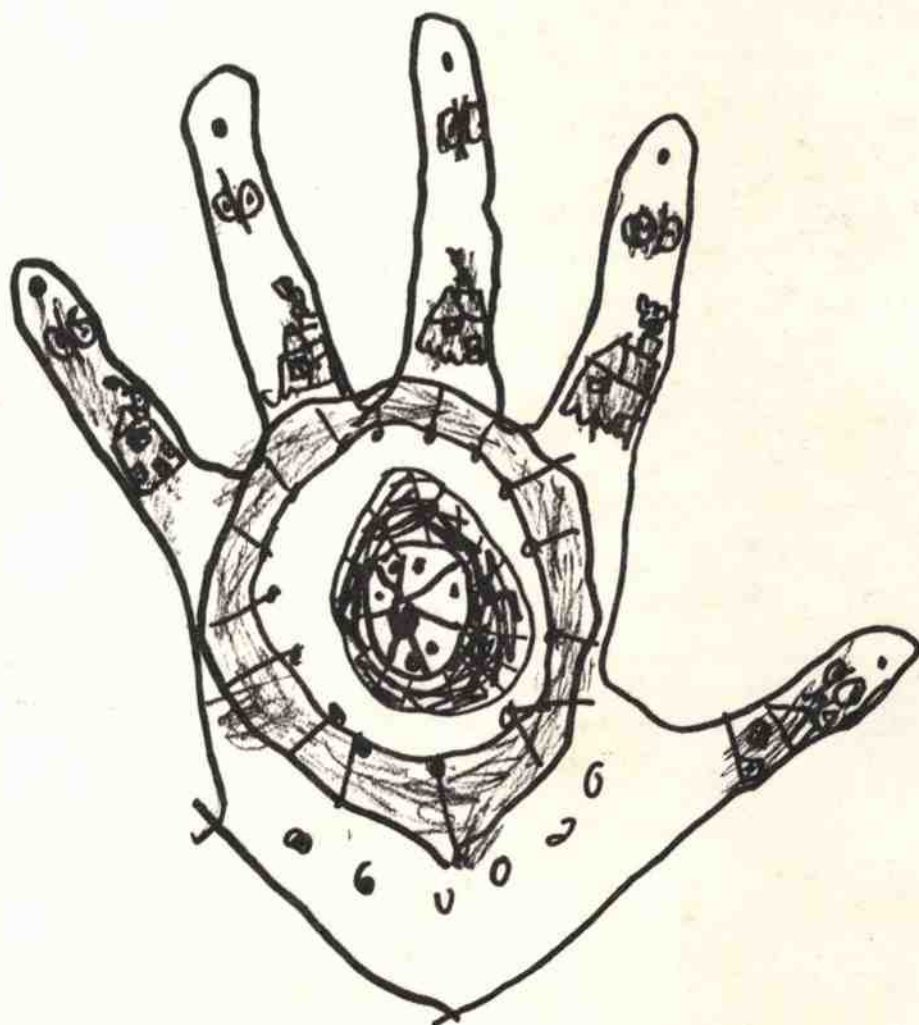


a journal of cooperative living

COMMUNITIES

\$1.00

no. 9



CHILDREN IN COMMUNITY

about this issue

Last spring when we began writing friends and acquaintances asking them to share their ideas and experiences about children in community, we had, based on past experience, little reason to hope for much response. But out of 30-plus requests, almost 20 responses came back — not all with material, but at least with encouragement. The word got around and soon unsolicited manuscripts began to appear. Unlike some previous issues which were written almost entirely by the editorial collectives, this issue on Children in Community was written almost entirely by our readers. Between this and the large response to our complaints about lack of communication from other groups in issue No. 7, we are encouraged to think that there is indeed hope for a communicating network of communities which can share information about specific issues, problems, and solutions.

The focus of this issue is on the experience of living with children in community. In "Dear Someone" the writer skillfully relates the serious and humorous aspects of sharing life with a band of little people. "Iris Mountain" offers a deeper view into the mechanisms which underlie and support the communal effort, with some revealing comments on the assumptions communards carry with them about communal life in general and children in particular. Twin Oaks reports on its neo-Walden Two style of community baby care — complete with air cribs and down-home behavioral engineering.

At Ananda, the development of the elementary and high schools had to await completion of some more basic village necessities. Their article describes the philosophy, problems and daily activities of the schools, with contributions by the students. "Notes from My Journal" is a highly personal view of a woman's changing perceptions of herself-as-mother and herself-as-person as a result of a year of living communally.

Two features deserve special attention: the reviews of children's books and the resource listings. Each lists some valuable materials for providing non-sexist, non-authoritarian models for children.

Also in this issue are various glimpses of life with children in a variety of communal situations, some tips on health and nutrition for children, and a new story from an old story that should delight big people as well as little people. An excerpt from Lee Goldstein's legal manual for communes, concentrating on some "family" legal matters completes this issue of *Communities*.

Graphics for this issue are primarily by artists 10 or under.

We can't yet know whether our children will grow up to be more cooperative, self-motivating, loving, caring folks than we tend to be. This issue neither raises nor answers many of the questions we need to deal with in trying to create better environments in which we and our children can grow. It merely begins the dialogue. We would appreciate your feedback.





COMMUNITIES

a journal of cooperative living

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1974

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Communities, member of APS, COSMEP

POST THINGS HERE



To all Members of the Commune:
We want to know how you

(In this article, the word "co" is used as a neutral pronoun, meaning he or she.)

"DEAR SOMEONE"

said the note on the bulletin board. "Please teach us how to make a box with a top. Love, Lisa and Samantha."

Our littlest child in times of distress runs out into the hall and hollers, "Somebody!"

We came to this community as a group of families. Now we are one family, but we have never tried to deny the special relationship that exists between parent and child. Only here there are more adults for each child to be with. It eases the pressure on the parental relationship. There is less friction, more freedom to be friends.

Right now we have seven children, all girls, ages 3 to 10, living here. Reaching out to love other people's children has been surprisingly easy, though I don't have the same obsessive interest that I have in my own child. Still they have all made me proud, embarrassed me in public (Jennifer waiting in line at the grocery store: "Are we ripping off the gum?"), made me furious, made me ashamed of myself (Lissa: "You can't treat me like that—I'm a PERSON!"). Discipline can be chaotic. With 15 adults there are 15 different personalities and boiling points. We have long discussions, arguments. Kids need a regular bedtime—kids should go to bed when they're sleepy. Some issues never get settled, like how can we have quiet at the dinner table? Sometimes the problem miraculously melts away, other times it returns again and again to haunt us. Does it upset the children to have inconsistency from the adults? I'm not sure. It may just make it clear to them that there is not one true way to do things and that adults are not a solid united phalanx of moral opinion.

Our discipline has become gradually freer. The basic rule is the Summerhill one: it's okay as long as it doesn't hurt anyone else. This sounds simpler than it is. For example, it doesn't hurt anyone for a kid to stay up late, but if co can't keep from making lots of noise then someone is hurt.

