koresh: "In our great country here, the United States, you know God has given us a rich history of patriotism. We're not trying to be bad guys."



ATF agents climb onto the roof of a community building. Moments later, an ATF agent accidentally discharges his gun, wounding himself twice in the thigh. To ATF agents stationed elsewhere, this may have sounded like community members shooting back.



An ATF agent "breaks and rakes" a window leading to the community's locked gun vault. Moments later, another agent prepares to toss in a concussion grenade.

Lynch was trying to reach Cavanaugh or anyone in authority at the ATF command post, but they would not respond. Martin came back on the speaker phone.

Martin: "I'm under fire!"

Lynch: "Are you hurt?"

Martin: "I'm okay."

Lynch: "Wayne, cease firing. Do you hear me, Wayne? Cease firing."

After a long pause, with only the sound of gunfire, Martin came back on. "I have a right to defend myself. (pause) They started shooting. (pause) They started firing first. There are women and children in here!"

Lynch: "Let's try and resolve this. I'm trying to make contact with the forces out there."

Martin: "Stop firing!" Off phone, Lynch hears Martin say, "Stan, don't return fire, okay?" There is a distant reply. "We haven't been." Then a storm of gunfire. "They are attacking us again!"

Lynch: "No, they're not!"

Martin: "Yes, they are! Don't call me a liar!"

Contrary to their intelligence assessment, ATF was not dealing with a "destructive cult" of compliant, brainwashed robots. Douglas Wayne Martin was a graduate of Harvard Law School. He had a wife and seven children, including the blind, wounded, 11-year-old Jamie. For seven years he was an assistant professor at the North Carolina Central University School of Law. Many who knew Wayne Martin describe him as a quiet, jovial and religious person, and found it hard

to believe he could have been involved in anything so violent. He was routinely described as professionally competent in court. "It was common knowledge that he was a Davidian," said McLennan County Commissioner Lester Gibson, "but he never talked religion."

Most of the Seven Seals group of Seventh Day Adventists had come to their beliefs through a lifetime of religious instruction. They firmly believed that powers of evil were loose in the world that denied God and his judgment. They felt that as God's chosen disciples, they would be attacked by the godless Babylonians and needed to arm themselves for their own defense. The raid only confirmed the Bible's message. What occurred in Waco was a collision between two passionately held violent world views; one based in biblical prophecy, the other in the myth of the American west. Neither understood the basic symbols and values of the other.

The gunfire continued unabated for over an hour. Only when the ATF ran out of ammunition did the agents take the call from Lt. Lynch, who negotiated a cease fire with Wayne Martin. In the following days, ATF agents accused administrators of covering up details of the raid.

When the assault team retreated, it was overwhelmed by the carnage. There were at least 32 casualties and there was no plan for helping the wounded. By 12:30 the government's wounded were beginning to reach hospitals. For those left inside, their

wounded dying, their dead unburied, the ordeal had only just begun. The prophet took his closest followers aside and told them what would be coming next—the chariots with flaming torches foretold in the Book of Nahum, armored vehicles and military tanks followed by a fiery apocalypse in which they would be translated into Heaven.

The Siege

While the ATF's second in command negotiated a cease fire, the incident commander, Phillip Chojnacki, was on the phone to Washington. The ATF Director's first reaction was to task three more teams of special agents to the scene, but, with overall commander Chuck Sarabyn nowhere to be found, Chojnacki asked his superiors to request an FBI hostage rescue team. When the FBI's special agent in charge, Jeffrey Jamar, arrived at 5:30 p.m., he found the ATF in disarray. Jamar had no special training for hostage rescue or siege negotiations and his lack of sensitivity to the situation would be critical to the eventual outcome. Jamar informed Washington that the FBI needed to take command of the site.

Treasury Secretary Benson and Deputy Secretary Altman briefed President Clinton on the events in Waco immediately after video footage hit CNN. But rather than a realistic summary, they gave Clinton a heavy dollop of ATF propaganda: dozens of women and children held hostage by a paramilitary cult led by a violent and brainwashing prophet armed to the teeth with machine guns and explosives. Now he had killed four agents who peacefully served a lawful search warrant.

Clinton expressed two basic concerns: (1) to insure the safety of the children, and (2) to negotiate the peaceful surrender of Koresh and his followers. This became the FBI's ostensible mandate. However, within a week, site commander Jamar had formulated an "emergency assault plan."

HRT, CS, and CEV

HRT: The FBI's Hostage Rescue Team.

CS: A fine particulate chemical weapon banned from the Chemical Weapons Convention; lethal in closed areas, not to be used indoors.

CEV: Combat Engineering Vehicle: a modified M60 tank that delivers the CS.

Jamar's weapon of choice was not tear gas—not even a gas at all. It was CS (O-chlorobenzalmalononitrile) a fine particulate banned from warfare by the Chemical Weapons Convention. Use for domestic law enforcement is against international law and numerous UN human rights conventions. Military branches which use CS are advised by the label that it is lethal in closed areas and should never be used indoors. Moreover, CS in methylene chloride aerosol is extremely flammable, and can be explosive in

power, moving equipment and manpower suddenly, controlling television and radio reception, and cutting off negotiations.

Later, Jamar made sure that the Justice Department investigative panel was provided with only the rewrite, that tagged Koresh an ordinary criminal, a "con man" whose followers were "dupes."

Having gotten the recommendations he wanted, Jamar began his two-month reign of terror. He brought up psy-ops equipment from Ft. Hood—HumVees outfitted to carry

loudspeakers and spotlights. For 24 hours a day, he broadcast obnoxious sounds at the church: high-decibel oscillations, a telephone busy signal, rabbits being slaughtered, elevator music, Tibetan chanting and more. Using U.S. and British Special Forces, he placed wireless television bugs in virtually every room inside the church and obtained infrared images from specially equipped overflights. The FBI even used Russian psychics to beam disorienting and discouraging messages at the church.

Within the first few days of the siege, Koresh's lawyer, Dick DeGuerin, arrived at the scene but was turned away at an ATF roadblock. His attempts to telephone Jamar were unsuccessful and he was told to "write a letter." DeGuerin wrote to Jamar requesting to confer with his client. Jamar denied the request.

On March 22, Jamar called a strategy meeting. He viewed the tactics to date as modestly successful. Several dozen church members had surrendered and there was an average of two new surrenders each day. But from eavesdropping surveillance he knew that many of those remaining were only becoming more committed. Jamar recommended "stress escalation," and failing that, execution of the emergency plan.

On March 26, Jamar gave Koresh a noon deadline to send out 10 more individuals. When none came out, he bulldozed the church members' parked cars, and used helicopters to shine searchlights and blare loud music at the compound throughout the night. Fixed loud-

speakers emitted a barrage of laughter, squawking birds, and sirens. On March 28, he cleared away all cars, trees, fences and other obstructions around the buildings.

The next day Jamar allowed Koresh to speak to his lawyer. On April 1, DeGuerin obtained Koresh's commitment to surrender following Passover. He advised Jamar that he had instructed his client not to speak with the FBI except to arrange the surrender, but Jamar refused to recognize the attorneys' instructions, and kept the loudspeakers on.

On April 6, Steve Schneider called the negotiators and complained about sacrilegious music from the loudspeakers during Passover. The FBI disconnected him. The next morning, Schneider left the church and walked out toward the FBI forward command post. FBI snipers threw flash grenades, forcing him back inside. An hour later, Koresh advised the negotiators that Passover would continue for seven more days.

On April 9, Steve Schneider again walked toward the armored vehicles that contained the forward negotiating team. FBI snipers again threw flash grenades at him, forcing him to retreat. Schneider phoned the negotiators and screamed that he should be allowed to meet with them. Seconds later, he again approached the vehicles. Again he was "flash-banged."

At the end of the day, Jamar asked Washington for permission to initiate the "emergency plan." White House Chief of Staff Mac McLarty took it up with President Clinton on April 11. On April 13, a White House meeting took place. Justice Department's Webster Hubbell was asked

The FBI's special agent in charge, Jeffrey Jamar, continued to refer to the people in the compound as hostages, ironically ignoring that they were his hostages.

closed spaces. When burned or mixed with water, it produces a witches' brew of by-products, including hydrogen chloride, carbon monoxide, and hydrogen cyanide. Jamar's "emergency plan" was an abandonment of the two prime objectives.

FBI's behavioral scientists arrived from Washington and advised that the usual strategy—coupling negotiations with increasing tactical pressure—was inapplicable, and that this strategy could "eventually be counterproductive and could result in the loss of life. Every time his followers sense movement of tactical personnel, Koresh validates his prophetic warnings that an attack is forthcoming and they are going to have to defend themselves."

The Hostage Rescue Team (HRT) called upon two regular consultants from the FBI's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime to analyze Koresh. While these psychiatrists specialize in criminal behavior and have no expertise in religious charismatics, they recommended, "Since these people fear law enforcement, [FBI should] offer them the opportunity of surrendering to a neutral party of their choosing accompanied by appropriate law enforcement personnel."

Jamar rejected the advice and ordered that the recommendations be redrawn to favor increasing tactical pressure. Jamar and his superiors viewed the group's religious beliefs as a convenient cover. He continued to refer to the people in the compound as hostages, ironically ignoring that they were his hostages.

Dutifully, the FBI's behavioral scientists redrew their recommendations to suggest ways of increasing the discomfort levels inside the church including interrupting water and



During the siege, a mixed force of ATF, FBI, Texas Rangers and local police manned the barricades at the outer perimeter. The only way community members could surrender was to evade the inner FBI perimeter and make it to the outer perimeter.

why the FBI had changed its mind about negotiating until Koresh surrendered. Hubbell said that it was because Quantico's only HRT had been in Waco for a month longer than expected, and both Sage and Jamar's assessment was that negotiations would produce no further results. Hubbell pushed for the assault.

The President wanted the military to review the assault plan. The next day Janet Reno met with commanders of Delta Force, other military representatives, four Justice Department lawyers, seven FBI officials including Director William Sessions, and Dr.

No one told Attorney General Janet Reno that child psychiatrists and social workers had ... produced not a shred of evidence of any abuse, sexual or otherwise.

Harry Salem, who was brought in to assess the effects of CS gas on children.

I find it hard to accept a deliberate plan to insert CS gas for 48 hours in a building with so many children. It certainly makes it more difficult to believe that the health and safety of the children was our primary concern. Based on my own medical knowledge and review of the scientific literature, the information supplied to [Reno] seems to minimize the potential harmful consequences for infants and children. ...

If you keep laboratory animals in that atmosphere long enough—40 minutes to an hour—then all will develop pulmonary edema and die... When you get it in your lungs, it inflames it, fluid gets into your lungs and you develop pneumonia... the [one recorded case of this kind of exposure] was saved by intensive care, positive pressure, and all the rest, for 28 days. If all these babies had come out, where was the equipment to put them into intensive care?

— Dr. Alan Stone, outside reviewer for the Justice Department.

After questioning Salem, Reno was persuaded that CS was non-lethal and would not permanently harm the children or pregnant women. When she asked why the standoff had to be resolved soon, Rogers and others fed her four lies:

- Koresh had broken every promise he had made;
- negotiations had broken down;

• no one had been released since March 23; and

• it appeared no one else would surrender.

Reno said she was not yet ready to make the decision.

Unbeknownst to Reno, on April 15, several individual church members attempted to leave the compound and were "flash-banged" back by the FBI. On April 16, Koresh advised Jamar that he had completed interpreting the first of the Seven Seals, and he would surrender when he had finished interpreting the remaining Seals. Jamar asked Koresh to put it in writing, then checked with Koresh's lawyer, Dick DeGuerin, about how long it might take Koresh to complete the Seven Seals. "A week or two" was DeGuerin's estimate, adding that the tapes he had been allowed to send in from religious scholars had persuaded Koresh to come out and survive as a messenger instead of dying as a martyr. Jamar assured DeGuerin that the negotiations had "all the time in the world."

Jamar knew the church members had only 16 ounces of water per person per day, and that could be stopped at any time if HRT snipers were told to put holes in the one remaining water tank.

Jamar gave the surrender letter to Larry Potts. Potts says he passed Koresh's offer to surrender up the chain of command to Janet Reno.

The Pizza Meeting

On April 16, Special Assistant Hubbell met with Deputy Assistant Attorney General Mark Richard and Public Affairs Director Carl Stern. Hubbell told Richard, who was serving as FBI-liaison, that Reno had disapproved the attack plan. Richard didn't like it.

Stern commented that the plan might be viewed by the public as something akin to Saddam Hussein gassing the Kurds. This infuriated Richard, who said the FBI would not be pleased, but it would accept Reno's decision, and would be asking for permission to withdraw its HRT.

After Richard crossed the street to the Hoover Building, Director Sessions called Reno and asked her to reconsider.

On April 17, Louis Alaniz, who had snuck into the church after the raid, managed to sneak back out. He got past the FBI inner perimeter and was taken into custody at the outer perimeter, a mixed force of FBI, ATF, National Guard, Sheriff's deputies, and Texas Rangers. He was the first church mem-

ber to successfully surrender since Jesse Amen managed to get out on April 4.

Later, church member Graham Craddock would say of the inner perimeter, "These are people who lowered their trousers and bent over, exposing their backsides to us. Do you think we wanted to send our children to these people?"

That night, Janet Reno met in her office with her closest aides over pizza. It was Saturday night and Washington was growing quiet. Her lights burned late because now Waco had her full attention.

William Sessions crossed the street from his office in the inner sanctum of the gargantuan J. Edgar Hoover Building and took the back elevator to Reno's cramped corner office.

Reno leaned over her desk and asked him what the FBI would do if children were endangered, such as being held up to windows or threatened to be shot. He said the FBI would "back off" in such an event, but that once the action was underway, tactical decisions would be in the hands of the site commander.

Reno knew the site commander would be the same man who commanded the Randy Weaver standoff at Ruby Ridge. Whether or not she had learned that a homicide indictment against her site commander was being considered by an Idaho Grand Jury, she didn't like the idea of giving him tactical control.

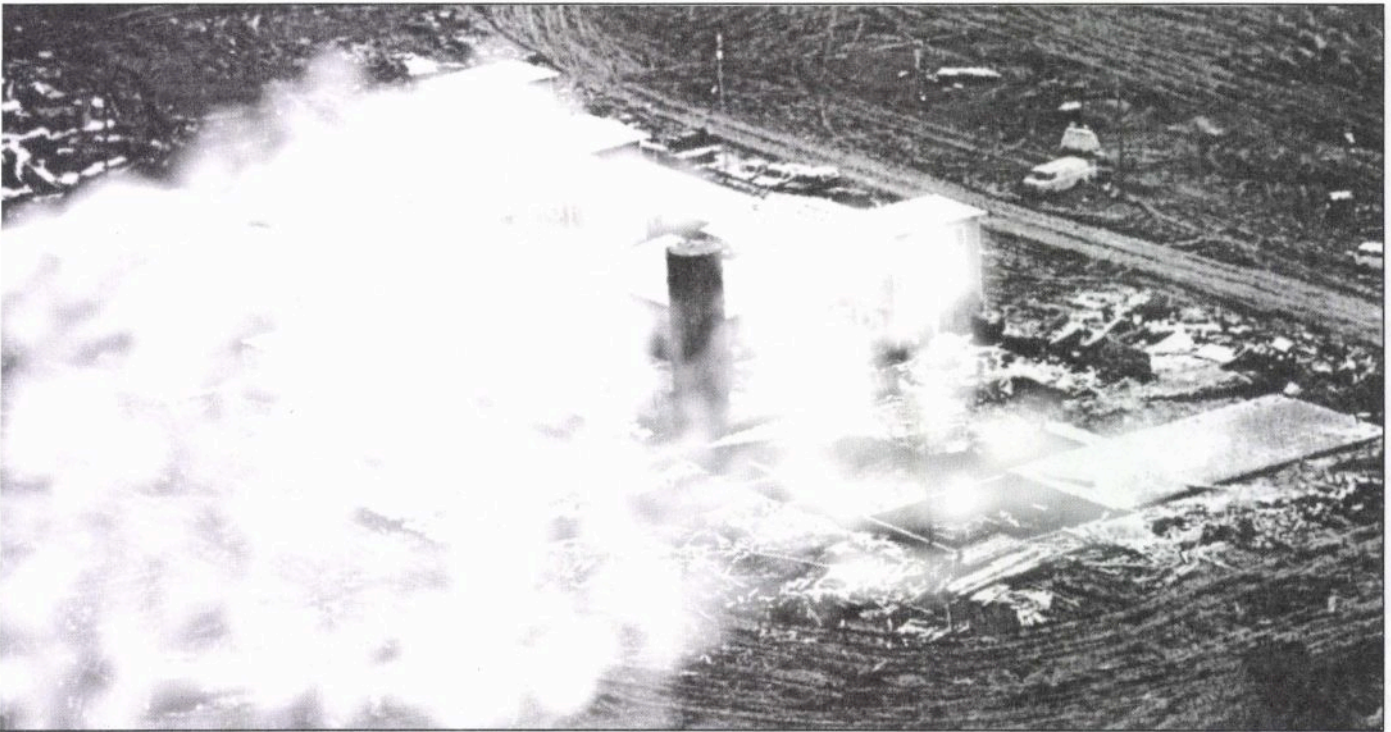
"Not good enough. I want you to get the hell out of there. Don't take any risks with the children," Reno said.