DEAR
SOMEONE,

So many of us living together has made us aware of the patterns which we inherit from our parents and perpetuate onto our children. We have questioned these patterns and abandoned many of them. Example: one woman was really into watching her child eat and telling her what to eat. The result was that the child was nervous at meals and ate hardly anything. From watching other adults and children, she realized that other people were not doing this to the children and they were eating more sensibly than her own child. Although she still was anxious about what her child ate, she was able to stop hounding her about it and let her eat (or not eat) in peace.

The children find power in their numbers. They seek support from one another when they feel they have been fucked over by an adult. Sometimes they can be pretty terrifying en masse. One evening some of them were evicted from the living room where they were making too much noise for some adults who wanted to listen to a record. The injured ones gathered their pals around them and stood in the door of the kids' room, shouting insults at the offending grown-ups. This kind of action can really freak-out a grown-up, especially visitors who are not used to being called an asshole by a five year old. We figure it's okay to get plenty mad back at them for this (if it makes you mad) but they are not punished for giving us lip.

The number of children is a great insurance against boredom. There is always somebody to play with. Although the age groups tend to group together (and the sexes when we had boys here), there are frequent odd combinations—the 10 year old and a 5 year old, for example. A few children seek solitude or the company of adults. Most of them have access to one of the adult rooms (their parent's) where they can keep some things they don't care to share and get some time alone. But they mostly play with others. One day when the other kids were away, Momo (age 3) pestered me repeatedly for attention. I was trying to work

and finally in exasperation told her to leave me alone.
"But I'll be so alone!" she wailed. I worry sometimes that they won't know how to be alone.

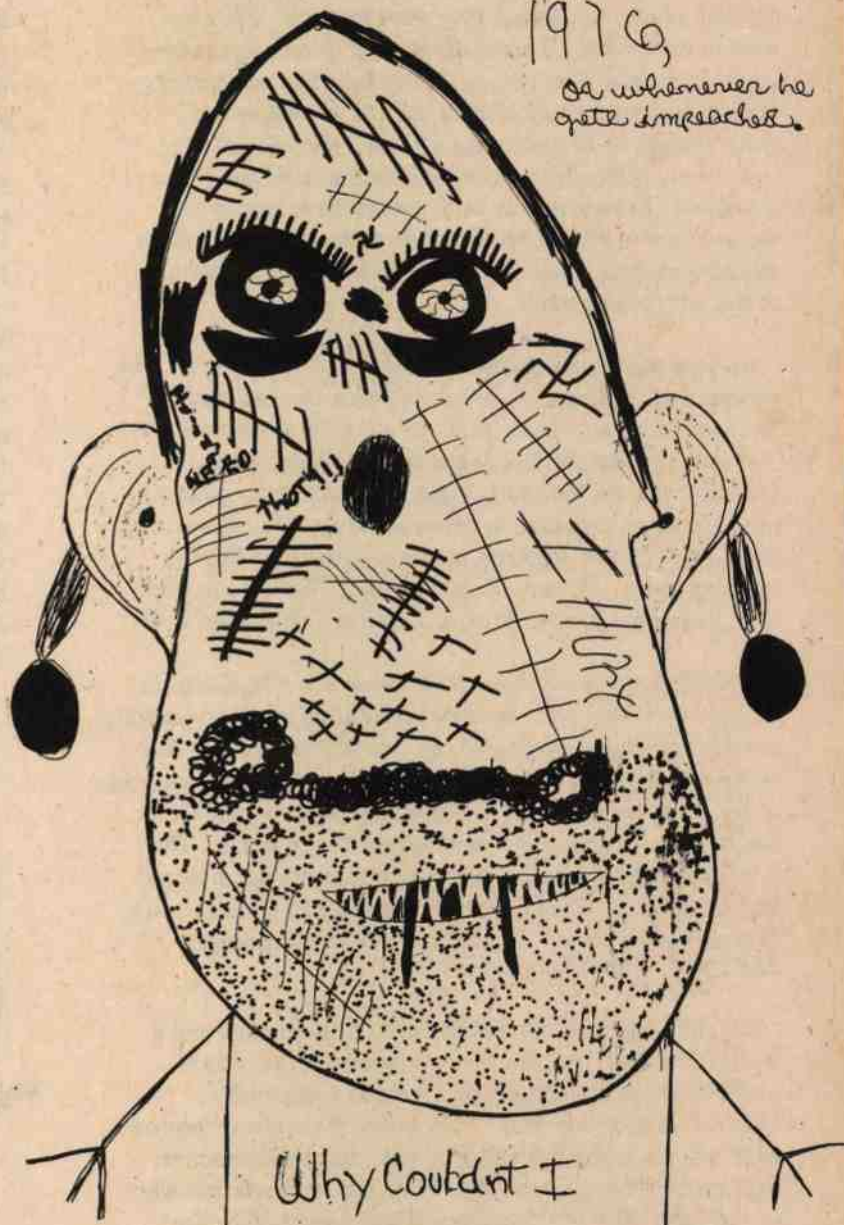
A deleterious effect of the numbers of children is the "pack" effect. When one says something, they all say it. The oldest girl dominates the opinion scene. If she says something is yukky, by god it's yukky all the way down the line. We wonder how they will ever develop minds of their own. At the same time I know that imitation is a form of learning among children, and I suppose they have some diversity to choose from. The pack effect sometimes results in their coming down heavy on a visiting child. They used to play exclusion games among themselves ("we're not going to play with YOU!") but this seldom happens now. It still happens from time to time with outside children. On at least one occasion it turned out to be definitely the other child's fault—he had used physical aggression, something which is taboo among our children and thoroughly policed by them.

The children have their own rules. A huge fight erupted last summer when a visitor child left some of their records out of the jackets. "She broke a kids' rule!" was the indignant cry. We see two sparring children run to the oldest girl and present both sides of a case, while she listens and makes a judgement. We grown-ups have learned to stay out of their fights. Otherwise they become grown-up-attention-attracting devices. It's cool to comfort the loser, but without encouraging her to go back in there and fight for her rights. Nowadays the kids don't fight much, considering their numbers. When they do, it's strictly words, insults. Like most children, they do not carry grudges. For a while we were having a persistent problem with fighting between the 3 year old and a 5 year old. I said to them one day, "why do you guys fight so much?" They looked at me blankly. It was clear that they had never thought of it that way. To them each fight was a separate event, not part of a continuous war.

Living as close together as we do, children are not separated from many aspects of adult life. They hear our conversations our fights, our tears. When they ask questions, we try to answer honestly. When we first got together, we were uptight about letting the kids know some of our problems. One couple split up; the woman took the kids and left the community. They (a boy,6, and a girl,8) came frequently to visit us on weekends. The parents, immersed in their own struggles, didn't know what to say to their children. What do you say, when you don't know what is going to happen yourself, and you feel guilty about what your problems are doing to your kids? Anyhow one weekend the girl freaked out. She tied herself into the car of her father's lover who was going away that day, insisted she was going with her, and had to be forcibly extricated. After that the

Richard Nixon in

1976,
or whenever he
gets impeached.



Why Couldn't I
have Three terms
like Roosevelt, damn!!

Tim FULTON
maker

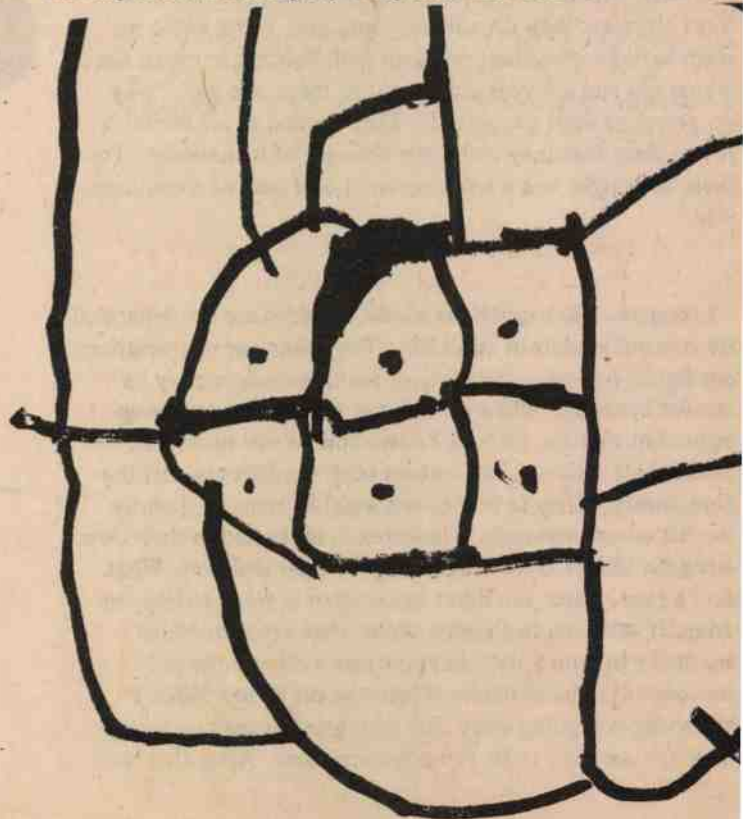
parents decided to tell her what they knew about their present state of confusion. It seemed to help her. Later we read in Bill Schutz's book *Here Comes Everybody* about children of divorce coming through either greatly strengthened or greatly weakened by the experience. He feels the key is whether the child is treated as a responsible person and allowed to know what is going on. If co is excluded, co is made to feel weak and helpless, maybe also guilty ("It's my fault—that's why they're not telling me.") We have found this to be true in our subsequent experiences and now we tell the children pretty much what they want to know. I feel we need to work more on encouraging their questions and helping them express their feelings. They have had some rough times here, where many of their parents' marriages have either broken up or undergone a lot of stress. I think the community offers them some security that a private home would not. In several cases both parents have remained in the community after splitting up. In spite of the difficulties this has entailed, at least the child has been able to continue to live with both parents.

We have tried holding kids' feedback meetings to help them express their feelings. These haven't been very successful, but some kids are able to get it out under these circumstances. The rules are that the kids speak about any angry feelings they have toward the adults while the adults listen quietly, not offering an explanation unless asked for one—this is tough to do. Lately kids' feedback seems to turn into a Sunday morning romp. At the last one Lisa said, "Well, if I'm mad at a grown-up, I just tell them at the time." Right on, Lisa!

The kids know a lot about sex because it is a big factor in their parents' lives and has caused disruption in the community. They know who-is-sleeping-whom is pretty important. Also we answer their questions about sex. They have been tempted to try it out for themselves. For several days running there will be lots of giggling and running into the bedroom. Then it is forgotten for months. Right now they are handicapped by lack of boys. One of the little ones said to me with a sigh, "I wish I had a penis." Alert for anti-feminist feeling, I asked why. "Then I could fuck Lori!"

Around home they run naked most of the summer and a lot of the winter, too, but they know that in the outside world there are up-tight people who don't dig nudity, dirty words and sassy kids. They police themselves when we go into town, and when visitors come, they want to know right away if they are up-tight. They also have relatives who are up-tight. This attitude is something passed on by the other children, not insisted on by the grown-ups who are wishy washy on the subject. But the kids, anxious not to be rejected or put down, are careful not to offend the up-tights. The result is to make them inhibited in public.

We have had our own school for our children since the community started 2 years ago. It has the tacit consent of the local authorities, though they say the children will have to be tested if they return to public school. The numbers in the school have varied. For a while we took a group of kids from other communities and had 14 in our school—now we are back to our 7. School was more formal when we first started: classes five mornings a week from 8:30 to 12. Gradually we have relaxed. We still have a teaching schedule, but if class doesn't happen in the morning, it can happen in the afternoon or evening. We are resigned to interruptions when the mail arrives with a package for a child, or when some other interesting event occurs. The kids' interests vary. Right now they are beginning to do some writing, something they hardly did at all last year. Last year they did a great deal of biology, many nature walks and dissections; now that seems less interesting to them. Throughout math has been our weakest subject—partly because it already had a bad reputation from their school experience and partly because we have never had an adult who was really into math and was willing to meet the kids on their own terms. Reading is our strong point. We have many books (got elementary school discards) and a weekly trip to the library keeps our most avid reader well supplied. One unusual feature of our program is our German class, taught by a member who was born in Austria. The kids' interest is whetted somewhat by being able to communicate with their grandparents. They sing German songs, read books about Germany, learn vocabulary. Susie knows the days of the week in German, but is a little hazy about Tuesday and Wednesday. ("Oh, yeah, Mittwoch!")



"GARAGE" (AGE 5)

The children do not have to attend classes, so sometimes they don't, usually when they have gotten into something more interesting. They look at school as a form of amusement in which they have an adult at their disposal. Their energy and enthusiasm are remarkable to me who remembers many long dull days confined in elementary school. In Philip Jackson's *Life in Classrooms* he vividly describes the public school's unconscious curriculum which includes such things as interminable waiting, learning to keep still, promptness. We are sometimes dazzled at how different their experience is from the average school kid. Scene from a recent Friday morning science class—Gene is the teacher.

Sama (putting her feet up on her desk): This is what we used to do in school when the teacher went out of the room.

Susie: Why when she went out of the room?

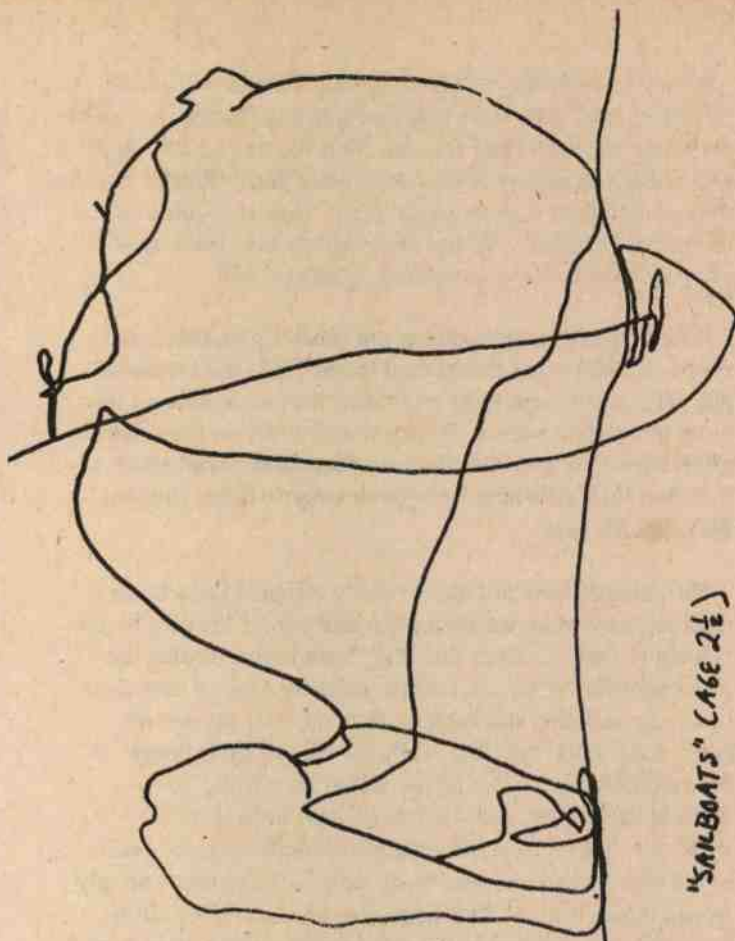
Sama: Oh, it used to make her really mad!