Reno still hadn't approved the raid. Sessions leaned a little harder. He would not leave his people there indefinitely. Reno didn't budge.

Someone made a comment that Koresh was beating babies. Reno's face flushed and she demanded to know what that meant. She was told that the FBI had learned through its listening devices that the church members were "beating babies."

Reno had been previously informed that Koresh had sexually molested minors, and that he continued to have sex while recovering from his wounds. She knew that sanitary conditions had deteriorated, something that would cause the health of the infants to suffer. Maybe all the pressure had pushed him over the edge?

No one told Reno that child psychiatrists and social workers had extensively interviewed and "de-programmed" all of the dozens of children who had left during the two-month siege and had produced not a shred of evidence of any abuse, sexual or otherwise. Given crayons and asked to draw



Army units fired 1,375 gallons of CS-laden ethanol into community buildings, completely enveloping them in a cloud of deadly hydrogen cyanide.

that they remembered of the February 28 attack, the children drew pictures of helicopters shooting from the sky. Rapid taps of the crayon tips made holes in the roof of their house.

Abruptly, Reno changed her mind and approved the FBI attack plan. The execution was set for Monday morning. Some of those present were able to finish their pizza. Janet Reno could not.

Only when there is clear evidence of criminal wrongdoing can authorities intervene in the free exercise of religion, and only then with appropriately low levels of intrusiveness. — Nancy T. Ammerman, an outside reviewer for the Justice Dept. Her analysis was not published in the official report.

Marching Orders

The limited plan approved by Reno was to send two Combat Engineering Vehicles (CEVs) inside the HRT's concertina wire just before sunrise. A CEV is an M60 tank which has been modified with a boom to assist in knocking down walls and delivering CS gas. Each CEV would be equipped to project CS using the Mark 5 delivery system—15 one second bursts per charge, six charges per vehicle, each burst propelled 55 feet by a specially-modified flame thrower. There were enough backup materials at the site for 1800 bursts per vehicle. After the

CEVs delivered aerosol CS, a Bradley vehicle near the building would deliver ferret liquid CS rounds into an unfinished construction area near the main structure, to deny access to this zone by church members.

It was hoped that by introducing CS at opposite ends of the compound, church members would be forced out the front door and surrender. If firing commenced from the compound, the Bradleys would deliver liquid ferret rounds into all windows and openings in the church. These were 40 mm shells delivered by grenade launchers that can penetrate a wall or hollow door from 20 yards away.

The vehicles would then stand down and wait. If all church members failed to exit the church after 48 hours, the CEVs would begin disassembling the church and continue until all occupants were located.

Church members who exited the compound and surrendered would be moved in an orderly fashion to a designated area behind the vehicles where they would be searched and turned over to waiting ATF personnel for handcuffing and transport.

Children would be escorted to representatives of the Texas Child Welfare Protective Services who would be manning portable shower stalls to wash away the CS residues. The children would be given fresh clothing and escorted to a waiting shelter.

An orbiting helicopter with SWAT personnel aboard would apprehend and arrest

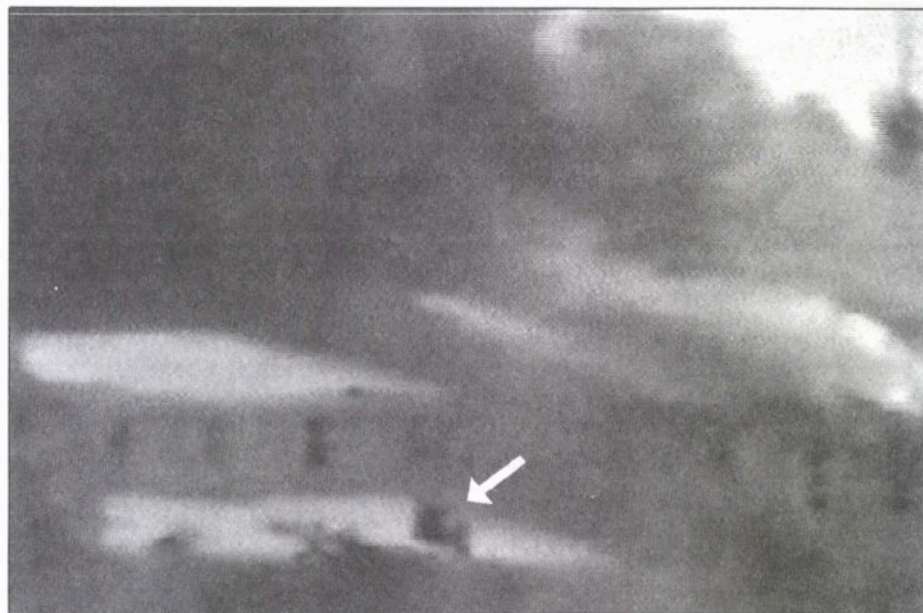
subjects attempting to flee from the site. The plan called for controlled arrests over a two day period. There was no urgency.

"This Is Not an Attack"

At dawn on Monday, HRT Commander Rogers ordered the plan into action. As the two CEVs moved inside the wire, Rogers moved his command tank to a position approximately 240 yards directly in front of the church. FBI negotiator Byron Sage phoned the compound at 5:59 a.m. "We're in the process of putting tear gas into the building. This is not an assault. We will not enter the building." The person on the other end threw the phone out the window.

FBI recordings later showed that at about this time, Koresh and others inside began assembling Molotov cocktails to throw at the tanks. From a conversation with Steve Schneider the day before, negotiators knew there was no fire protection within the building. According to Jamar, had the senior commanders known of the incendiary devices, they might have called off the tank assault. Unfortunately, no one was monitoring the tape devices at 6 a.m.

Sage began reading a prepared script over the loudspeakers: "We are in the process of placing tear gas into the building. This is not an assault. We are not entering the building. This is not an assault ... you are under arrest. The standoff is over. We do not want



Shortly after the first smoke appeared under the east roof, a black-clad man in a fireproof hood slid down from the roof and jumped into a tank turret. He dismounted the tank and walked away slowing toward the FBI perimeter, removing his hood. He was not taken into custody.

anyone hurt. Follow all instructions. This is not an assault. Do not fire any weapons. We do not want anyone hurt."

What the FBI was saying and what the combined force was doing were two distinctly different things.

Later, under cross-examination at the murder trial, FBI agent Tom Rowan said he saw a "man with a shoulder weapon" firing out of a window at the CEVs. He said that he "kept firing gas canisters at the window until the man stopped shooting."

Rowan testified he used his launcher to fire a flash-bang at "an area where someone in aerial surveillance had seen a person coming out of a door or window." Rowan said that everyone's orders were to keep the church members inside the church.

By 6:31 a.m., the HRT reported that the entire building had been gassed. By 7:09 a.m., "the HRT reported that the Ferret rounds had been delivered through all the windows ... where movements or gunfire were detected."

That should have ended it, but HRT members used their 400 ferret rounds so quickly that the FBI's command center in Washington sent out a bulletin at 7:45 a.m., "canvass[ing] all FBI field offices to locate more Ferret rounds." By 9:20 a.m., the FBI's Houston field office had delivered an additional 48 Ferret rounds to the scene.

The FBI attack plan had called for the Texas Child Welfare Protective Services to be present. At 9:30 a.m., Joyce Sparks received a call at home from the governor's office, asking why she was not out at the compound. She said she had not heard the attack was underway. She immediately placed a call to the FBI office but was told she didn't need to come, that there would be no one coming out. She hung up the phone and turned to her husband. "They intend to kill them all," she told him.

At 10:00 a.m., Reno left her command post in Washington for a scheduled luncheon appearance in Baltimore. Her departure could not have come at a worse time. Almost as soon as she was out of the situation room, violence against the church by the armored vehicles escalated dramatically.

Instead of standing down for 48 hours and letting the gas do its work, the two vehicles moved in aggressively to attack any location where the infrared cameras or television bugging devices indicated that church members were hiding. One tank took up a position blocking the trap door to a root cellar—a buried school bus—which would have provided safety for church members if they could have reached it.

At 11:30 a.m., on Rogers' orders, CEV-2 breached the back side of the compound, concentrating on the corner of the building above the cellar where the FBI knew that the women and children had gathered to escape the CS gas. It was standing room only for the cellar's occupants, wet blankets over their heads, infants cradled in their arms, coughing and wheezing from hours of intense gassing. As the smoke, toxic gases and

heat began to increase, some of those standing in the cellar began to collapse. Those still able began to recite the 23rd Psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want..."

Ordered to clear a path to the cellar, the tank plunged into the gymnasium and bulldozed its way through the two-story-high structure as the roof and walls caved in. The tank operators felt the floor give way, showing those inside with large chunks of jagged concrete. They backed CEV-2 out before it could plunge through the floor into the writhing mass of bodies below. As they backed, the tank knocked over lanterns and cans of fuel, and crushed a pressurized tank filled with liquid propane. The gymnasium collapsed completely as the tank withdrew.

In the cellar were Audrey Martinez, 13, and three other girls ranging in ages from two to 14, a seven-year-old boy, a one-year-old too badly burned to determine its sex, and Rosemary Morrison, 29—all buried alive before any fire reached them.

Two sisters, Jennifer and Katherine Andrade, aged 19 and 24 years respectively, died from inhaling toxic fumes, as did 17 others found later. Four nearby died from blunt trauma. Rebecca Saipaia, 24, and a young man were burned to death. An unidentified two-year-old boy, specified in the Justice report as "Doe 33," reportedly died of a stab wound to the left chest, although the principal pathologist suggested the cause was a puncture wound from falling debris.

Nine died from gunshot wounds, including nine-year-old Abigail Martinez and two unidentified children, a six-year-old girl and an infant. It is an open question whether these bodies were shot where they were found or were pushed into their final position by the CEVs, which systematically bulldozed the burning church complex into a central pyre.

Instants after their mothers, Aisha Gyarfaz and Nicole Gent, expired, two infants were born through the process of a primordial biological survival reflex. Both lived only moments before succumbing to gas, falling concrete, and fire.

FBI line agents admitted later they had orders to return fire if fired upon and that once the CEVs began disassembling the building, the attack force had come under fire. Videotape footage shows 21 adults attempting to exit from the building at one time or another. James Riddle, Stephen Henry, Neal Vaega, Lisa Marie Farris, and Abigail Martinez died of gunshot wounds to the forehead. Phillip Henry and Novellett Hipsman, both British citizens, died of gunshot wounds to their foreheads and chests. Mary Jean Borst died of a gunshot wound

to the back. Five unidentified church members, aged 30, 25, 15, 12, and six, died of gunshot wounds to the head and chest. A 30 to 50 year old female died of multiple gunshot wounds to the left back and thorax. An infant died of a gunshot wound to the head.

Audiotape recordings made by the FBI but excluded from the trial jury as prejudicial provide a poignant tableau: the sounds of grumbling tank engines and clanking tracks, followed by the sound of splintering wood, crashing walls and roaring gas. Then the sounds of men and women praying fervently, and little children—all of them now dead—crying out in terror for mom and dad. Then the loud-speaker voice of FBI Special Agent Byron Sage, repeating over and over, "This is not an attack. This is not an attack."

The Trial: Showdown in San Antonio

Nine church members escaped the burning building. Within a few days, a 10-count indictment charged 12 church members with federal firearms violations, murder, and conspiracy. The conspiracy charge allowed the government to hold three defendants who were not even present at the raid.

Judge Walter Smith, a close personal friend of the FBI Director, ruled out use of the 911 tape; challenges to the legality of the warrants; the requirement and service and execution of a warrant; the use of the words "as-



After the fire, the ATF displayed this arsenal of weapons which it claimed to capture from the community. During cross examination at the trial, ATF agents confessed that many of these weapons had no connection to the Branch Davidians and did not come from their community.

processing team was kept at bay after the fire while the ATF was "obviously altering outside evidence. I disagreed with that." On the witness stand, Byrne expressed his concern that ATF agents had salted the scene with bogus evidence.

At later Congressional hearings, it would be revealed that the Department of Justice had halted the Treasury Department after-action shooting investigation of the February 28 raid when it became apparent that the ATF agents' stories didn't jibe with the facts. The U.S. Attorney also forbade Texas Rangers from interviewing anyone in command of the initial assault.

Texas Ranger Sergeant Fred Cummings revealed that half of Mount Carmel's metal double front-door was missing—the half publicly identified as key evidence because the "spray pattern" of entry holes confirmed that ATF fired a burst of machine gun fire at Koresh as he tried to surrender. He also acknowledged that he observed "trash" being loaded into a dumpster by FBI agents before the scene was processed for evidence.

Koresh's handiwork for Hewitt Handguns, 48 fully automatic rifles, were paraded before the jury, but despite all the talk of .50 caliber machine guns—ostensibly the reason for keeping 1000 reporters at a barricade two miles from Mt.

Carmel—none were found.

Denied nearly all subpoenas, defense attorneys called only 11 witnesses. In his summation, defense attorney Dan Cogdell said: "Ninety people lost their lives in the name of gun parts. Make no mistake, [government officials] want us to pay for their mistakes."

Doug Tinker, the soft-spoken senior attorney, concluded, "The government showed that they have gas masks. And they did. The adults had gas masks. The children didn't. They don't fit children, folks. They don't fit children and the evidence will show that CS gas kills children. The government used CS gas. I'm proud of our country, but I'm not proud of what they did here. They killed children."

After just three days of deliberation, all 11 defendants were acquitted of murder and conspiracy. Seven were found guilty on lesser charges (possessing a firearm during the commission of a violent crime) and the others were cleared completely. Smith said the jury had misunderstood his instructions. He dismissed the lesser verdicts on count three because they were predicated on the murder and conspiracy charges, of which all defendants were acquitted. Jurors later said their finding of guilt on the lesser charge reflected their conclusion that neither side was blameless.

A week later, in a bizarre ruling, Smith reversed the jury and his own ruling and entered guilty verdicts against seven defendants. The group as a whole received 240 years, 170 on charges of which the jury had found them innocent. Fines and restitution totaled \$9,675,500. Jury foreman Sarah Bain was weeping outside the courtroom as she told reporters, "I'm extremely upset, and at least two thirds of the jury will be as upset as I am." Another juror told the *N.Y. Times*, "The judge ignored the jury's conclusions."

The 51-day siege had cost federal taxpayers an estimated \$13 million, not including state costs, or costs for the use of military equipment and personnel. The trial cost another \$1.3 million, and the CS gas an estimated \$20 million.

The Legacy

On April 22, Bill Clinton responded to criticism for the deaths at Waco, saying, "I do not think the United States government is responsible for the fact that a bunch of fanatics decided to kill themselves," he growled. "The bureau's efforts were ultimately unavailing because the individual with whom they were dealing, David Koresh, was dangerous, irrational, and probably insane.... Mr. Koresh's response to the demands for his surrender by Federal agents

FBI audiotapes recorded the sounds of grumbling tank engines and clanking tracks, the sound of splintering wood, crashing walls and roaring gas ... men and women praying fervently, little children crying out in terror for mom and dad ... the loud-speaker voice repeating over and over, "This is not an attack. This is not an attack."

sault" or "attack" in reference to ATF actions; discussion of the church members killed by the ATF agents; or any use of the Treasury or FBI reports analyzing the mistakes made in the raid. These pre-trial rulings would lead to sustained objections whenever defense questions could be interpreted as suggesting governmental misconduct.

Nonetheless, Texas Ranger Captain David Byrne testified that his crime scene

was to destroy himself and murder the children who were his captives as well as all the other people there who did not survive.

"I hope ... that others who will be tempted to join cults and become involved with people like Koresh will be deterred by the horrible scenes they have seen. ... There is, unfortunately, a rise in this sort of fanati-

on children, that "if a child is in a cult situation for any length of time," he or she might experience "permanent damage."

This statement caused Methodist Minister Joseph Bettis to write the Attorney General, "[F]rom the beginning, members of the Cult Awareness Network have been involved in this tragedy. This organization

is widely known for its use of fear to foster religious bigotry. The reliance of federal agents on information supplied by these people, as well as the whole record of federal activity deserves your careful investigation and public disclosure. ... Cult bashing must end, and

you must take the lead."

In early May, a coalition of 16 religious and civil liberties organizations, including the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Conference on Religious Movements, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, the Episcopal Church, the General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists, the National Association of Evangelicals, the National Council of Churches of Christ and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations issued a statement which read in part, "We are shocked and saddened by the recent events in Waco... Under the religious liberty provision of the First Amendment, the government has no business declaring what is orthodox or heretical, or what is a true or false religion. It should steer clear of inflammatory and misleading labels. History teaches that today's 'cults' may be tomorrow's mainstream religions."

While there are many lessons to be learned from Waco, and few have yet to penetrate the corridors of the Justice and Treasury Departments, perhaps the most salient concern is the erosion of separation between the military and the police forces in America today. The use of psychological warfare, poison gas and pyrotechnic devices, helicopters, tanks and assault vehicles, and special operations involving the intelligence assets of other nations being deployed within the United States are ominous forewarnings of a KGB-zation of domestic police forces.

To Americans fed up with crime in the inner cities and frustrated with a punishment system that serves to create more criminals and increase their effectiveness, the escalation to military levels seems a justifiable pro-

gression. But to those of us for whom the Constitution still holds the promise of a free society, where innocence is presumed and the government is one of strictly limited powers, the leap is too far, too brutal, and too difficult to rescind. David Koresh may have been deluded, or he may have been a prophet. He, and those with him, didn't deserve what America dished up.

At his worst, David Koresh was a pedophile and a petty tyrant who held his followers and his children too closely to him after he had been marked for death. At his best, David Koresh was a modern-day martyr in the mold of John Brown, calling upon the federal government to face up to its secret sins or plunge into civil rebellion. If the latter interpretation is justified, we ignore what happened in Waco at our peril.

As hearings on Waco resumed in Congress, the convicted church members were being shuttled between separate federal prisons. Some remain defiant of authority and are tormented by their captors, who mock their religion, refuse them showers and yard privileges and harass them mercilessly. Thirty-six-year-old Livingston Fagan, who has a masters degree in Theology, describes his experience in Terre Haute: "I had my feet kicked from under me. On one occasion, I was thrown to the floor. I had my clothes stripped from off me. I was chained hands and feet and then on my back, I was in a crouching position and this guard went on to point out to me that if I did not obey him, I would be treated like a bitch. It was very clear that this individual was going beyond the call of duty." Refusing work, refusing strip searches, refusing to speak when spoken to, Fagan and others are made to go naked, left in isolation cells, and refused outside communications.

But as Paul Fatta told a reporter recently, "I'm suffering. I don't like it. I want to be outside. But there are promises in scripture... that's what I'm waiting for. Whether I'm out there in the so-called free world, it really doesn't matter. I'm beyond that. The issue to us is relative to what God is doing, not what man is doing. Man has already demonstrated his willing incompetence." Ω

Albert Bates is a public interest attorney and retired paramedic and author of five books on law, energy and environment. He has lived in intentional community for the past 23 years and currently serves as an instructor in appropriate technologies. This article debuted as a three-part series in the journal, Natural Rights, in 1993 and 1994. Comments can be sent to the author electronically at natlaw@igc.apc.org.

A coalition of religious and civil liberties organizations said, "Under the ... First Amendment, the government has no business declaring what is orthodox or heretical, or what is a true or false religion.... History teaches that today's 'cults' may be tomorrow's mainstream religions."

cism all over the world. And we may have to confront it again."

When asked by Congressman William Hughes why the FBI would consult groups like CAN, Janet Reno replied that she was concerned about the negative affect of cults



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The Heart Will Find a Way: Creating a Network of Reunion

by Ramón Sender Barayón



The KIT network helps isolated former Bruderhof members reconnect, such as at this 1992 US KITfolk gathering.

THIS IS THE STORY OF HOW HUNDREDS of isolated former Bruderhof members found each other again—and how reunion with community can help heal the human spirit.

The KIT ("Keep in Touch") network began when I decided to research the story of my daughter Xaverie, from whom I had been separated for 30 years. I had been prevented from participating in her life by the Bruderhof, the group of Christian intentional communities in which she lived. After Xaverie's death in 1988, I asked the Bruderhof leadership to allow me to interview community members who knew her. I intended to write a memoir and, in the process, assuage a father's thirst for his daughter's presence. In the process I also hoped that I would find some healing for the emotional trauma caused by the long separation. I had done this when I wrote *A Death In Zamora*, which traced the life of my mother, shot during the Spanish Civil War when I was two.

My daughter Xaverie had grown up in the Bruderhof with her mother, after I was asked to leave and subsequently realized I was emotionally incapable of living in the

community, and in the marriage. Over the following years, despite numerous attempts to communicate with Xavi, I was cut off from her completely by the Bruderhof leadership. Occasionally I phoned when visiting the East Coast in the hopes of at least talking to her, but was always told, "We think it's in Xavi's best interests not to speak with you." I remained enough under the Bruderhof leadership's control to accept their reasoning, but their ongoing refusal to allow me a relationship with my own daughter remained a festering wound in my heart.

When she was 17, I insisted upon a visit and finally was allowed one hour with her in a local diner. It remains one of the most magical moments of my life, although I realized it created a dilemma for her: to listen to her heart's desire for her father or remain true to the Bruderhof's (and her mother's) demands. After that visit she wrote to tell me that she could not, as a novice member,

remain true to her faith and remain in contact with me. Twelve years after that visit, she wrote once more to tell me that she loved me but due to the differences in our lives she would be unable to communicate with me further.

Despite the finality of her letter, I clung to the dream that some day things would change. When my wife Judith and I traveled east in the summer of 1988, she encouraged me to try to telephone Xavi again. This time I had slightly better luck, because whoever answered the phone did not recognize my voice and assumed I was a customer for their toys.

"No, Xavi is not taking orders right now," he said. "She just gave birth to her second child."

That was how I discovered that she had been married for three years and that I was a grandfather twice over! I asked to speak with my son-in-law, John Rhodes, and when he refused to allow me—or even Judith—to speak with Xavi, I contacted a neighboring minister as a possible go-between. We returned to San Francisco feeling that perhaps some sort of beginning had been made towards resolving the impasse.

On October 3, 1988, I received the news of Xaverie's sudden death from a virulent

The policy of warning ex-members away from each other had successfully isolated many of them, but it could not stifle the yearning to renew childhood connections and old bonds of friendship and fellowship.

melanoma cancer five weeks earlier, on August 26, roughly three weeks after our phone call. When I read the letter, my first reaction was one of shocked disbelief, but when I spoke with John Rhodes and later read the transcript of the memorial service, the truth hit me in all its appalling starkness. My daughter had died at the age of 33, leaving behind two small children. Five days later I

still was trying to come to grips with the reality, and yet it seemed as if months had passed. Why couldn't the community have let me know sooner? At least they could have telephoned. Why was I not allowed one final visit?

I spoke twice on the phone with John, and out of respect for his obvious grief, I tried not to express my anger at the five-week lapse between her death and my receiving the news. John seemed as warm and open as anyone from the Bruderhof had been with me since I left. However, I sensed that other ears were listening to our conversation, and I detected a slight edge of paranoia somewhere over the phone extensions. Perhaps they thought it amazingly coincidental that I had appeared in their neighborhood eager

to see Xavi only a few weeks before she died. Or perhaps they feared that I would accuse them of gross medical negligence.

Six months later, I decided to research my daughter's life story. Perhaps I could capture memories of her in the same way that I had captured those of my mother in Spain, by hunting down all those who had known her.

When the Bruderhof leadership turned down my request to interview Bruderhof members, I began to search for former members. I knew the phone number of one former Woodcrest community member, Vince Lagano. Vince gave me the names of two more ex-members who in turn gave me the names of two more. By the end of the month, I had talked with more than 30 ex-Bruderhof members and had personally vis-

ited with four. By the end of the second month, I had spoken to over 60. In spite of the fact that most had followed obediently the Bruderhof's warning not to contact other ex-members (because doing so would prevent any possibility of return to the community) they all were eager for news about the others and asked for their addresses.

The KIT Round-Robin newsletter started as a modest two-page sheet sent to 30 or so ex-members to share each others' news and addresses, and give these long-isolated friends access to each other again. The newsletter became a monthly, and very soon I was mailing 10,000-word issues to 200 ex-members. The volume of incoming mail was extraordinary, and the newsletter expanded to 16,000 words per issue, almost all of it "Let-

The Bruderhof Responds

by Doug and Ruby Moody

THOUGH WE ARE GRATEFUL TO THE staff of *Communities* for the chance to respond to Ramon Sender's story, we are pained that our response needs to be made public in such a forum. However, the readers of *Communities* need to know that the Bruderhof community described in Ramon's article and in the pages of the KIT newsletter is entirely different from the community we have lived in and committed our lives to for the past 40 years. Though we will not present a blow-by-blow rebuttal of Ramon's story, there are several statements he makes which cry out to be corrected.

The circumstances of Ramon's departure from the Bruderhof in 1959 would normally be a personal matter between Ramon and the Bruderhof. But since Ramon has made our strained relationship a matter of public record, we have no choice but to point out some of these circumstances: After Ramon had taken the vows of the novitiate in the Bruderhof—a life-time commitment—he decided to leave for California and turned his back on many of the beliefs that we consider central to a life of discipleship to Christ. Among these is a commitment to absolute purity before marriage and in marriage.

Tragically, Ramon abandoned these beliefs immediately upon his departure.

The following excerpt from a December 30, 1969 letter from Ramon to his ex-wife, Sibyl, demonstrates the enormous gulf that he created between himself and the Bruderhof immediately upon his departure: "I wish that the Bruderhofians wouldn't be so f—— prudish about things, and would relax and laugh at themselves and life more. . . . Sex play is perfectly good and normal among young people, and they should be allowed to f—— themselves silly over hill and dale. Ecstasy is good for you."

After receiving such letters, is it any wonder that Sibyl decided not to have any contact with her former husband and chose not to allow Ramon access to the daughter he had abandoned? Naturally, the Bruderhof leadership supported Sibyl in her resolve.

Regarding the life of Ramon's daughter, Xaverie, we can only report that our own experiences of living with Xavie for 30 years, celebrating her wedding and the birth of her two children, and suffering with her husband John Rhodes through the agonizing two weeks before her untimely death in 1985 bear no resemblance to the picture Ramon paints.

John Rhodes reports that Xavie did not want to inform Ramon of their marriage or

the birth of their two children. They had told Ramon that it was her wish and that they did not ask anyone else's advice. But he won't believe it. Xaverie's illness was very brief. One week after her death, John tried to contact Ramon, but the address he had was incorrect, and the letter was delayed before being returned. John has apologized for his delay in informing Ramon, but Ramon persists in blaming the community. It is tragic, but still a fact, that a visit from Ramon was the last thing Xaverie wanted in these last days of her life. Regarding Ramon's suspicions about the subsequent phone call and the "slight edge of paranoia" that Ramon "detected over the phone extensions," John tells us that there was no one except himself on the line. About our being afraid Ramon would "accuse them of gross medical negligence," the doctor he inquired of told him (and reported to us later) that "the Bruderhof has one of the best medical care systems he had ever seen." Xaverie would not have received better medical care anywhere else in the world, and Ramon cannot deny this.

Since that time Sibyl (and the Bruderhof) have made many efforts to reconcile with Ramon through visits, correspondence and phone calls.

ters to the Editor." At this point I invited four local Bruderhof graduates to form a volunteer staff and share the workload, Vince Lagano, Charlie Lamar, Dave Ostrom, and Christina Bernard.

I talked with exiles from the "Great Crisis of 1960-1961" (in which hundreds of members were expelled from the Bruderhof communities in Paraguay), who were living in dire poverty, and with survivors of various subsequent mass exclusions from the American Bruderhof communities. I discovered that one ex-member, Lee Kleiss, had started a round-robin letter in the early 1960s. I found the so-called "Hartford Boys," a group of young men driven away by a Servant of the Word (a Bruderhof elder) who had beaten them severely, and the

tightly-knit group of ex-Bruderhof members in England, who had stayed more closely in touch. Like the ex-members in Germany, the English ex-members seemed willing to let bygones be bygones and tried to put a good face on past wrongs, in contrast to the feistier Americans. But they *all* shared an intense desire to know whom I had found and what these people were doing with their lives.

The Bruderhof's policy of warning ex-members away from each other had successfully isolated many of them, but it could not stifle the yearning to renew childhood connections and old bonds of friendship and fellowship. Almost every person I contacted expressed the same hunger for news. However there were a few exceptions. One or two had been alerted to stay away from KIT by

the Bruderhof and would not speak to me, and a few others remained too traumatized and fearful to accept even a sample issue. However, over the intervening years, many of the more timid folk have put aside their fears and joined the KIT network.

Financial contributions from the readership have kept abreast of mailing and printing costs, so the staff only had to donate their time and telephones. When someone sent the Bruderhof a photocopy of the KIT newsletter, we began to mail copies directly to each of the Bruderhof communities. By then we had created a widely scattered support group whose feelings about their ex-member status ran the gamut from guilt to outright rage. Some staunchly defended the Bruderhof while others' anger erupted in

We were pained that he didn't give the forgiveness Sibyl asked for on her 1990 visit to him, nor after her letter to Ramon that followed, from which we excerpt:

"Thinking about your coming visit to the grandchildren brought me face-to-face with the question, what will their reaction be to the KIT letter when they are old enough to read it? As it is written now, I do believe it would be most injurious to the relationship we both hope for. I say this based on my experience with Xavie whom I try to imagine reading the KIT letter. I think by now you may have read the memories people wrote of her and see that she was definitely 'her own woman,' and a dedicated fighter for the Bruderhof. I think she would have had a pretty strong reaction against it. It would not have drawn you closer together My goal was to bring her [Xavierie] up to love and respect you and I succeeded, partly through protecting her from knowledge of anything in you that might attack that love and respect—for example, how you were during the years of your drug taking. I never wanted her to be a judgmental type and she never was. But it's one thing to know that our stands are rarely those of the general society—on faithfulness to one marriage, for instance—and to know (as I ultimately had to tell her) that her own father fails to share this stand with her, has in fact

remarried more than once ... Rightly or wrongly, this is the sort of thing that pained her deeply—not so much what you had done, but the chasm that stretched between your respective philosophies and values....