Susie: (experimentally, putting her feet up on her desk):

Gene doesn't care!

Field trips are the school's most popular activity and probably the most educational. Any place is good for a field trip: a railroad bridge being built over the river, an old log cabin on a near-by estate, a band concert, Monticello. We go to Washington, D.C. several times a year where we hit the Smithsonian, the zoo and the art galleries. And last summer we went to Cape Hatteras for a week. The field trips are especially important because the kids don't watch television much and need to get into the outside world. The TV policy is kind of accidental. Only one adult is into TV, and he keeps his in his room. He occasionally invites the kids in to see the *Waltons* or a movie, but they never suggest it any more. Some people had objections to televisions in public rooms, so we have never plugged them in.

One of the kids' greatest strengths, which I think comes from no TV and a free school, is their infinite capacity to amuse themselves. They do art work and cook and play a variety of imaginative games. Right now they are making papier mache Easter baskets—their idea. Our girls don't play outside as much as we'd like them to in the winter—in the summer they will swim all day in the river if an adult is willing to watch them. I can really get into some of their games. Last week they were all dressed up in paper crowns and costumes and went about addressing one another in phony accents: "Oh King Alexander!" "What is it, Princess Alissia?" Another day a grandparent sent Jennifer a kit to make a stuffed frog. It came in a highly decorated box. The contents were ignored while they made a puppet theater out of the box and puppets out of the pictures on it and staged a puppet show.



The children all sleep together in one room and have a playroom in the attic and a schoolroom. They spend more time in the public rooms (living room, dining room) than the adults who have private or two-person rooms. Sometimes the grown-ups feel hassled by the constant presence of kids' games and stuff in the public rooms, but the kids retaliate by pointing out that the adults have private rooms to go to. The kids' room is usually a mess—clothes, toys, books and blankets all over the place. If an adult will help organize them to pick it up, they will usually pitch in but without much enthusiasm. We would like to teach them respect for things which have lives and usefulness of their own and deserve not to be wrecked before their time, but so far we haven't done very well.

In the kids' room each has a bunk with several shelves to keep things on. Some of the girls have decorated the walls and ceilings of their bunks with pictures. They also have boxes to keep their clothes in. They have private possessions and many shared ones. They claim certain clothes as their own but often wear each other's. Toys and jewelry are constantly traded from one owner to another, one of the most favored games. One Christmas Jennifer got an amethyst ring with a card on it saying, "Jennifer, this is your birthstone. Don't lose it." Several days later she came happily into the dining room to show off a tin ring with a Buddha on it. "See?" she said proudly, "I got this in trade for my amethyst ring."

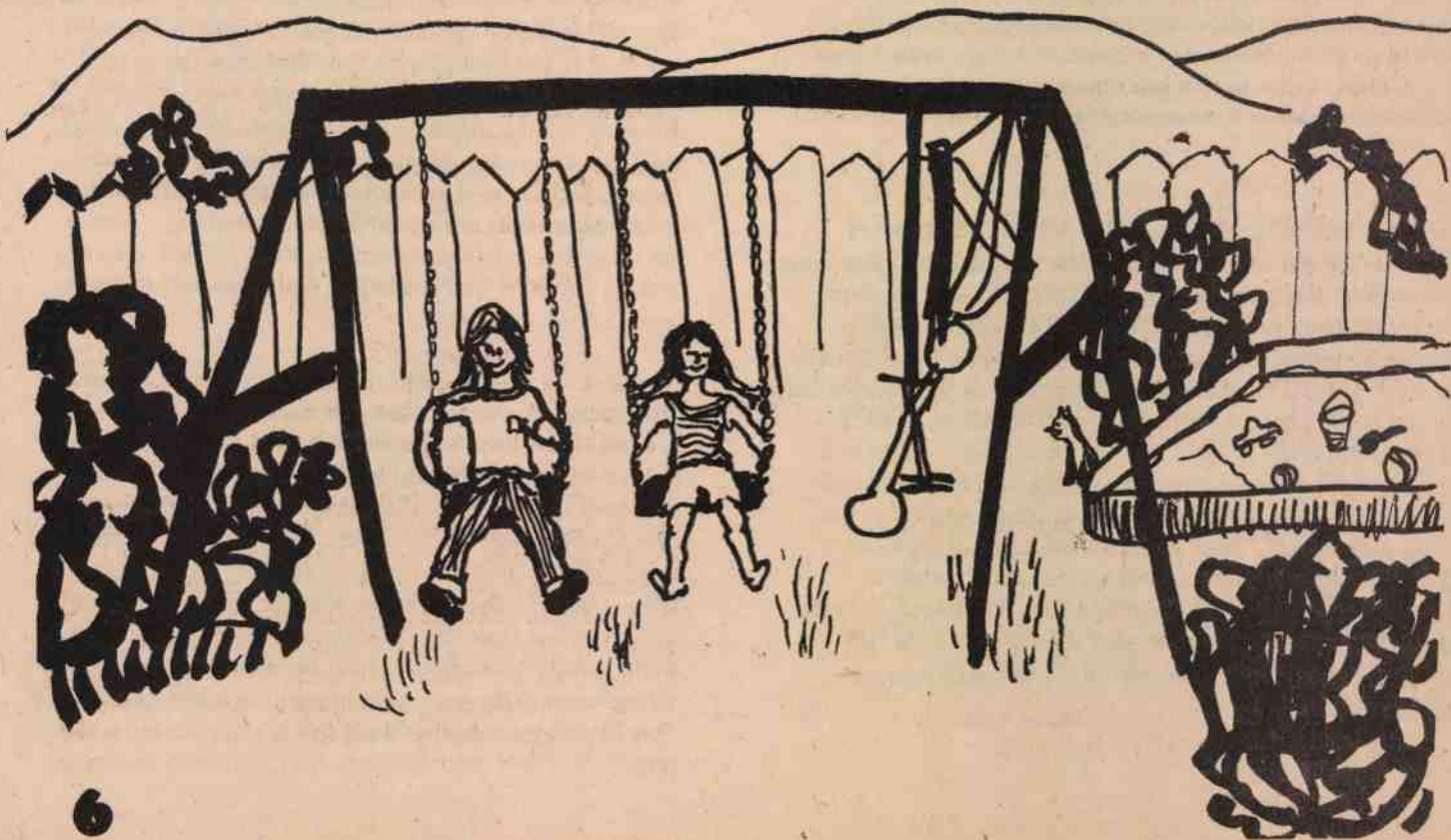
Money is, however, held in common. They used to have private money—gifts from grandparents and finding it around the house were the chief sources. This became a hassle as some kids ran out of money while others were flush. Finally one day they pooled their cash in a kids' fund. Now it is doled out on special occasions. Today they went to the circus, each carrying a small parcel containing, I believe, 25¢.