"One of my convictions was that Xavie be able to choose for or against joining the Bruderhof as an entirely free person. I strongly believed that if my actions did not 'speak' to her, my words certainly wouldn't, so I 'lived' rather than spoke. She was left to form her own philosophy ... In one of your conversations—maybe it was with the Moodys—you said it was tragic that Sibyl never remarried. Ramon, I *wanted* to be faithful to you. And when Xavie said, as a young woman, 'Mama, I'm so glad you never remarried—that would have been a terrible blow for me,' it was a confirmation of the joy I had had in that faithfulness. I didn't preach to her about it, I just did it. What I'm saying is the children of the Bruderhof are no more 'brainwashed' than the children outside the Bruderhof. Both sets of children are simply 'spoken to' by the lives of the adults around them.

"I think if you had been better able to communicate to Xavie, even in that one meeting in the diner, that you fully supported the way of life she had chosen and were more than willing to work out with her together a relationship which would take into account the differences between your outlooks, you would have gotten much farther with her. But she felt pressed by you to go farther into your life, on your

terms, than she was ready for. She loved you and she so much wanted your respect for the life she loved."

Regarding the other issues raised in Ramon's story, we will respond simply by saying that we (both over 75 now), experienced more freedom of individual choice here in the Bruderhof than anywhere else, after living on four continents. We joined under our free will 40 years ago; we stayed and returned freely twice after spending a year away from the community; we were in no way "controlled" at any time. The collapse of 1960-61 that Ramon refers to was so great there wasn't cash to meet every need; the women and girls and the sick and elderly were helped first. Certainly, overcoming the results of such a collapse took years. Many mistakes were made. Many of us in the Bruderhof have gone to great lengths to apologize personally to those who were hurt during those years. In many cases we have received forgiveness and a wonderful reconciliation has taken place. But for some, reconciliation has proved impossible. Why is this? Rather than try to explore all the reasons publicly, we invite any reader of *Communities* or any seekers of truth to come and visit us. We have an open door, and we certainly have nothing to hide. Ω

Doug and Ruby Moody live at the New Meadow Run Bruderhof in Farmington, Pennsylvania.

verbal vitriol. Each had his or her own dramatic story to tell. The most moving were those told by people who had been ejected from the communities as teenagers, cut off from their parents and from any type of financial or emotional support.

Keep in mind that the KIT network is not a membership organization, nor do the former Bruderhof members speak as one. It allows all voices to be heard—the angry ones, those pleading for forgiveness and understanding, those simply wanting to share their life stories. At times the various purposes KIT serves intersect and collide, such as when the "support group aspect"—the need to vent anger—interferes with the need to communicate to the Bruderhof leadership in the hopes of resolving some of the unresolved conflicts and misunderstandings.

Unfortunately there are many of these. It seems as though the Bruderhof leadership always made the separation as difficult as possible. Many ex-members, including myself, recalling the leadership's methods of controlling people in community, assumed the difficult separations were carried out in the hope that the evicted member would be so traumatized he or she would beg to be taken back, willing to confess to even the most blatantly false accusations as proof of his or her obedience and total surrender to the leaders. In our experience, the Bruderhof had proved itself a remarkably cruel and vindictive organization, especially in the case of its own adolescents. What terrible burdens of guilt and shame they placed on these youngsters!

In late 1989, we heard that the Bruderhof

was quite concerned about the KIT newsletters. At first I received some frankly hostile letters from members. Then a change occurred, and the letters became more sympathetic. I heard that "a new spirit of reconciliation" was awakening in the Bruderhof. Ex-members wrote about their surprisingly pleasant visits to relatives within the communities. The usual challenges to "repent and return" were absent from members' conversations, although now and then a "longing" might be expressed in a gentler manner. In January, 1990, a Bruderhof couple traveling in California visited with KIT staff.

The meeting seemed to go well. I felt that personally they were willing to acknowledge that I had been treated very badly. As long as the conversation centered on the failings of individuals within the Bruderhof, they listened. They acknowledged that serious mistakes had been made in the past by various Servants and Witness Brothers, but the moment either their beloved former leader Heini Arnold was criticized, or abusive aspects of the Bruderhof system itself were mentioned, they simply did not hear what was said. This lack of agreement on major issues set the tone of all future meetings.

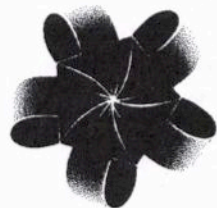
In the late summer of 1990 we held our first KIT conference at a youth hostel in central Massachusetts. Approximately 50 "survivors and graduates" gathered for three days of shared memories and visiting with old friends and lost relatives. What an amazing event!

In 1992, KIT staff incorporated as the nonprofit Peregrine Foundation ("peregrine" meaning "pilgrim" or "wanderer"). Other projects were added, such as Carrier Pigeon

Press, which publishes book-length memoirs of ex-Bruderhof members, and the "Women From Utopia" series. We also created a computer bulletin board that allows KITfolk to converse and interact on a daily basis. In 1995, the newsletters and other articles became accessible in electronic form on the Internet and World Wide Web. We have held four more annual conferences in the U.S. and two Euro-KIT gatherings in England.

As of December, 1994, the KIT newsletter has published over a million words, and three books and four "Annuals" (bound and indexed collections of the newsletters) are in print as well as various smaller brochures and pamphlets. The XRoads Fund (named in Xavi's memory) has assisted various young people, and helped one young man move out of a homeless shelter into an ex-member's home. Also we were able to track down this young man's birth father and reunite them—a real and heartwarming detective story! In another case we aided a large family thrown out of the community under the most adverse of circumstances and told to go on welfare. Rarely does a month go by that we do not receive a "thank you" letter for the help and services provided. Ω

Ramón Sender Baryón administers the Peregrine Foundation, and publishes the KIT newsletter, the MOST newsletter (for former northern California communards), and Carrier Pigeon Press's "Women from Utopia" series. He has lived in the Woodcrest Bruderhof, and the Morningstar Ranch and Wheeler's Ranch communities. He can be reached at PO Box 460141, San Francisco, CA 94146-0141.



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A Few Commonsense Suggestions

by Tim Miller



DOUG JONES, BIRDSFOOT FARM

IF WE'RE NOT GOING TO SPEAK ABOUT AND condemn "cults," just how are we to avoid getting taken in by wrong-minded persons or harmful situations? I think the only answer is to stay perennially on guard: keep both eyes open, and whatever happens, don't let emotion overwhelm your common sense. A lot of religions and a lot of communities are going to do you a world of good, and a few are going to be disastrous. So just stay alert. In regard to "cults" as well as every other part of life, here are some suggestions for staying centered:

- Avoid people with guns.

- Don't give your money away unless you are willing to let it go unconditionally.
- Retain a commitment to truth.
- If you don't feel comfortable around certain people, take any and all steps necessary to keep your distance from them until you can develop an informed judgment.
- Question authority.
- Remember that life goes on; if you make a mistake, extract yourself from it and proceed from there.
- Love, if not all you need, is at least better than hatred. Ω

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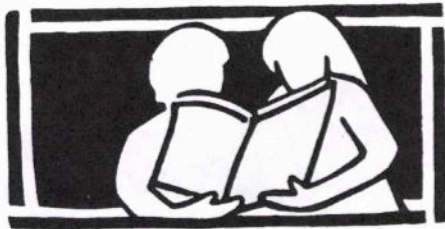
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One of the Fellowship for Intentional Community's primary objectives is to provide the most up-to-date contact information for intentional communities that we can find, and our **Communities Directory** is the centerpiece of that work. (A brand new edition is now available, and can be ordered using the form on pg. 80.)

While we do all we can to make the **Directory** as current and comprehensive as possible, it takes us more than two years to complete, and we receive new leads for communities at a rate of one or two a week. Rather than trying to publish an updated directory every few months, we regularly publish this late-breaking information here in **Communities** magazine.

Almost all of the information contained in these four pages is also included in the new **Directory**—yet a few of the pieces here have come to us after we sent final camera-ready copy to the printer in early March. Eight of the listings are brand new, and two identify communities listed in the **Directory** that have recently folded. The Index Codes tell you which section of this update to look in:

- [*] *New since the '95 Directory*
- [n] *New Listings—this is the first time the group has been listed in Communities magazine.*
- [u] *Updates—address, phone, and name changes for groups previously listed in this column.*
- [d] *Disbanded recently*

The information here is condensed and abbreviated—and is more thoroughly presented in the **Directory**. If you would like to examine a copy, please contact us at the telephone number listed below and we can direct you to nearby libraries which have copies.

You can help us, too! Please let us know if you discover any leads about new communities, or find that we have incorrect information in current listings. Please send updated information to **Directory Update**, Rt 1, Box 155-M, Rutledge, MO 63563, or give us a call at 816-883-5545. Thank you!

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NORTH AMERICAN NEW LISTINGS

AGAPE

(Forming)
2062 Greenwich Road
Ware, MA 01082
413-967-9369

Agape is a lay contemplative community with a non-violent education ministry and witness. We set aside a part of each day for silence and prayer, and also invest energy in local, regional, and global concerns relating to institutional violence. In addition, we have a full life here at Francis House, the community homestead. We cut wood for heat, garden for our food, and build and maintain our own dwellings. We have a permanent caretaker family, long-term residents (three months and up), and an active nonresident community of over 100 people. Volunteers share in all aspects of the community life: office work, homesteading, childcare, and hospitality. Internships are from two weeks to three months. 6/1/95

BEMIS ERECTUS (FINOCCHIO)

36 Bemis
San Francisco, CA 94131-3020
415-334-6550 Gay / 587-5939 Bi
415-861-0371 Fax
fcook@igc.apc.org

A "family of choice" valuing open communication

and cooperation among intimate equals (revising our male role training), and diverse health/spirit-conscious, sex/love/intimacy-affirming lifestyles. Some members "comfortably" co-exist with HIV. Dinners on alternate Thursdays, with sharing/check-ins. Decisions by consensus, plus a house manager. We host numerous community events: Gay/Bi Spirituality, Healing, and the Arts; Citizen Empowerment; Peer Counseling classes; Neighborhood Safety meetings. Sublets often available, visitors frequent, and a waiting list of people who want to join our family. 1/2/95

CLOUDBURST COMMUNITY

(Forming)
PO Box 373
Bisbee, AZ 85603

We have 36 acres of hillside at 6,500 ft. where we are building a community of sustainable nature-centered living. Cloudburst is a place to create home for 5-10 members, to grow trust, cultivate friendship, and encourage passionate living. We seek diversity of race, class, creed, ethnic origination, age, sex, and sexual orientation. We value honesty, a willingness to share in all aspects of community life, and a sense of humor. We have community workdays and make decisions in a weekly meeting. We share meals, sweats, gardens, and each other's pain and joy. 1/29/95

COMPOUND "I"

Oakland, CA

Compound "I" is a vegan collective living in a warehouse space in an urban industrial area in Oakland. We share most dinners, and enjoy the convenience of having a basketball court (which doubles as a performance space) in our living/dining room. Most of us are artists in one way or another, and we frequently host performances organized to benefit various progressive causes. We share cooking and chores as equally as possible, and make most major decisions by consensus. 9/18/94

FILLMORE HOUSE

San Francisco, CA

An ever-evolving community of politically and artistically active people attempting to live a caring lifestyle in an often uncaring world. We usually fill house openings with friends and acquaintances. The house's focus has shifted over time: artists, musicians, jugglers, and around again. Members are active in various collective endeavors around town. Our varied schedules permit us to enjoy being together in various ways: midnight rituals, early morning breakfasts, weekday beach parties, or just hanging out in the evening around a box of cookies. 8/5/94

GALILEE

(Forming)

6215 SE 53rd Street
Portland, OR 97206

An egalitarian, non-denominational village of spiritual travelers who recognize the teachings of the world's religions as One Truth expressed as many truths. We encourage creative and artistic ways, and are an income-sharing cooperative corporation oriented toward networking with other groups for mutual economic, social, and spiritual benefits. Our earth-oriented existence includes experiments with organic farming and indoor farming. At this point we have neither land prospects nor financing. 2/17/95

HORCONES TWO841 E 7th Street
Tucson, AZ 85719
520-792-3662

After more than 20 years of experimenting and learning about the design of intentional communities, Los Horcones (Mexico) is starting a sister "Walden Two" community in Arizona or New Mexico. Our new group will be based on principles of behavior analysis, the application of science to all areas of community life, and research into sustainable technologies. Horcones Two, currently based in a small house in Tucson, AZ, is seeking others who share our vision. We are looking for 200-400 acres of land with a moderate climate, at most hour's drive from a city, where we might grow to 200 or more members. Write for more information. 1/25/95

MANAU KENDRA(Forming)
PO Box 105
Ben Lomand, CA 95005-0105
408-425-3334 VoiceMail

Forming a family of refinement, clan of clarity, tribe of truth. Yes vegan, no alcohol, no drugs, no smoking, no tobacco. Let's unify and co-op to get land in Northern California, or (?), and grow organic fruit and nut tree nurseries and groves, organic edible

landscapes 'n' gardens. Children and families appreciated. Let's co-create a safety zone to raise holy kids. Call/write Brother Little Star * Thakar Sevdar at the above address. 4/27/95

MICCOSUKEE LAND CO-OP

Tallahassee, FL

100 families and individuals who cooperatively own 279 acres near Tallahassee, with 1- to 2-acre private homesteads, and 90 acres preserved in its natural state as common land. Shared common desire to live rurally where the land is respected and neighborly interactions are sought-after. All activities (except paying necessities such as taxes and insurance) are purely voluntary. We're diverse in age, occupation, and religious practice. Though our lives are busy, we find time to celebrate milestones and support one another in hard times. Many of us envision more time for shared meals and hanging out. 12/26/94

NASALAM(Forming)
Route 3, Box 332
Fair Grove, MO 65648
73527.1676@cis.com

A spiritual community forming on sacred land in the Ozark Plateau of SW Missouri. We honor all beliefs while having a foundation of our own blend of beliefs, goals, and practices. Vegetarian, substance free, primarily interested in polysexual (i.e., gay/bisexual) individuals oriented toward a polyamorous, polyfidelitous lifestyle with strong tribal overtones. Though the community is being initiated by a spiritual group, the Order of Melchizedek, one need not necessarily become a member to live here. We should be moving into our new home by the time this is in print. Please write for more information. 1/23/95

OSTERWEIL HOUSE338 E Jefferson
Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2309
313-996-5956

We are a student cooperative household of 13 folks in a homey three-story house with shared meals and a living space with no TV. Osterweil tends to be slightly apart from the other student co-op houses in Ann Arbor's Inter-Cooperative Council, both by location and social interaction (see Resource listing in the '95 *Directory*). Voted by the ICC "Most likely to be forgotten" in 1993. 1/6/95

POSITIVE LIVING CENTER & COMMUNITY(Forming)
344 Indiana Avenue
Venice, CA 90291
310-399-0032

(Formerly known as the Spiritual Rebel Center.) We are an urban, beach community inspired by the mystic Osho to create a growing community of healthy, conscious people within an existing town — Venice Beach. Our general focus is on spiritual development (though non-religion). We live in four households, and each of our 40 adult members is expected to contribute 6 hrs/mo to the community. Please include SASE with inquiries. [cc] 1/10/95

POTASH HILL ARTS & EDUCATION COMMUNITY(Forming)
33 Potash Hill Road
Cummington, MA 01026
413-634-0181

13 privately owned 2-4 acre lots in western Massachusetts; 60 acres of common land with buildings. Educational, dormitory, dining, business, and studio facilities available. Our intent is to establish and maintain meaningful connections with others who value a similar lifestyle, and to pursue the highest possibilities in all aspects of living: relationships, the arts, natural healing, education, business, alternative energy, gardening, celebration, and fun. We value personal autonomy. Currently we are 12 members, including three children. Call or write for more information. 7/27/95

SPECTRAc/o Rob Sody
73 Holly Hill Estates
Smyrna, DE 19877
302-653-2029 Voice
302-653-0494 BBS

Spectra (formerly the New Family Experiment/Blackbird Pagan Connection) is developing its own religion and monastic community. We are a growing, fluid community of members and friends, resident and nonresident. We hope to learn, grow, and work toward a new tribal-style family form within the context of a Pagan/Wiccan Earth-centered spirituality. We encourage positive social change through positive personal change and activism; sponsor weekly rap sessions; and do organizational development. Please write or call if you would like to visit. Ideas and input always welcome. SASE requested. 1/30/95

TWIN PINES COOPERATIVE COMMUNITY835 Pomeroy Avenue
Santa Clara, CA 95051
408-249-8994

A limited equity housing cooperative in a high-density urban neighborhood. 10 buildings spread over two city blocks, with 8 two-story townhouse units per building. Individual units are 2-3 bedrooms with carport, outdoor storage, and fenced patio. Common areas include a swimming pool, rec room, office, playgrounds, an older children's area, and picnic tables. Members elect a Board of Directors at an annual meeting, and active committees include: Pets, Finance, Social, and Member Selection. TPCC is diverse ethnically, and houses low-to-moderate income families. The driving force is a few members who were here when TPCC was founded over 20 years ago. 9/13/94

UNKNOWN TRUTH FELLOWSHIP WORKERS(Forming)
HCR 1, Box 23
Warrensburg, NY 12885
518-623-2831

We believe in and seek the true religion. Vibes come from it directing us, yet much is to be learned. We are celibate, and ally with such communes as Yahwehists, Shakers, Serpent Handling Pentecostals, Cave Saints, Waldenses, Native Americans, Naturalists, UFOs, etc. We eat Kosher and organic.

Weider exercise, outdoor living, Shamanism, genetic structuring, rock hounding, gold mining, archeology, astrology, crafts, herbs, much more. We have a writing ministry, and have a recommended reading list. We sell *Snake Handlers* for \$5, and distribute other literature. SASE requested. 2/14/94

WESTCHESTER COHOUSING GROUP

(Forming)
PO Box 475
Hastings, NY 10706-0475
914-639-4146 / 639-1300 Fax

For four years we have been educating ourselves and the public about the cohousing concept, investigating sites, and drawing up preliminary plans. We are looking at sites within one-hour of New York City—ideally with plenty of green space, and near a town with a MetroNorth train station and good public schools. We intend to create a neighborhood for singles, families, and the elderly, with diversity of age, race, religious outlook, and sexual orientation. Members pay \$10,000 deposit over six months, and \$25/mo in dues to cover operating expenses. 1/13/95

WYGELIA

(Forming)
2919 Monocacy Bottom Road
Adamstown, MD 21710-9312
301-831-8280

Three adults on 65 acres of hilly wooded land 40 miles from DC. We've a broad spectrum of training and skills, including fabric crafts, upholstery, engineering, blacksmithing, foundry, woodworking. We have a tiny garden (with terrible soil) and a large and well-equipped shop space. Shared commitment to open communication, personal growth, and not keeping resentments. We have meetings whenever one of us wants one. Income earning opportunities abound here and nearby. Our large house has space for 2-4 more members, and our land for one more house. 9/13/94

YELLOW HOUSE, THE

1404 Ruby
Kansas City, KS 66103
913-342-5967

A 110-year-old, 3-story Queen Anne in a central city neighborhood. Residents share the rehab and maintenance of the house, and contribute their skills to the nearby Franklin Community Center which houses a co-op grocery, a coffeeshop, daycare, and social services. Core residents have a 20-year history of work with neighborhood organizing, small business management, community health care, alternative church formation, strategic planning, environmental activities, and higher education. Short-term visitors welcome who're interested in inner-city development and health care. 12/18/94

CHANGES (PREVIOUS LISTINGS)

CHRISTIANSBRUNN BROTHERHOOD

(Re-Forming)
Christiansbrunn Kloster
Route 1, Box 149

[This is a new, more accurate description, recently submitted.] Gay religious order founded in 1749.

Post-Christian Harmonists acting as one in the Holy Spirit on a 63-acre cloister in central Pennsylvania. Crafts, printing, and farming are emphasized. Visits, work retreats, and novitiate training offered. SASE to Brother Johannes. 6/25/95

CHRISTMAS STAR

2444 Dripping Springs Road
Winkleman, AZ 85292

See description in previous *Directory*. Their old phone number is no longer in service, and neither is the 800 number listed in our new *Directory*. The community reports they have no immediate plans to get a new number. 4/8/95

CIRCLE OP SPRINGS

(Forming)
PO Box 1171
Moab, UT 84532

New name and phone number (was listed in the '95 *Directory* as "Sky Ranch"). 4/17/95

CONSCIOUSNESS VILLAGE / REBIRTH INTERNATIONAL

PO Box 1026
Staunton, VA 24402
703-885-0551

Address & phone have changed since the '95 *Directory* was printed. 5/18/95

FAMILY, THE

14118 Whittier Blvd. #116
Whittier, CA 906
800-4-A-FAMILY
310-690-4930

Incomplete zip code was listed in the '95 *Directory*. For a full description see the listing there. 5/5/95

FOLKCORPS

(Forming)
111 Bobolink
Berea, KY 40403
606-986-8000

New address, new name ... was listed in the '95 *Directory* as "Futures, Inc." 5/10/95

HEATHCOTE CENTER

(Re-Forming)
21300 Heathcote Road
Freeland, MD 21053
410-329-6877

Area code has been changed from (301) to (410). 2/8/93

JUMP OFF LAND TRUST

(Forming)
c/o Sanford McGee
PO Box 3254
Sewanee, TN 37375
615-598-0307 / 598-5942 (msg.)

Jump Off Land Trust is their new name. See description in the previous edition of the *Directory*, listed as either Ecanachaca, or EarthStar Institute. 1/2/95

LOTHLORIEN FARM

PO Box 2022
Perth, Ontario K7H-3M9
CANADA

Address has changed since the '95 *Directory* was printed.

INTERNATIONAL LISTINGS

LEBENSARTEN & ECOVILLAGE INSTITUTE

Ginsterweg 3
D-37595 Steyerberg
GERMANY
05764-2754

80 members. The buildings and land are held in common. Separate incomes: healing professions and seminars. Open to more members. We also have the Ecovillage Institute which offers advice for seeking and initiating of communities. 6/19/95

MONTCLAIRE COMMUNITY

(Forming)
• **Protém Address in Zimbabwe:**
c/o Dell Smith
24 Hopely Avenue
P.O. Greendale
Harare, ZIMBABWE
• **USA Contact Address:**
Attn: June Lang
238 W Chestnut Street
Lancaster, PA 17603-3547
717-394-6971 Fax (Attn: Linda)
717-394-6466

Envisioned: A working farm, demonstrating Community Values as family and global values; independent and INTER-dependent; inclusive of generational age groups and needs. Developing sustainable systems to achieve and ensure basic human needs, with reverence for all beings, working for world peace, recognizing that inner work and service to humanity is pivotal in creating a better world for all. Non-hierarchical cooperative systems, land trust, consensual decision making. Quaker values, inclusive of other spiritual paths including Anthroposophy. Vegetarian/macrobiotic diet; non-smoking, drug-free environment with holistic approaches to health, education, housing, agriculture, and economics. 12/18/94

NEVE SHALOM WAHAT AL-SALAM

Oasis of Peace
D.N. Shimshon
99761 ISRAEL
011 972 2912 222
• **US Address:**
121 Sixth Avenue #502
New York, NY 10013-1505
212-226-9246

A rural community of 23 women and 23 men, established in the mid '70s with an ecumenical spiritual basis, and a primary focus on peace and coexistence. We live a cooperative lifestyle with elected leaders, and make our decisions using consensus. We live mostly in single family residences; families have independent finances. 8/31/93

OSHO COMMUNE INTERNATIONAL

17 Koregaon Park
Poona 411 001
INDIA
011-91-212-660-963/664-1812 Fax

- **USA Info/Booking:**
714-633-5232
M-F 4:30-6:30pm PST

Osho was a spiritual master, also known as Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, who passed away in 1990. There are still about 500 Osho Centers around the world, with the main ashram located in Poona, India. In the US there are about 50 centers. Call or write for additional information. 3/1/93

PLUM VILLAGE

- Meyrac
Loubès-Bernac
47120 FRANCE
33-53-94-75-40 / 75-90 Fax
- **US Contact Info:**
Community of Mindful Living
P.O. Box 7355
Berkeley, CA 94707
510-527-3751 / 525-7129 Fax
parapress@aol.com

A community practicing mindfulness, woven into all daily life activities, under the guidance of Vietnamese Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh. All visitors help in the preparation of the meditation halls for sitting and celebrations, kitchen support, cleaning the bathrooms, emptying garbage, etc. as part of the daily practice. We refrain from smoking, drinking, and sexual practice during retreats. Accommodations are very simple. During Summer Retreat we receive children of any age; at other times children must be

12 or older. Please write for additional information. Advance reservations required. 1/19/95

**UFA-FABRIK
"THE FACTORY"**

Internationales Kultur Centrum
Viktoriastraße 13
D-12105 Berlin, GERMANY
030-755-030

In the summer of '79, over 100 people took over the desolate grounds of the former UFA-Film studios, creating a comprehensive work and living project with a worldwide reputation as a multicultural site for innovative social, cultural, and ecological lifestyles. Today our resident community has 50 members (ages 1 mo to 90 yrs), about 120 employees, and over 200,000 visitors a year. Our 4-acre site, now leased from the city, includes a bakery, an organic market, an international café, two large theaters, a cultural center, and an animal farm. We host a wide variety of classes, a free school, a circus school, Germany's #1 samba band, an ongoing ecology exhibition, and an International Theatre Festival in alternate summers. 6/25/95

UTOPIAGGIA

Villa Piaggia
1-05010 Montegabbione
ITALY
39 763 87020

An intentional community (est. '75) of 20 adults and

15 kids aged 2-17. We are one Italian and the rest German, living on 250 acres in three houses in the hills of Umbria. Four members work full-time on the land (sheep, cows, cheese), and the others have jobs outside. We haven't given up our original ideas about communitarian living, but we've certainly mellowed down to an enlightened group living with some basic common values and lots of private space for everybody. We ask visitors to schedule visits at least a week in advance, and to contribute \$20/day for household expenses. 8/1/93

GROUPS THAT HAVE FOLDED

GRIFFIN GORGE COMMONS

Box 531
Wells, NY 12190

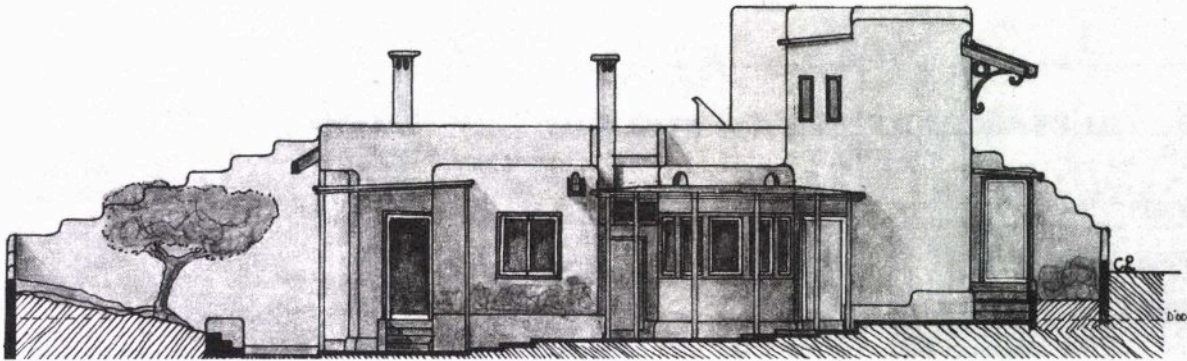
Bad address: "Forwarding Order Expired." Their unlisted phone numbers have also been disconnected.

**PILOT MOUNTAIN
ECOCOMMUNITY**

(Forming)
Route 2, Box 175-B
Pilot Mountain, NC 27041
(919)351-4955 / 922-4789

This community, listed in the '95 *Directory*, that has dissolved.

Santa Fe Co Housing For Sale



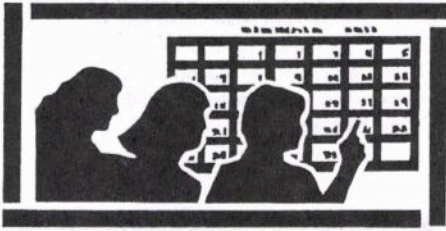
Preliminary elevation by D. Cororilas (changes made)

- Two bedroom, one bath
- Guest house (bth & kitchen) Rents for \$4,800/yr
- 1,298 square feet
- Ornamental exercise pool
- Radiant heat
- Large, cool, covered patio
- 30' living / dining room
- Fireplace
- Passive solar
- Raised plant beds
- Walled garden
- Water softener
- Reverse Osmosis
- Elegant and sophisticated
- Designed by a world renowned architect
- Elderly owner is moving to a life-care facility

\$226,000

Telephone 505-471-7005

COMMUNITY CALENDAR



This is a calendar of:

- 1) events organized or hosted by community groups;
- 2) events specifically focusing on community living;
- 3) major events with significant participation by members of the "movement."

Most of these events occur with some regularity, so this calendar is a fairly accurate template for what to expect next year. Events listed as "hosted" are generally scheduled at a new site for each meeting.

Please send us suggestions about what we might include in future calendars (use form below). Also note that the Fellowship publishes a quarterly newsletter (free to FIC members) that includes announcements of and reports about similar events. Information about joining the FIC can be found on the inside front cover.