Presents from outside sources are generally shared: candy strictly so, and other things tend to melt into the common pile. It doesn't seem to be a problem that some kids get many more things than others. We try to cut down on the amount of presents they get. Relatives are sometimes taken aback to find that their gifts have been given away to other children. We think it's neat.

The children have not had regularly assigned tasks to do until recently when we got a pony and two of the girls began helping to feed it. Since then they have begun feeding the other animals: dogs, cat, rabbits, chickens. Up to now their basic responsibility has been to clean up after themselves (they don't always do that) and take care of their things. It has gradually been dawning on us that they really want to share in adult work activity, but we have been shutting them out. Last Spring, for example, Jennifer planted garlic in the tomato bed and somebody came out and unknowingly spread mulch over it. This Spring we are making an effort to include the children in the garden work, which they want very much to do. They are having their own plots of vegetables and flowers and we are encouraging them to

help us. They like to work in the kitchen, especially making dessert which we might not have unless they make it. At first having them in the kitchen was such a hassle that we weren't patient with them. Now the older children have learned enough that they can make cakes and cookies with out supervision—just a little prodding to make them clean up afterwards. Recently Lisa (age 10) volunteered to take a regular turn on kitchen duty as the grown-ups do, and she has been working one half day a week: cooking, washing dishes, cleaning house, doing laundry. Working seems to make the kids feel important. "I'm working, right mom?" Momo will say proudly as she cuts up potatoes for supper. I hope they keep this positive attitude toward work—don't know what we would do if we had a teen-age slob who never lifted a finger. Right now our problem with kids and work seems to rest with us grown-ups. Are we willing to take the time and trouble to help a learner with our work?

People often ask us if we feel we are doing right by our children, if we are preparing them to live in the "real" world. Who can say? Can a kid who can't add numbers but has brilliant insights into the psychology of other people get into Harvard? Will there be a Harvard when she is 18? We are here trying to build a satisfying life for ourselves. We hope they will do the same.



IRIS MOUNTAIN



We at Iris Mountain Community do not call ourselves a "Christian" or even a "religious" community. Although some of us have deep roots in the Gospel teachings and found encouragement to sell some of our goods, move back to the land and begin a new life of sharing work and breaking bread together, our common language of religious experience is limited. However, we claim to hold some common values, calling some of them spiritual, some of them humanistic. When we talk about "growth", we include spiritual growth. When we talk about "cooperative behavior", we imply (religious) values of love, sharing, trust, non-possessiveness, goodwill to our fellows.

We find that from the very beginning of our life-together in intentional community that our adult lives are hopelessly and hopefully intertwined with the lives of the children here. What does this mean for each of us and for all of us?

For the purpose of this discussion, let's define "adults" and "children" in this way. An adult is a person who has matured to the point of being able to care for her/himself, both physically and emotionally; is capable of "making" a living for her/himself and is able to choose freely where, how and with whom she/he lives. Granted, our society limits this potential in many ways. A child is someone who has not matured to this point or who, because of one circumstance or other, (age, health, lack of skills, lack of mobility), does not have free choice of where and how and with whom she/he lives.

Have you ever considered that kids are literally stuck with their parents by law until a certain age?

When our original "pilgrims" set out from the city to rural West Virginia, one of our major objectives was to provide a better environment for the children. There were five of them, ages 1 year to 11 years, whom we felt deserved cleaner air, more elbow room, a chance to learn farming and survival living and to enjoy the enrichment of living with a number of adults besides the two parents.

Meanwhile, the group of four older "school age" children were the focus for intensive community planning and action around forming an alternative school. We adults had our gar-

In due time, two other families joined our extended family group at IM, bringing four little ones all under four years of age. Those four plus our youngest became the "nursery" group. They received special attention, special equipment, even a special "child care" person one summer. We like to think that their needs were mostly met.

dens and building projects, our community meetings and even an occasional "adult" meal uninterrupted by children. Yet the majority of our energies went toward children and meeting their (our adult assessment of) needs. They trusted us.

We did not begin by planning and organizing for children as a future community project. They were already with us. Nor were the children given a lot of choice about all the new people and circumstances they were to encounter in the new lifestyle. Nathan, the youngest, had known an extended family with two "daddies" from the time of his adoption at eight weeks. The older children had to make adjustments to varying degrees.

Two significant problems occurred and continue to occur that relate directly to life with children. Each is also an opportunity for learning for both adults and children.

The first is that of shared adult responsibility for children and frequent corresponding feelings of guilt in relation to that responsibility. The other is the "One-More-in-the-Boat syndrome (hereafter referred to as OMITB) that affects children *more visibly than* it does adults.

The whole idea of *negotiating* responsibility for childcare was new to most of us. The assumption in the nuclear family was that mama was "mama" and everything was her responsibility. Daddy "helped". He worked to pay the bills and the more he "helped" the better daddy and/or husband he was. Daddy could come and go as he pleased. When mama wanted to leave the nest, she had to ask Daddy to stay home or get a babysitter. Some furred and feathered brothers and sisters function as a team better than that!

"Negotiation is learning to live in the same space."

... John Talbot

So, as we came together in community, we intellectually wiped out that assumption. Everything is to be negotiable since we really want to share the responsibility.

Then comes the time when each adult has plans or desires to be away from the nest and the children can't go along with any of them. Who has thoughts about caring for the young ones? Maybe only Mama! Sure, it's biological. However, men and women who have not given birth to children learn to *feel*, not just *think*, responsible. This takes time, patience and occasional outbursts of the liberated women. And who feels guilty when she finally negotiates away *her* responsibility? Mama, of course.

Only when childcare (meeting the needs of children that they cannot meet themselves is *felt* as a shared responsibility by adults and older children in a community of persons

who are committed to cooperation, does it cease to be a burden. When negotiated, it no longer need produce anxiety, resentment or guilt. We found that this basic assumption of where the responsibility lies must be changed and replaced by openness, trust, awareness of children and good communication.

Theoretically, people moving into community together understand the concepts of cooperation and sharing. They may also desire and agree to share food, space, time, labor, possessions, enjoyment and close relationships. However, because of our conditionings and because people have certain basic needs, the actual living together does not go as smoothly as the original fantasies!

One human need is to be important, special, to have a sense of self-worth. "I am the only me. . . the only child. . . the only man/woman. . ." OMITB may mean for someone, "I'm not the "only" anymore. Some other criterion is necessary for self-worth.

Another need is to be able to function in a skilled and recognized capacity. "I am the mother/father/son/daughter/student/ sexual partner/carpenter/breadwinner. . ." If there is more than one of these role/function persons in a group, and if strokes (attention, recognition, affection) are obtained for the role/function, then competition between persons results. Most of us are taught in our society that we should strive to be ONLY and/or BEST. OMITB, at the level of this need, may mean the threatened loss of recognition, the scarcity of time and affection. "I am afraid I will not get enough. . . Someone else will get more, or get my share of. . ."