Monthly • Community Living Experience

Shutesbury, Massachusetts. Learn the "why" and "how" of community by experiencing the daily life of Sirius community. *Guest Department, Baker Road, Shutesbury, MA 01072; 413-259-1251.*

Monthly • Attunement with Nature:

Organic Gardening at Sirius

Shutesbury, Massachusetts. Practice attuning with Nature (and gardening with Nature Intelligences) while learning the basics of organic gardening. *Guest Department, Baker Road, Shutesbury, MA 01072; 413-259-1251.*

Sep 1-4 • Twin Oaks Communities Conference

Louisa, Virginia. Labor Day Weekend at Twin Oaks, for folks now living a communal or cooperative lifestyle, and those who'd like to. Information on new communities forming in region. Sliding scale. *Twin Oaks, Rt. 4, Box 169, Louisa, VA 23093; 703-894-5126.*

Sep 8-10 • Strawbale Workshop, The Farm Eco-Village Training Center

Summertown, Tennessee. *Vicki Montagne, The Farm, Summertown, TN 38483; 615-964-3574.*

Sep 9-23 • Tour of Sustainable Communities

Findhorn (Scotland), Arcosanti, Sirius, & Kripalu communities. Led by Gordon Davidson & Corinne McLaughlin, co-authors, *Builders of the Dawn*. Sponsored by Institute of Noetic Sciences. Transportation, accommodations, meals & lectures, \$3,400. *800-353-2276.*

Sep 10-Dec. 9 • Geocommons College Eco-Village Design Team

Fall semester program in sustainable, mindful living and eco-community design on a beautiful hill farm in southern New Hampshire. *Geocommons College, Derbyshire Farm, Temple, NH 03084; 603-654-6705; geo@igc.apc.org.*

Sep 22-24 • Cohousing "Getting It Built" Workshop

Rhinebeck, New York. With Kathryn McCamant & Charles Durrett, &/or Ellen Hertzman, co-authors of *CoHousing*. Cohousing development pro-

cess, technical issues, working together. *CoHousing Company, 1250 Addison St. #113, Berkeley, CA 94702; 510-549-9980. Or Omega Institute, 800-944-1001.*

Sep 22-24 • Harvest Energy Festival

Summertown, Tennessee. *Mary Ellen Bowen, The Farm, Summertown, TN 38483; 615-964-2534.*

Sep 24-Oct 2 • Permaculture Fundamentals

Summertown, Tennessee. *Vicki Montagne, The Farm, Summertown, TN 38483; 615-964-3574.*

Sep 25-Oct 9 • 9th Annual Permaculture Design Course

Central Rocky Mountain Permaculture Institute. Two weeks, \$800. *PO Box 631, Basalt, CO 81621; 970-927-4158.*

Sep 28-Oct 1 • 2nd Annual North American Cohousing Conference

Boulder, Colorado (at University of Colorado campus.) *Rocky Mountain Cohousing Association, 1705 14th St., #160, Boulder, CO 80302; 303-499-8189.*

Oct Weekends • Adobe, Rammed Earth, & Strawbale Construction

Cardondale, Colorado. For workshop catalog, contact: *Solar Energy International, PO Box 715, Cardondale, CO 81623-0715; 303-963-8855.*

Oct 9-13 • Solar Home Design

Cardondale, Colorado. (See "Adobe, Rammed Earth, etc.," above.)

Oct 7-13 • Eco-Villages & Sustainable Communities

Findhorn, Scotland. Presentations and demonstrations by ecovillage pioneers—*Jonathan Porritt, Peter Russell, Jon & Nancy Todd, Prince Charles, Robert Gilman, Paul Hawken, Albert Bates*—and other architects, engineers, building professionals, permaculture experts, alternative technology specialists, "green" activists and entrepreneurs. £450 (450 British pounds) incl. meals & accommodations. *Accommodations Secretary, Findhorn Foundation, Cluny Hill College, Forbes, IV36 ORD, Scotland. Phone: 44-0309-673655. Fax: 44-0309-673113.*

Oct 12-15 • Communal Studies Association Annual Conference

Estero, Florida (near Fort Myers, Florida) "Communal Cosmology: Visions, Beliefs, & Practices." held at site of *Koreshan Unity community (1894-1980). Lyn Rainard, Tidewater Community College, 1428 Cedar Rd., Chesapeake, VA 23320; 804-549-5226.*

Oct 14 • Solar Houses, Sustainable Energy Practices

Builders and designers of homes at High Wind community show homes; give step-by-step overview. Optional second day for more technical info, on-site inspection. *Plymouth Institute, W7136 County Rd U, Plymouth, WI 53073; 800-377-7513.*

Oct 19-22 • "Community Quest" Conference

Winter Park, Colorado. How to form new communities, with *Corinne McLaughlin* (Sirius community), *Patch Adams* (Gesundheit! community), *Stephan Brown* (Shenoa Retreat Center), *Laird*

TELL US ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY EVENTS!

NAME OF EVENT _____

NAME OF SPONSOR OR HOST _____

CONTACT PERSON _____

PHONE _____ DATE THIS FORM COMPLETED _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY/TOWN _____ STATE/PROV _____ ZIP/POSTAL CODE _____

PROPOSED DATES OF EVENT _____

- Check here if dates are firm.
- Check here if dates are tentative, and give alternative dates being considered.
- Check here if you would like information from us on other events scheduled for the dates you have listed.

Deadline: 4-6 months before event. Please enclose information describing the event(s) that you wish to have listed.

Please mail completed form to: **Community Calendar, PO Box 169, Masonville, CO 80541-0169.**

Sandhill (Sandhill Farm), Geoph Kozeny (Peripatetic Communitarian), and other experienced community founders and leaders. Visioning, decision-making, consensus, facilitation, conflict resolution, real estate/finding land, legal options, "how-we-did-it" accounts. Moderate cost, plus work/scholarships available. *clo L.I.F.E., PO Box 824, Palmer Lake, CO 80133; 719-488-2966.*

Oct 20-22 • Pandanaram Communities Conference

Pandanaram Settlement, Williams, Indiana. Open forum discussions. All interested in living cooperatively welcome, especially those from other communities. 812-388-5599.

Oct 26-29 • Permaculture Designers Convergence

Summertown, Tennessee. Vicki Montagne, *The Farm, Summertown, TN 38483; 615-964-3574.*

Oct 27-29 • Cohousing "Getting It Built" Workshop

Big Sur, California. (see "Getting It Built" Sep 22-24, above). *CoHousing Company, 1250 Addison St. #113, Berkeley, CA 94702; 510-549-9980. Or Esalen Institute, 408-667-3005.*

Oct 28 • Permaculture Expo

(Summertown, Tennessee. See "Permaculture Designers Convergence," above.)

Nov • Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC) Fall Board Meeting

Golden Rule Community, Ukiah, California. All are invited to attend and participate in this biannual working Board meeting and, if desired, get involved in upcoming Fellowship activities. Publishers of the *Communities Directory & Communities* magazine and managers of the Community Business Loan Fund, the Fellowship is considering additional informational and clearinghouse functions (perhaps including regional or national gatherings, a how-to community building manual, a pamphlet series, and/or an annual communities tour). \$16/day incl. 3 meals & campground facilities; \$41/day inc. 3 meals & double-occupancy room. *FIC, PO Box 814, Langley, WA 98260; 360-221-3064. (See p. 9, "Fellowship News," and inside front cover for more about the FIC.)*

Dec 1-3 • The TLC Experiment

San Diego State University. *FREE* community-building weekend, facilitated by William Polowniak, author of *On Creating a Community*. *1760 Lake Dr., Cardiff, CA 92007. 619-633-1061.*

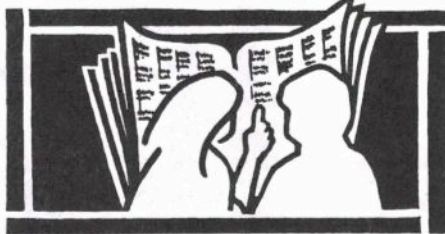
Jan 3-10, 1996 • Third International EcoCities Conference

Yoff, Senegal. (6 hrs. from JFK airport). Co-sponsored by EcoVillage at Ithaca and APECSY, the conference will focus on EcoCity theory and practice worldwide. Conference, meals & housing: \$600/adults & \$350/students. \$125/Third World residents; \$50/Africans. *Rakey Cole, Eco-Cities Conference, Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853.*

Jan-May '96 • Geocommons College International Communities Semester

Spring semester study/participation in innovative intentional communities in Europe (Findhorn, Plum Village), India (Auroville, Mitraniketan), and USA. *Geocommons College, Derbyshire Farm, Temple, NH 03084; 603-654-6705; e-mail: geo@igc.apc.org.*

CLASSIFIEDS



Classifieds are for anything by, for, or related to communities and community living. Information on how to place an ad is on page 75.

SEEKING COMMUNITY COFOUNDERS

RENAISSANCE ECO VILLAGE seeks 500+ community members: Renaissance musicians/performers/artisan businesses, architects, cohousing developers, teachers, permaculturists, investors, healers, temple builders, children, etc. 1000+ acres with river desired. For current plans contact REV, 945 University Ave., Boulder, CO 80302. 303-444-1987.

COMMUNITY PROPERTY FOR SALE

FOR SALE OR RENT. Large Country Home, built 1780, refurbished 1987. Located near healthy, friendly town, Pine Plains, New York. Perfect for Cohousing community or B&B. Fourteen large rooms, 2 kitchens, 3 baths. Sits on 3-1/2 acre wooded lot with trout stream, surrounded by farmland. Some land prepared for good vegetable gardening. Two hours to NYC, 35 min. to Woodstock and Rhinebeck, near Omega Institute. My mother just passed away; must sell. Only \$155,000 or \$995 per month plus utilities, security. 305-661-5227. Fax 669-4350. e-mail adiben@aol.com.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, VIDEOS

COMMUNITY BOOKSHELF. Books by mail on Intentional Communities, Indigenous People, Self-Sufficiency, and much more (including the 1995 *Communities Directory*). For a free catalog, write Community Bookshelf, East Wind Community, Tecumseh, MO 65760. 417-679-4682.

ENJOY RENT-FREE LIVING in desirable locations worldwide. THE CARETAKER GAZETTE is a unique newsletter containing job openings, advice and information for property caretakers, house-sitters, and landowners. Published since 1983, the Gazette includes letters, caretakers' profiles, and classifieds. Free advertising for landowners. Each issue contains over 50 job opportunities world-

wide. Bimonthly publication for only \$24/year (6 issues); \$15/half year (3 issues). HC 76, Box 4022-I, Garden Valley, ID 83622. Phone/Fax 208-462-3993.

LAND IN A LOVING COMMUNITY by David Felder, member, MLC. A book on Land Cooperatives. "This practical guide is everyone's dream—a mortgage-free home in a caring community."—Hazel Henderson. Only \$8.50. Call 1-800-231-1638.

POLYAMOROUS COMMUNITIES, Group Marriage, Open Relationships. Contact others. Create loving alternatives. SASE for details. Current issue, \$4. Touchpoint, PO Box 408-CM, Chlo-ride, AZ 86431. 520-565-2546.

VIDEO ON INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES.

"Follow the Dirt Road" shows what's happening in today's North American communities—socially, politically, economically—and more! 53 minutes. \$28. Monique Gauthier, FTDR, 207 Evergreen Ct., Landenberg, PA 19350.

JOIN THE CELEBRATION! OFF OUR BACKS

America's foremost and longest-running feminist news journal ("Outraged and Outrageous"), is 25 years old this year. To make sure you don't miss an issue, take out a subscription (or two) and help us make the next 25 years even more momentous for women. A subscription to *off our backs* is two thumbs down to Newt! \$21/year (11 issues). Washington D.C. residents add \$1.22 tax. Trial subscription (3 issues), \$6. \$22/yr outside U.S. oob, 2337B 18th St. NW, Washington DC 20009.

CRAFTS, SHELTER

BUFFALO MOCCASINS. Custom made to exactly fit your feet. Artistically handcrafted ankle, calf, or knee height. Free brochure. Living Nature Creations, PO Box 3694, Sedona, AZ 86340-3694. 800-430-7988.

IDEAL FOR COMMUNITY BUILDINGS—ECONO-DOME

pre-cut round roof frames with connectors. Compatible with any type of support walls, or build directly on any flat surface. Unique design has many possibilities and options. Easy-to-complete, gravity-assisted, drop-in-panel technology now available. Many energy- and materials-efficient sizes available. Kit prices start at \$1,200. *FREE BOOKLET, \$15 two-hour video, \$20 planning manual with color photos, floor plans, and more.* Write: Faze Change Produx, 111 The Farm, Summertown, TN 38483, or phone 615-964-4354.

LIVING SHELTER CRAFTS TIPIS & YURTS.

Custom-made tipis and yurts and workshops on community living at Planetary Headquarters in Sedona, AZ. Circle Living Workshops offer hands-on experience with pitching and living in lodges as well as a rejuvenating experience on beautiful Oak Creek. Our book, *Tipis and Yurts: Authentic Designs for Circular Structures*, with beautiful color photos of creating and erecting tipis and yurts, available in bookstores now. For brochure, call 1-800-899-1924, or write PO Box 4069, W Sedona, AZ 86340.

L.I.F.E. Presents

Community Quest



Creating Ecologically Sustainable Communities

• October 19-22, 1995 • Winter Park, Colorado •

- Communities and our Future • Communities, Health & Healing • Visioning •
- Overview, North American Communities • Legal Options • Facilitating Meetings •
- Leadership & Administration • Decision-Making, Consensus • Conflict Resolution •
- Finding & Financing Land • Attracting Investors & Members •
- "How We Did It!" Stories •

Experiential Learning Community-Building Experiences Booths & Exhibits

PLUS: Cohousing, communities & ecological sustainability, community businesses & worker-owned co-ops, permaculture design, passive solar buildings, straw-bale construction.
The cooperative *Transformation Game*. Music & entertainment.

Patch Adams, M.D., Geshundheit! Community (clown, health-care visionary, physician); **Stephan Brown** (financial/legal/real estate consultant; formerly, Shenoa Retreat Center); **George Cheyney, Ph.D.**, Mondragon and worker owned cooperatives; **Caroline Estes**, Alpha Farm (consensus facilitator/teacher); **Geoph Kozeny**, *Communities Directory* ("Peripatetic Communitarian," expert on North American communities); **Corinne McLaughlin**, Sirius Community (Presidential Council for Sustainable Communities; co-author, *Builders of the Dawn* and *Spiritual Politics*); **Laird Sandhill**, Sandhill Farm, *Communities Directory* (communities movement visionary/activist; consensus, conflict resolution facilitator/teacher, organic farmer); **Kathy Tyler**, co-author *Transformation Game*; fellow, Findhorn Foundation; and many more . . .

Endorsed by *The Fellowship for Intentional Community*

Families Welcome! "Snow Mountain Ranch" in the Colorado Rockies has many activities for children. **COSTS: \$250 Early Registration** (postmarked by 9/18/95). **\$290 Late Registration** (after 9/18/95). \$75 Deposit. Rooms/meals \$35-\$85 per day. VISA/MC accepted. Work Scholarships available.

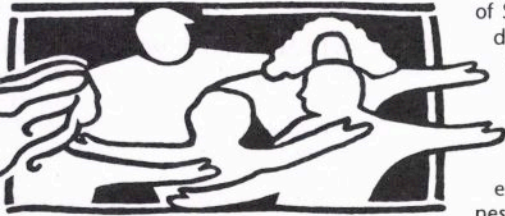
To register, or for information on program, accommodations, scholarships, airfare or exhibit space, contact:

COMMUNITY QUEST

c/o L.I.F.E., P.O. Box 824, Palmer Lake, CO 80133

719-488-2966

REACH



Reach is a regular feature intended to help match people looking for communities with communities looking for people. As the most up-to-date and widely read clearinghouse available to you, Reach reaches those who are seriously interested in community. One community told us: "I would like you to know how much we appreciate your fruitful efforts. We are receiving regular inquiries. We have a new family moving here from the East Coast, and many interviews and orientations booked. They are all a direct result of our Reach ad."

Please use the form on page 72 to place an ad. Please note: THE REACH DEADLINE FOR THE WINTER 1995 ISSUE (OUT IN DECEMBER) IS OCTOBER 15!

The Reach rate is only \$.25 per word (up to 100 words, \$.50 per word thereafter) so why not use this opportunity to network with others interested in community? Now we offer discounts for multiple insertions as well: \$.23 per word for two times and \$.20 per word for four times. Please make check or money order out to Communities, and send it, plus your ad to: Patricia Greene, 400B Main Rd., Gill, MA 01376. Feel free to call me with any questions about Reach at 413-863-8714.

Listings for workshops, land, books, etc. belong in the classified column, so please contact Diana Christian.