Children, in their lack of experience, take cues from the adults about what contributes to self-worth and literally demand attention and recognition for their activities and their BEING! At Iris Mountain, we adults find ourselves laying trips on the children about their activities.

"Doing nothing but reading all day will ruin your eyes."

Oh? What you really mean is why don't I do something "useful", like chopping wood or helping in the kitchen.

If a child's place in the community is determined by a role, then anyone who comes in and takes over that role/function (and maybe even appears to do it better) really does threaten that child at a deep level. However, if that child belongs to a family group, his/her influence with her/his peers and with the adults, and has freedom to explore various functions or to reject them all, s/he will not be threatened by newcomers, big or small. An example at IM is the "littlest angel" problem. On several occasions the youngest child in the existing community has obviously felt threatened by the arrival of a younger child or infant who gets a lot of attention. When a child is afraid of losing this role, there is likely to be regressed behavior. Adults may likewise exhibit "regressed" behavior, when threatened by the loss of a role!

Nobody wants to have to prove he's loveable ALL the time.

A third, and equally important need is for space for the physical body, the energy body, the psychic body. Each individual's space need vary in size according to her/his individual size and resourcefulness. OMITB may mean a threatened loss of particular space for one person. The same thing may represent the possibility of additional strokes for another. The children test this out very quickly. When Bard came, the three youngest children consumed him with affection, climbed all over him, and then harassed him to see if "he really loved them." Bard proved not to be a threat because he 1) did not take away adult time and affection from them, and 2) he added to their personal affection bank accounts.

When Sullivan arrived with sleeping bag and guitar, and with no long-term commitment to staying, he slept a few nights in the children's playroom. Four months later, he still sleeps there. Were the children consulted? Yes, but they apparently felt powerless to fight effectively for their space. Through adult intervention and mild to heavy protests by the children, their playroom has been moved to another and more satisfactory space. However, the space that is now Sullivan's is still seen as "our playroom."

The manner in which this incident was handled would make up another article. To sum it up, Sullivan learned about the big waves his seemingly quiet and non-demanding entry into community made. Adults learned how protective children were of "their" communal space. The children learned how to make louder noises and bigger movements to make their feelings known. A good exercise in power and influence for us all!

Nobody wants to protect and fight for one's space needs all the time! There is a need for some guaranteed "privileges" as members of the group.

One thing learned from experience at IM is that underlying values and the time-proven systems that work for persons in our group cannot easily be discarded or renegotiated without feelings of loss, dis-connectedness and sometimes resentment. Our group and its common history EXIST. Period. OMITB means evaluation of the meaning of membership for the new and the old, and more so for the new people. We discovered that among our expectations of each member, including the children, are self-direction, initiative and personal strength. It is by such self-directing behavior that full (influential and satisfactory) membership is achieved. On the other hand, for the group to expect and demand any behavior that is beyond the capability or understanding of a person, whether that person be 5 or 50, leaves that person bewildered and feeling powerless. So the "system" must provide ways of assisting understanding and growth and of protecting vulnerability.

OMITB may mean that one or more member's personal equilibrium may really be sorely tested, if not destroyed. In other words, a member falls out of the boat or jumps overboard!

Children lose equilibrium but are not free to jump ship. Their coping mechanisms may be to "attack" the newcomer or to misdirect their frustration and anger toward a person or thing who serves as scapegoat.

One more human need has to do with asking for and receiving support for personal values, projects and dreams. Not all personal goals an individual has are commonly arrived at by a collaborative process. Hopefully, out of a conjoint exploration of personal goals group goals are forged. If those group goals also include the values, projects and dreams of the children, they will feel supported and will return energy to the community. Once again, not all of anyone's personal values, projects and dreams are common ones. How does a community support individual dreams?

Among unresolved issues at IM remains the one of satisfactorily prioritizing group goals. As if that isn't tough enough, these group goals have to be prioritized by each individual along side of strongly articulated personal goals. We are admittedly and by choice highly individualistic in many ways. We value diversity and personal growth. (We won't predict how this will end up. We only say that it is a crash course in making choices with limited time and resources.) What does this do to children?

Margi wants candy. She has a little money, she can walk to Unger Store, she gets a trip from a "parent" about spoiling her teeth, she goes anyway. Satisfaction.

Colin wants a horse. He doesn't have enough money for a horse, the community doesn't have money for a horse, we don't even have a barn or pasture that is adequate for a horse. Obviously, Colin does not get a horse. But, wait! The gasoline shortage comes along. Some adult thinks it might be a "Practical" thing to have a horse. Now Colin's personal goal has a chance of becoming a common goal. How can he make that work for him? The way he handles this kind of situation depends on how other people handle his personal dreams. It should not become necessary for Colin to subordinate his desire and his personal motives for a horse, to a common, practical goal. Both must be operative. He is twelve and talks of owning (hear that? OWNING!) a large horse ranch when he grows up. What does a community of newly-converted communitarians do with such an obviously "capitalistic" personal goal of one of the children?

Janie wants a room of her own, she's had one all of her life, but all her money and most of her time are tied up in going to school away from IM. How does she "justify" that personal goal in the light of all the "important" things that need to be built or arranged, like remodeling the kitchen, building an animal barn, or writing a proposal for funds for an alternative school?

Even with the psychology of plenty ("there is enough for everyone") to which most of us subscribe, we still can't always have everything we want. The reality is that choices must be made. It is important that our group not subvert its own commitments to cooperation and collaboration in the very process of making our choices. It becomes less than fully cooperative and maybe even coercive when choices are based

on poor assumptions and poorly articulated values. Some faulty assumptions uncovered at IM from time to time, that do violence to the spirit of our intentionality, are these below.

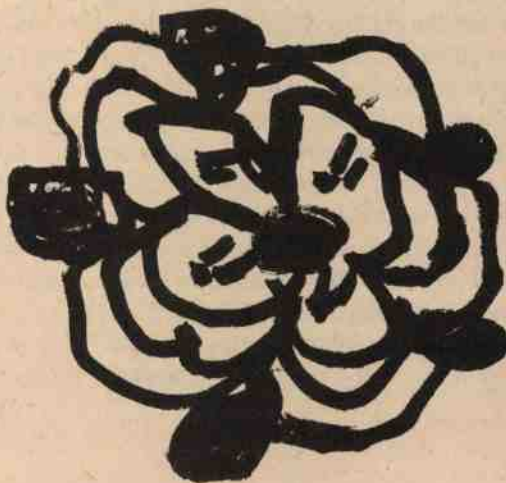
1. Adults have more sense than children and can make more reasonable choices about what is best.
2. A group goal is always more important than a personal goal
3. Money and/or a dominant personality is the most useful resource with which to influence choices.

We have by no means finished our business, individually or collectively, with these assumptions. It is just good to see them in the light of day. We do believe, though, that true collaboration in making choices and decisions can take place only when all available information, including individual feelings, is accessible to everyone. Values and assumptions must be examined at all levels of operation. All possibilities, even the wildest solutions offered by children, must be given consideration. We become like children when we trust each other enough to share our personal dreams and values.