COMMUNITIES WITH OPENINGS

ACORN, Mineral, Virginia. An exciting, young community valuing equality, self-sufficiency, ecology, cultural diversity and nonviolence. Started in 1993, now 20 members and growing to at least 30. Income-sharing with cottage industries and work at nearby Twin Oaks Community, commuting career people okay, too. Located in rolling country 45 minutes from Charlottesville and two hours from Washington, D.C. 72 acres of forest and farm land with a large organic garden, chickens, pond, river frontage, old farmhouse, new 5,000 sq. ft. residence/community center, new workshop building. At Acorn we work and play together, while supporting individual choices in personal growth and spirituality. We value open communication, using consensus decision-making and a structured but flexible labor system. Members range from 1-60 years and come from all over the U.S. Visitors and prospective members welcome. Write or call for more information. Acorn, CM5, Rt. 3 Box 486A, Mineral, VA 23117; 540-894-0582.

AQUARIAN CONCEPTS COMMUNITY, Sedona, Arizona. God-centered community based on teachings of the Urantia Book, continuing Fifth Epochal Revelation—The Cosmic Family Volumes as transmitted through Gabriel of Sedona. Clean air, pure water, organic gardens and farms now developing. Starseed schools (all ages), medical clinic, and healing center. Founded in 1986. Currently 100 members full-time. International flavor. Growth potential unlimited. Acquiring new land as needed. Some living on land, others nearby. Income from community businesses, work available nearby in town. Self-sufficiency short term goal. Serious spiritual and personal commitment required. *Aquarian Concepts Community, PO Box 3946, W. Sedona, AZ 86340; 520-204-1206.*

THE COMMONS ON THE ALAMEDA, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Return to village life. Join a successful, 28-unit cohousing community just three miles from Santa Fe's Plaza. Buy this beautiful, fully equipped 2250 sq. ft. Santa Fe style home with views of mountains, river and nature pond park. Home office with private entrance could be third bedroom. Indoor greenhouse/studio. Radiant heat, passive solar, low toxic. Private back yard borders community orchard. Enjoy benefits of cohousing life: consensus decisions, the Common House, gardens, play areas, community dinners, events, fun. Wonderful setting for families or anyone who is tired of being isolated and wants to be part of a community without sacrificing privacy. Community was formed in 1991 and is almost complete. This is a rare opportunity to join an established and thriving cohousing community. \$275,000. 505-471-5130.

CRAZED WEASEL CLAN, Crescent City, California. We are two women (23 and 29), one man (40), one sensitive new age dog, 11 chickens and a mouse named Willard. We live on a remote slice of paradise on a wild river in the Siskiyou mountains of northern California. Our life includes gardening, carpentry, crafts, cooking, and subverting the dominant paradigm (when we're not too busy processing!) We try to live sustainably, walk gently on the Earth, communicate openly, and take time to laugh and play in the river. If your idea of a pleasant commute home involves fording a creek and hiking a mile, please write! 4307 Big Flat Rd., Crescent City, CA 95531.

DANCE HAWAII, Hilo, Hawaii. Seeking people of extraordinary courage, integrity, and intelligence for "intentional family," right living on planet Earth, music, dance, and fun. We run several profitable community businesses (organic produce, computer distribution, food service equipment). We offer visitors/prospective members the opportunity to learn through intimate participation. Visitors are paying guests/students until demonstrating alignment with our vision, values. For information on how to visit, send SASE to PO Box 10840, Hilo, HI 96721; 808-968-8089. SASE is a must.

DEER ROCK COMMUNITY, Faber, Virginia. Organized in 1992, purchased 330 acre valley in the Blue Ridge Mountains complete with three houses, copious industrial buildings and 80 acres of orchards. We make group decisions by consensus with rotating facilitators. Resident dues are 7% of after-tax income (\$60 minimum,) off land 4% or \$10 per month for supporters. Our common values include: free inquiry and expression, spiritual and cultural diversity, shared power and responsibility. For more info, contact: *Deer Rock Community, Rt. 1, Box 381, Faber, VA 22938; 804-263-6512, 8894, or 5455.*

ENCHANTED GARDEN, San Diego, California. Privately owned house with beautiful garden in canyon area near San Diego State seeking offering housemate/rentals; one space available for work trade. Goals: creating extended community around gardening together and shared rituals; demonstrating how much beauty can be created in a backyard; exemplifying an alternative way of life. 6008 Arosa St., San Diego, CA 92115; 619-582-9669.

GANAS, New York. GANAS, a new NYC intentional community, is opening an experiential learning center on 75 beautiful acres in upstate Catskill Mountains. GANAS started on Staten Island in 1980. We grew from six (all still here) to about 75 adults of varied age, faith, philosophy, and nationality. Less than half are permanent. Those who are committed have agreed to aim at good, frequent communication on all personal and group issues; and reasonably autonomous, loving, hopefully happy individual lives. We decide most things together with the goal of everyone getting what they want whenever possible. We make few rules, many adjustments, and think together with love and intelligence when-

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Boulder CO 80302

ever possible. We're currently expanding the retail recycling businesses that support GANAS. Our Catskills project will add music, theater, physical fitness, and emotional growth, workshops and country living. A 65-room hotel will house contributing guests. Renovation and some programs will start next spring. We need people now for both projects. If you want information or to visit, contact GANAS, 135 Corson Ave., Staten Island, NY 10301-2933; 718-720-5378.

KIBBUTZ KERISTA COMMUNITY, San Francisco, California. We seek connectivity with additional practical idealists who wish to collaborate in the design of a scientific utopian tribal lifestyle. We promote the idea that grace is the goal of education. Our desire is to create a sex-positive society which will be a light unto the world. Free brochure. Contact: *Kibbutz Kerista Community*, PO Box 410068, San Francisco, CA 94141; 415-0558-9330.

PEACEFUL GARDEN, Sandpoint, Idaho. Gathering spiritual-minded folks who are ready for a serious commitment to peace, love and growth. Our community is our teacher, our mirror and our stage. We are learning to walk our talk, to be non-judgemental and cooperative. We make our decisions by consensus and employ permaculture and organic sustainability through our understanding of the Gaia Principle. We welcome others interested in bio-regional independence. Inquiries by phone or mail. *Peaceful Garden*, 425 Colburn-Culver Rd., Sandpoint, ID 83864; 208-265-2713.

SPARROW HAWK COMMUNITY, Tahlequah, Oklahoma. We are an active, intentional spiritual community with an eclectic approach. We have a foundation of 14 years. We're 76 adults, 14 children. Cottage industry and creative employment encouraged. There are no earthquakes predicted for this area. Our homes are attractive, modern, on the grid, while located in a beautiful rural Ozark setting. Cultural events and university nearby. Homes and properties are privately owned, some available. Contact: *Ananur Spencer, Sparrow Hawk Community*, 328 Bailey Blvd., Tahlequah, OK 74464; 918-456-0036.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY MEMORIAL UnREST HOME, Athens, Ohio. Beautiful homesites on 150 acre wimmin's land trust in beautiful Hocking Hills area near Ohio University. Tax exempt. Lesbians and feminists welcome. SASE to: *SBAMUH*, PO Box 5853, Athens, OH 45701; 614-448-2509 or 614-448-6424.

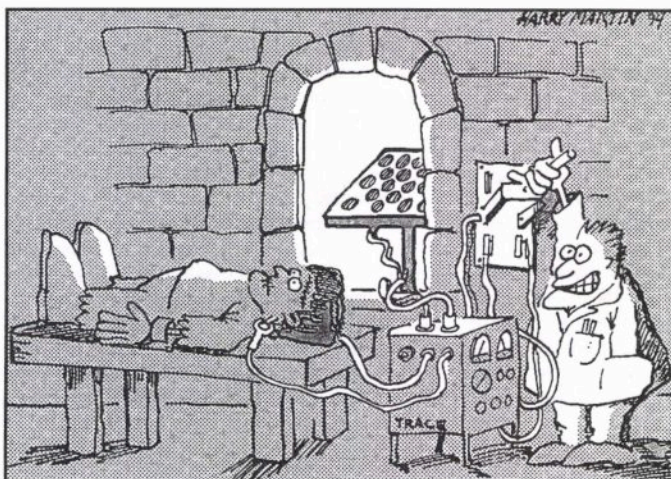
WESTWOOD COHOUSING COMMUNITY, Asheville, North Carolina. 24 clustered, privately owned, energy-efficient dwellings, central common house for optional shared meals and other activities, and several work studios planned on 4+ acres with woods and creek in Asheville in the Blue Ridge Mountains. \$60,000-\$120,000 price range, depending on dwelling size. Using Permaculture principles. Site plan and building design finished; plan to complete construction by end of 1996. Site selection in order of joining. Welcome: any age children and adults, any family type. Information packet avail-

able for \$1. PO Box 16116, Asheville, NC 28816 704-252-2118.

COMMUNITIES FORMING

ABUNDANT LAND TRUST, Whitleyville, Tennessee. Hill country 80 miles northeast of Nashville. We seek motivated people: activists, lefties, green, appropriate techies. Woodworking shop (main income—also light construction) orchard, spring, large house, green connection throughout Tennessee. We also seek good neighbors. *Abundant Land Trust*, 292 Haydenburg Ridge Rd., Whitleyville, TN 38588; 615-621-3474.

CLEARVIEW CENTER FOR THE CELEBRATION OF LIFE, Gill, Massachusetts. Join us in founding an eco-spiritual community and learning center in Vermont/New Hampshire. Planning clustered village of affordable, energy-efficient homes with shared common space (possibly off grid,) on rural land with water and views. Organic farming, workshops, green businesses. Priorities: sustainable living on all levels, consensus, deep harmony and partnership with nature unconditional love, creativity, fun and freedom. Guiding principles: follow joy, focus on solutions consciously create your own reality. Seeking emotionally mature and financially secure optomists to join our founders group which gathers regularly in western Mass. to co-create this vision. Send \$2 for vision statement package to: *Patricia Greene*, 400B Main Rd., Gill, MA 01376; 413-863-8714.



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DEJA VU ALL OVER AGAIN!

ECOVILLAGE COHOUSING COOPERATIVE, Ithaca, New York. The best of both country and community. We're an environmentally oriented cohousing community on the outskirts of a culturally diverse, dynamic university town in upstate NY. 30 uniquely designed, moderately priced, passive solar homes are planned, with 25 families already committed. Our 30 acre neighborhood is surrounded by 100 acres of fields, ponds, and distant views. We broke ground this summer! Inquiries welcome at *EcoVillage Cohousing Cooperative, PO Box 25, Ithaca, NY 14851; 607-277-2072.*

EDEN RANCH, Paonia, Colorado. 65 acres of heaven just purchased on Western Colorado mesa. Wondrous 360 degree views. Your own innovative business will thrive here, or work in nearby towns. Seeking self-supporting members desiring rural, spiritual environment, working together on organic farm. Future retreat center will be main community business, other businesses planned. Diversity in thought and age, consensus decision-making results from mutual respect and trust. Maximum 20 families. \$15,000 membership/land share, plus cost of dome or straw bale home, labor assisted by other members. Prospectus, bylaws, \$3. *Jim Wetzel, Nancy Wood, PO Box 520, Paonia, CO 81428-0520; 970-835-8905. Come visit!*

EDGES, Glouster, Ohio. 94 acres near Ohio University. Permaculture, solar, planned Education Center & Childrens' Camp. Interpersonal dynamics important. For brochure send SASE to *Emily, Rt. 3, Box 452, Glouster, OH 45732; 614-448-2403.*

INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY, Cummington, Massachusetts. Our site is situated on 115 acres of woods and pastures in the Northern Berkshires, 25 miles west of Northampton, a five-college town. Thirteen privately owned two-four acre lots, community building and 60 acres of common land. Educational, dormitory, dining, business and studio facilities available. Our vision is to further the important things in life: establishing and maintaining meaningful connections with others who value a similar lifestyle, and pursuit of the highest possibilities in all aspects of living: relationships, business, the arts, natural healing, education, alternative energy, gardening, celebration, and fun. We value personal autonomy and foresee a community of independent thinkers with the initiative to take responsibility for shaping their lives and their community. Currently we are nine members, including two children, anticipating total of 35. Call *Neel Webber, 413-634-0181, or write: 33 Potash Hill Rd., Cummington, MA 01026.*

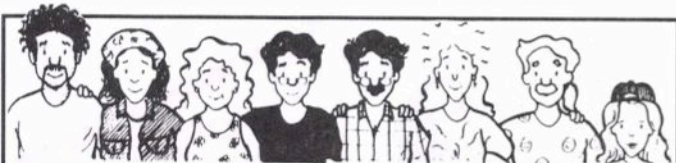
INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY, Northfield, Ohio. New Community forming near Serpent Mount Sacred Monument. Pantheistic spiritual orientation, wholistic healing mission. Organic farming, alternative energy/housing. Our vision honors self-sufficiency, development of personal spirituality, diversity, creativity, wholistic healing to express, embrace embody THE SACRED in all moments and actions. We have found ideal land and need to raise the money to buy it. Send a SASE for more information to: *PO Box 186, Northfield, OH 44067.*

NAMASTE GREEN, Barnstead, New Hampshire. Permaculture, polylove keynote, egalitarian, living positively, pods in integrity. *Namaste Green, Box 578, Barnstead, NH 03225.*

NOAH'S ARK II (Ha!), Texas. Couple with newborn interested in saving seeds, plants, birds, animals from imminent earth-changing fire (versus flood) problem, via earth shelters, greenhouses, alternative power and lifestyles. Acquired at auction an 11 acre farm/ranch, fenced, level, cleared, fallow, house, well, metal outbuildings, electricity, phone, city water from town (pop. 380-4 miles) between Austin and Texas A&M. Share insights from Sufism, Hopis, Nostradamus, Cayce, multiculturalism. Into independence, interdependence, job-sharing, teamwork, solitude, and sharing. Room for trailers, campers, 1 mile from highway, not many neighbors. Just beginning. *Barbara or Jim, 4001 Oakridge, Houston, TX 77009-5230.*

OLD DILLION PLACE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST, St. Joe, Arkansas. 75 acres common land with small creek, seven caves and springs. Hilly, wooded and remote. Parcels available from 5-15 acres or more. Some with electricity, some without. People practicing natural healing, with healthy lifestyles, into primitive skills, respect for the Earth and preferably vegetarian. *CLT, Rt. 1, Box 265, St. Joe, AR 72675; 501-449-4796 or 808-946-6155.*

S.E.A.D.S. OF TRUTH, Harrington, Maine. Solar Energy Awareness and Demonstrations Seminar Center. 60 acres on river, rural Maine coast.