To paraphrase Eberhard Arnold, "Every person is an idea of God". With that in mind, we *intend* to learn more about trusting each other, especially children. We *intend* to become more aware of our assumptions that may motivate untrusting, and therefore non-cooperative, behavior. We *intend* to make choices based on our best knowledge of our own needs and our common goals of life together.

Beyond this, we *hope* that these intentions and our new behaviors are in harmony with the Creation, with the "idea" of God. We *hope* that the process of life together gives the ultimate satisfaction rather than living our lives waiting for "pie-in-the-sky" Utopia. We hope that this age is the beginning of a new era when human beings can fully appreciate their humanity.

We end by pointing out the obvious. There is no way to define "childhood" or "adulthood" and there can be no sharp lines drawn. Ask Sullivan (our oldest member) who the 'King of the World' is? His answer, "Nathan, of course", our youngest.



TWIN OAKS & LITTLE FOLKS

Two and a half years ago, anticipating that we might soon begin to have children at Twin Oaks, we began to talk about the ways in which they could be a part of the community. Prior to this, we had had children here sporadically, when a member with a child was taken in, or, in one case, when a member bore a baby. None of them stayed long, and each time Twin Oaks was left childless again. Most of us agreed, most of the time, that we were not ready, emotionally or financially, for children.

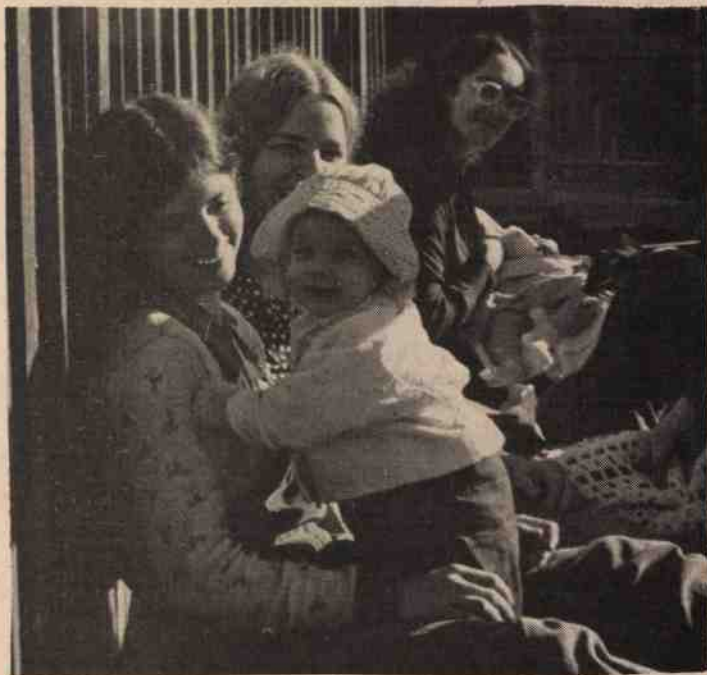
It was during a long period of membership stability and financial ease that we slowly decided differently, and began to plan our family. Those of us who were particularly interested met every week to talk about plans for children. Talking about it gave us a lot of confidence, and we became surer and surer that we would have children soon. But the final push into it came from a very traditional event. One of the women found that she was pregnant.

We quickly moved out of the planning stage and into action. First, of course, the other women who wanted to bear children could at last throw off contraception. And work began on a building for the children.

We had decided that the children would be housed separately. The reasons for this decision were both practical and ideological. This plan seemed to work well in many Kibbutzim, and was, of course, also suggested in *Walden Two*. It means that the children have a place where they are free to wander about without a lot of "no-nos", safe from the dangers that are so abundant in our adult world. The person watching over the children need not spend all cos time protecting the children and environment from each other. In fact, just opposite of that, we hope that the separate building will help us to structure an environment which will encourage the behaviors we value, such as cooperation, curiosity, sensitivity, etc. (We are trying to structure the adult environment in the same way, of course!) In addition, we felt that housing the children separately would help us avoid the possessive ties that often develop between parent and child.

Plans for the building had been finalized before we knew we were expecting. It is a building designed (by us) for children: light switches and door knobs set down low, lots of places to run and hide and play, and areas for noise set apart from areas for sleep. It is also designed for adults (an upstairs area for them to sleep in) and for a community which has many visitors (an entrance area with windows so that visitors may observe but not disturb the children).

The first baby was due in March, 1973, and we began digging the footings in August, 1972. Construction went slowly because of our inexperience with new techniques: the building is dug into the ground on three sides and the walls are of poured concrete. It was not done in March, and is still, over a year later, not quite finished. The babies, on the other hand, have been arriving more or less on schedule.



We have three and a half babies now. Maya came in March, Thrush in June, and Seren in October, 1973. Demia is due in August. The three of them now live in a room in one of our adult living buildings. There is a play area separate from the nursery, and, yes, they sleep in aircribs. (The aircrib was designed by B.F. Skinner, who wrote *Walden Two*, out of which idea Twin Oaks was born.) These aircribs serve basically the same function as regular cribs, except that they are individually heated, so that the babies need never sleep with more than a diaper and undershirt. It is not true, (as some think) that they can sleep naked in there, unless you are willing to spend a lot of time cleaning up after each shit.

But there is no need for rubber pants (the mattress is porous and extra piss drips through), and that helps to eliminate diaper rash. The plexiglas window/door is pleasant to look through, and helps shut out noise in the room. It is a delight to see the babies beam through that window and play happily in their cribs.

People who take care of the children regularly are the Hebrew "metapelet", which is what a kibbutzim child care worker is called. We like the word because it has neither sex association (unlike "mother" or "nurse") nor institutional connotations (as "caretaker"). It is short and punnable ("Aw, yer meta wears combat boots!"). Metas are chosen (mostly by flip of a coin) from among members who are willing to make a long term--commitment to the program. Some metas have changed to other work or left the community, but by and large it is a stable group of people.

Much of the work at Twin Oaks is scheduled, and child care is no exception. Metas take turns on shifts, so that there is always an adult responsible for the children. During the nights, a meta sleeps in the room, so that co will hear if a baby wakes up. During the day, metas usually work three or four hours at a time. This is about as long, it seems, as most of us can stay fully tuned in to three children's needs.

The eight metas are men and women, biological parents and not. And anyone in the community is free to come by and be with the kids at any time. Biological parents have no particular privileges in being with the babies, but they have been intimately involved with the child for ninemonths longer than the rest of us, and often spend a lot of time with the babies. Nursing women of course, have a lot of close contact with the children they nurse. People other than parents have formed strong relationships with each of these babies, too. With one child at least, some of these non--biological relationships seem stronger than the biological ones.

Leif, who is not a biological father, spends a lot of time with Thrush, taking her for walks, playing the guitar while she sits near him, and holding her while she winds down from an active day into sleep. He has a very strong relationship with her, and she prefers to be near him if he is in sight. She enjoys being with Jenny, her mother, too, but shows no clear preference for her over metas or others who are with her a lot. Because Jenny found it difficult to do the other things she wanted, she stopped nursing Thrush at two months. Shawn took over the nursings, feeding Thrush cows' milk through a device which enables the baby to suckle at shawn's breast. Shawn, too, has formed close ties with Thrush.