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CoHousing, the quarterly journal of The CoHousing Network, is the **indispensable resource** for people interested in forming, joining or just finding out about the new "micro neighborhoods" throughout North America. News, Resources, Group Listings and Practical Information on Every Aspect of Developing and Living in CoHousing Communities

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SEPTIMA VILLAGE, Tampa, Florida. Come to the water! Inward (meditation, ritual, study) outward (service) journey model. Current village consists of service to 25 women and their children in long-term recovery from drugs and alcohol. As members join, vision unfolds. Possible paid positions. Desire to form separate, united staff housing. *Septima Village, PO Box 262738, Tampa, FL 33615; 813-221-4001.*

PEOPLE LOOKING

HAVE BUS STILL TRAVELING! Family of 3-1/2, continue seeking community on a spiritual/heart-oriented path. Grateful for all connection. Open to heart-oriented, grounded folks, especially with younger children (ours is 2.5) Northwest, quality water, and trees. If you feel moved

to connect or connection to move, let us know! *Rochelle, 2936 NE 77 Place, Portland, OR 97213; 503-252-9083.*

SEEK PARCEL OF PRIVATE PROPERTY ideally within off-grid, permaculture community in mountains of Arkansas or Missouri or something like that. Rural, inexpensive. *Dexter Ator, 3444B Willowrun, Austin, TX 78704; 512-447-0869.*

FAMILY OF FOUR seeking to form/join ecovillage/small community in intermountain West/Northwest. Our inspiration is the Earthship design sailing into a sustainable future for our children and grandchildren. Simple, back-to-basics lifestyle with caring supportive people desired. *Lana Nakaishi, 36 Charles, Wenatchee, WA 98801.*

WE ARE LOOKING FOR A RURAL FAMILY-FOCUSSED COMMUNITY (or persons wishing to form one) including "special needs" children, especially teenagers, as our son, Robert, 16, has Down's Syndrome. We desire individual space, community school and community work and play. Areas of interest: gardening, horticulture, writing, reading, movies, art. In as natural a setting as possible, spring water to drink, year-round creek, woods, hills, meadows for play and renewal. Our spiritual path is an open one, but close to the Unity Way as in the Daily Word. Susan has Lyme's Disease and a couple of associated illnesses, but am doing well and confident of healing. *Susan, Thomas and Robert Wertheimer, 272 Arlington Dr., Ukiah, CA 95482; 707-463-0607.*

SEEKING A COMMUNITY where I can be myself and where my skills are useful. I'm an egghead, book-worm, scientist and secular humanist type with math degree. Into math, science, computers, logic and reasoning, and wildlife. I'm good at anything technical, such as book and record keeping, designing methods and plans, income tax, and writing. I can also teach math, writing, and such to children. I'm not into religion, new age, vegetarianism or anything of that ilk, and please, no drugs or politics. *Norman F. Hale, 110 Bank St., New York, NY 10014.*

RETIRED WASP, 60'S, seeks inexpensive private living space with WASP seniors group who share housing and help each other when the going gets rough. I'm Aquarian, straight, divorced, non-drinker/smoker/druggie. Fair handyman skills, strong plant-growing skills, second-degree Reiki. Interested in alternative healing. No interest in gurus or off-the-grid locations. Prefer eastern half of Texas. *William Curnutt, 1702 Martha, Pasadena, TX 77502-2828; 713-477-5441.*

RESOURCES

COMMUNITY SEEKERS' NETWORK OF NEW ENGLAND. For joining, starting, and learning about communities. *Don Bricknell, PO Box 2743, Cambridge, MA 02238; 617-784-4297.*

INTERESTED IN JOINING A BRUDERHOF COMMUNITY? We'll put you in touch with former members of the Hutterian Brethren/Bruderhof. *Peregrine Foundation, PO Box 460141, San Francisco, CA 94146; 415-821-2090.*

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Please specify which section you wish your ad to appear under: Communities With Openings

Communities Forming People Looking
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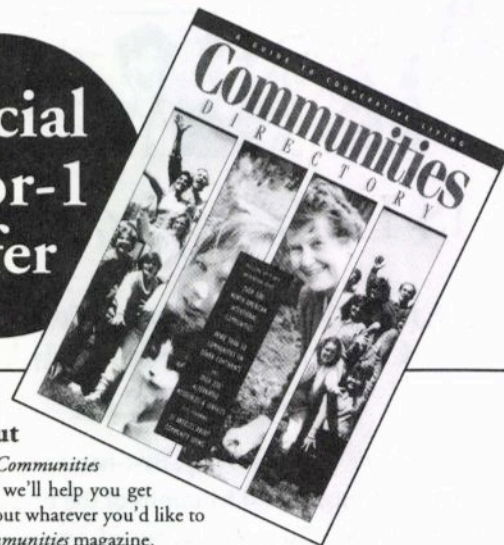
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Everybody wins! You get to help your favorite libraries *and* place your notices or ads in North America's foremost publication on cooperative living. We get more directories into circulation. And a multitude of library patrons will gain access to the community listings, resources, and featured articles.

Orders: Send \$30 per institutional copy ordered to: *Communities, Rt 4 Box 169-M, Louisa VA 23093.* Include your name and address, plus a complete mailing address for each library that you wish to endow.

COMMUNITIES MAGAZINE ADVERTISING ORDER

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Reach Listings - Communities seeking members, people seeking communities, etc. (Please see opposite page)

Discounts: Ad agency discounts: 15% when accompanied by prepayment. FIC members: 5% discount (prepayment required).
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CITY/TOWN _____	STATE/PROVINCE _____ ZIP/POSTAL CODE _____

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- Caroline Estes: Challenges Facing the Cmities Movement; Kirkpatrick Sale: Bioregionalism, Cmity, & the Future (C93-2)
- Debra Lynn Dadd-Redalia: Sustainability & Sustenance; Dorothy Maclean: Spiritual Dimensions of Cmity (C93-23)
- Patch Adams: Prescription for Happiness—Love, Friendship,

- Cmity; Corinne McLaughlin: Future of Cmities (C93-78)
- Gordon Davidson: What Cmities Have Learned About Economics; Noel Brown: Transition to Global Sustainability (C93-77)

Workshops

- Anapol, Dr. Deborah: Poly Lovestyles (C93-69)
- Arkin, Lois: Urban Eco-Village Processes: Retrofitting for Sustainability (C93-17)
- Brown, Stephan: Everything You Wanted to Know About Starting Community (C93-55)

- Kozeny, Geoph: Leadership, Democracy, & Accountability (C93-93)
- Nearing, Ryam: How To Love More Successfully: Polyfidelity (C93-46)

- Schaub, Laird: Intro to Consensus (C93-31)
- Schaub, Laird: Intro to Facilitation (C93-45)
- Shaffer, Carolyn & S. Lewis: Phases of Cmity Life (C93-70)

Panels

- Founders' 1: Small, Rural Cmities (C93-4)
- Founders' 3: Large, Spiritual Cmities (C93-26)
- Founders' 4: Large, Rural Cmities (C93-40)
- Polyfidelity (C93-25)

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- Please send me a complete list of all 85 Celebration audio tapes, free!
- Please send me the tapes circled above. I've enclosed a check payable to FIC. _____ # of tapes at \$8.50 (includes postage) for a total of \$ _____.

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AFFINITY LONG DISTANCE SERVICE REQUEST

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All issues are \$5 each, except where noted.

#80/81 Vision & Leadership:

The Four-Fold Way, Buddhist community, Goodenough, what happened to Kerista?, the URI split up, Sunflower House, Co-op America, collaborative decision making, servant leadership, bullies & egos, paradigms of control & harmony, ropes course. (Spr/Sum '93) \$10 - counts as two

#82 Women in Community:

Women at Twin Oaks, The Farm, Shannon Farm; Women in Bruderhof, Hutterite, Shaker, Oneidan, Mormon, Owenite communities; Maggie Kuhn. (Spr '94)

#83 Celebration of Community:

Highlights of the Aug '93 gathering in Olympia, WA: plenaries—Kirkpatrick Sale/Bioregionalism, Dorothy Maclean/Findhorn, Corinne McLaughlin/leadership, Gordon Davidson/spiritual economics, Dr. Noel Brown/environment; founders' panels. (Sum '94)

#84 Growing Up in Community:

Idyllic, nurturing, humorous, confusing, & frightening aspects of community childhood: in commune, kibbutz, The Farm, charismatic Christian, Bruderhof, political activist, and secular egalitarian communities. (Fall '94)

#85 Passages: What Have We Learned?

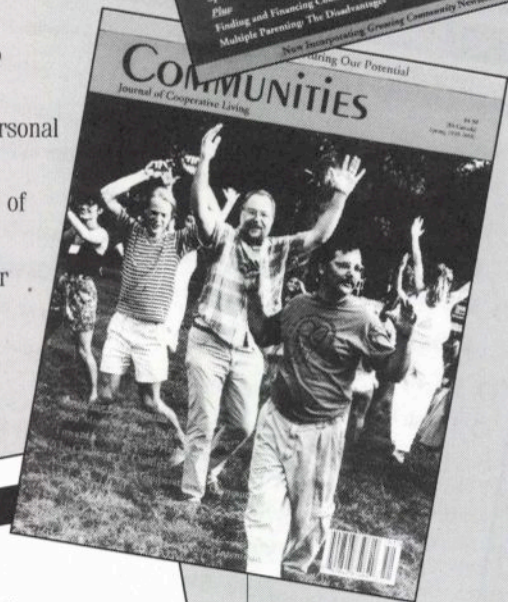
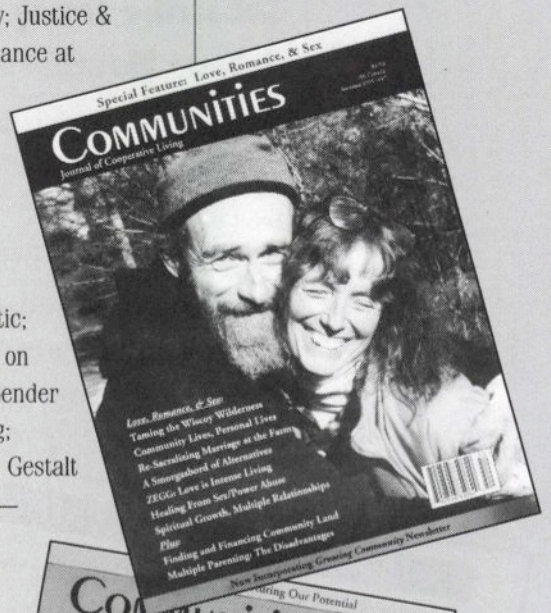
Friends & Lovers Community; Justice & Mercy at Aprovecho; Governance at Twin Oaks; Co-op Wars; Boundaries, Trust & Discernment; A Closer Look at "Cults". (Wint '94)

#86 Nurturing Our Potential:

More Confident, Less Idealistic; "You Mean We Have to Keep on Growing?"; Toward A New Gender Harmony; Feedback Learning; Challenge of Conflict; Aikido; Gestalt Practice; Multiple Parenting—Advantages. (Spr '95)

#87 Love, Romance & Sex:

Community Ideals & Personal Loves; Re-Sacralizing Marriage; Smorgasbord of Alternatives; ZEGG; Healing from Sex/Power Abuse in Community; Spiritual Growth & Multiple Relationships. (Sum '95)



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- Please send a free description of all 75 back issues & special discounts.
- Please send me issue #s _____ for a total of _____ magazines.
- Multiple Copy Discounts** — 1 issue - \$5; 2-4 \$4 each; 5-9 \$3.50 each (includes shipping).
- Amount Enclosed (check in US funds to Communities) - \$ _____

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Please photocopy and mail to: Communities Back Issues, Alpha Farm, Deadwood OR 97430

COMMUNITIES MAGAZINE, DIRECTORY ORDER, & FIC MEMBERSHIP

Communities Magazine— Subscribe Today & Get a Free 1-Year Membership in the FIC!

Your source for the latest information, issues, and ideas about intentional communities and cooperative living!

Supplements the *Communities Directory* (see ad opposite) with update listings about communities in North America—including those now forming.

Fellowship for Intentional Community (FIC) Membership

The FIC is a network of communitarians promoting communication and understanding about and among intentional communities across North America. The Fellowship:

- publishes *Communities* magazine and the best-selling *Communities Directory*.
- hosts gatherings & events about communities

- builds bridges between communities and the wider culture.
- serves as an information clearinghouse for all aspects of community—for individuals, groups, and the media.

FIC membership supports these efforts and offers the following benefits:

- our quarterly newsletter
- discounts on selected products and services.
- advertising discounts in our publications.
- invitations to board meetings and other activities.

• first notice on whatever we're doing, and the opportunity to get in early!

Join the Fellowship team today! Special limited time membership offer—subscribe now to

Communities and receive an individual FIC membership, free!

COMMUNITIES MAGAZINE, DIRECTORY ORDER, & FIC MEMBERSHIP

Communities Magazine (check appropriate circle)

- 4 issue subscription \$18 (\$22 foreign price) 8 issues \$33 (\$40) Single issue \$5 (\$6)

Now thru Dec 31, 1995, as a new subscriber to *Communities* you're entitled to a one year individual membership in the FIC, free! Check the appropriate membership categories below.

Communities Directory

- \$23 (\$25)- includes shipping, please call for quantity discounts!

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- Yes, I wish to join the Fellowship free for one year with my subscription to *Communities*!
 I wish to join the Fellowship at the regular rates—no magazine subscription at this time.

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Individual, \$15-35 (sliding scale) fee waived with *Communities* subscription

Community: \$20 for under 10 members, \$35 for 10-50 members, \$50 for over 50

Organization, \$25-50 (sliding scale)

Donor: Supporting, \$100 & up; Sustaining, \$250 & up; Sponsoring, \$500 & up

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Newsletter only (non-member), \$10 Please send more info on FIC services

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Please photocopy and mail to: FIC, Rt 1, Box 155-C, Rutledge MO 63563
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Available Now...the All-New *Communities Directory*

Features 540 completely updated listings for communities in North America and 70 communities on other continents. The new *Directory* includes many communities that have formed since our first edition in 1990.

Listings includes contact information and a full description of each group.

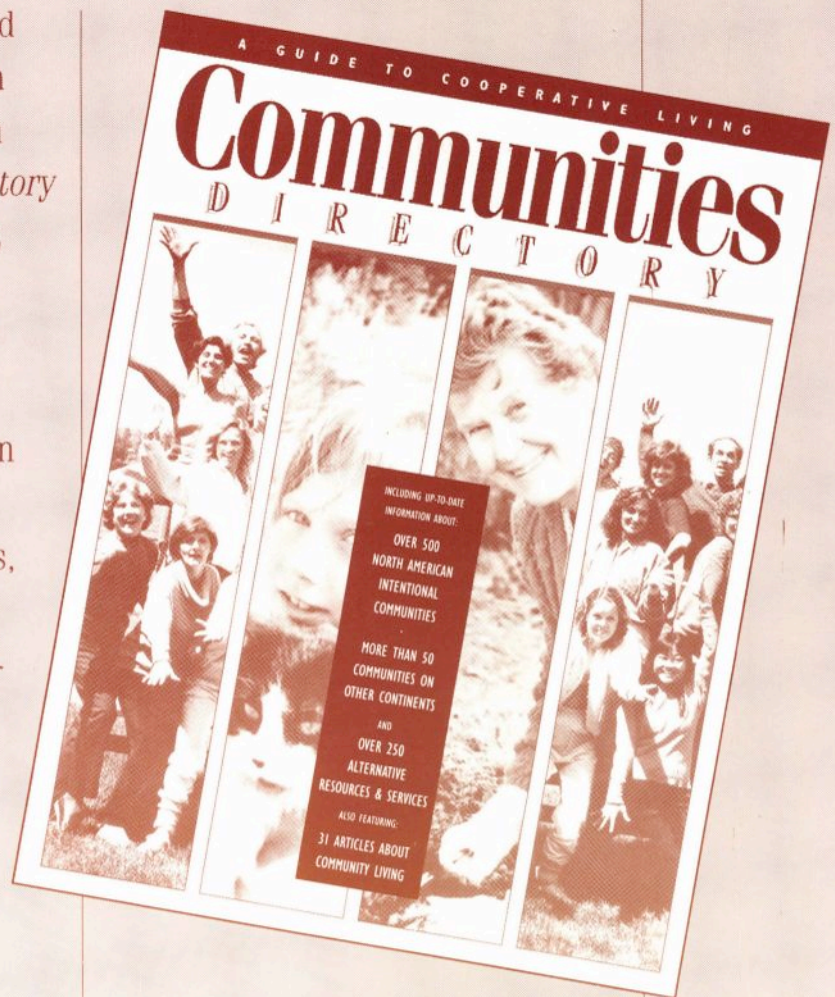
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Published by the Fellowship for Intentional Community, a network of communarians promoting communication and understanding about and among intentional communities.

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