The babies seem to thrive on having a family of 50 with eight "parents." Though they often seem dazed when they come into a noisy crowded room, they all delight in being at meetings, where they invariably steal the show from the intended topic of discussion. Thrush sits and looks from face to face, smiling and laughing, and crawling from person to person. They do tend to prefer being in the arms of some of the adults they know better (such as the metas), but they show no fear of the many strange faces they see.



Biological parents, too, seem happy so far under this system. When feelings of possessiveness arise (and they have come up in non--parents as well!), we try to talk about them and sort them out before they become a problem. It is important for us to support each other in working through our feelings of jealousy and possessiveness.

This kind of feedback and decisions about the children are reached in weekly meetings of the metas and other interested folks. This is perhaps the most important single part of our child program. Since there are not just one or two main figures in the child's life, we feel it is particularly important for us to come to agreements on how we be with the kids. It is also tremendously important that we keep things clear between ourselves, for we cannot hope to relate in a healthy way with the kids if we relate to each other with anxiety, jealousy, or disapproval.

All manner of things are discussed at these meetings, including petty details which seem sometimes to be discussed *ad nauseum*. The issue of circumcision was one of these. All the medical facts indicated a flip of the coin, but emotions were strongly divided. In the end we decided against circumcision.

We have talked about a lot of heavy philosophical issues as well, and decisions evolve out of these discussions. The ways we be with the children are subtle, and talking about them helps keep them straight.

One message we want to be sure they get is that they are loved and taken care of. There is a lot of physical and spiritual love that goes on, of course, between the adults and the babies. We also want to be aware that they will pick up on what is happening between adults, and it is nice to let them see the love that is there. We try to be honest about what we are feeling, too, and not just smile always: sometimes the message is, "I love you and i'm feeling hassled right now."

When we first started doing this (when we had only one baby and lots of time), we had what we called "the awake and happy program." We would wait until Maya had been awake and not fussing or crying in his crib for a few minutes, and then go to him. (If we knew he was hungry or needed something, of course, we would go to him right away). We gradually lengthened and varied the amount of time before going to him (reinforcing him). We kept data. And we had many long and fruitful discussions about whether this approach would create a lot of "Little Mary Sunshines" and whether we were allowing the babies to be free to feel their emotions. Meanwhile, with two more babies, it was no longer possible to be so precise about the awake and happy program. It is manifested now in our being aware to pay attention to the babies when they are happy, rather than just trying to deal with their crises. We have to be especially aware of this with Seren, since she is often content to sit or lie and watch the goings on; particularly when things are hectic, we want to remember to tune in to her often to see if that is what she wants to be doing, rather than waiting to tune in till she gets squirmy and fussy. Through all this, some of us have learned to become less attached to the academically experimental approach, and others learned to fear that approach less.

One message we want them *not* to get is "You've got to put up a fuss to get any attention around here." With three babies, it could be very easy to ignore one until co demanded attention, probably by crying. So we try to be paying attention to them when they are happy.

Another important message for the babies is that their needs will be met, and that they can help us meet them. If a baby cries, we check it out to see what that baby needs:

food, sleep, diaper change, etc. We try to give them plenty of attention and love so that they won't have to cry for that, but can learn to ask for it in other ways. Maya, who is walking, will run up and hug you, or lift his arms to be picked up. Thrush will crawl onto you and cuddle at your neck. Seren looks at you and raises her arms. We did not decide ahead of time what gestures they would use, but each child has developed them, and we have been happy to respond to them by giving the love they ask for.

They have been free, so far, from some of the frustrations of baby life: Since they eat and nurse pretty much on demand, they are not hungry a lot, and meal times are pleasant (though often pretty messy) affairs. They are not often around things they are not allowed to touch, and will happily explore any area they can. Metas, nursing women, and others are rarely around the kids when they are overtired or angry, so the children are not subjected to a lot of those vibes.

We cannot, and do not want to, protect them from all frustrations forever. They have already experienced, and continue to experience, every baby's frustration of not being capable of reaching a goal (picking up an object, crawling to something, reaching for something high). We have introduced a few firm "no-no's", such as not eating books and not taking a pencil or pen (metas often have these for writing in the daily log which records the childrens' activities). We changed one "no" to a "yes" in the process of insisting that they play with each other gently. When Maya approaches Seren, the meta will start to model gentle behavior, and to calm both babies, by stroking them and saying, "Gentle, gentle" in a soft voice. If Maya gets rough, the meta takes his hand away, or moves Maya away to another toy. Often Maya will take the first cue, and pat Seren gently, looking at her and babbling to her. Other important "no-no's" will be taught as they are needed.

It is hard to predict what the nature of our children's program will be a few years from now, though it will most certainly still be communal. We talk about the future, but we know that when the time comes, we will use the current information as much as whatever theories we have discussed.

In the meantime, the babies and adults help to keep each other happy and high.



ANANDA SCHOOLS

ANANDA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The operation of the school during Ananda's initial period of existence was somewhat precarious. During that time there were four or five different starts and stops. Given the financial history of the community, there seems almost no way this situation could have been avoided. With no money to provide either salaries or a suitable building, the responsibility fell directly upon the parents, who usually had little or no experience in this role and who were struggling to provide themselves with some kind of adequate shelter which often had to double as a schoolhouse. After two and one half years the resources of the community had reached a point where the members decided they could afford a kind of tax. Each adult was asked to contribute five dollars per month into a fund to be used to 1) employ a teacher, and 2) buy material for the continuing construction of a schoolhouse. Since at that time no one in the community felt qualified to run the school, the position was filled for the first nine months by Adele, a friend of the community. The schoolhouse slowly but surely kept progressing toward the habitable stage, which occurred in January of 1973. Completion of it is scheduled for June, 1974. *No More Public Schools*, by Hal Bennet has been a good help to us in the legal area of setting up a school.

After spending the better part of five years in meeting the survival demands of providing an adequate structure, getting sufficient funds, and finding the necessary personnel, we finally reached the stage where we could devote serious energy to figuring out just how we were going to implement all those wonderful ideas that had been piling up. For us the most important of these was deciding just what we meant by

spiritual growth and what type of conditions were most favorable to it. On the one hand was the theory prevalent in the counter-culture at that time that you shouldn't "lay any trips on the kids" and that, if given enough freedom, they would somehow work things out for themselves. A viewpoint expressed by a different set of parents was that since the only important thing in life is to realize God, every child should be made to follow a strict routine of sadhana and that sooner or later he would benefit from it.

In evolving our particular solution to this dilemma we made use of Yogananda's observation that God doesn't force himself on a person but responds only when that person makes a sincere appeal to Him. With this guideline our procedure has been that while making every effort to expose the child to a spiritual appreciation of life, we are continuously watchful for signs of rebellion or submission. In practice this has meant concentrating on spiritual practices which

are enjoyable and/or meaningful to the children. The morning satsang (spiritual gathering) has evolved to its present state by trying out different ideas and observing the response of the students, not necessarily the immediate reaction but the overall response during whatever seemed an appropriate time period. Telling or reading stories from both Eastern and Western spiritual traditions was an immediate hit. Chanting started slowly but is now quite popular. Currently, yoga postures and recharging exercises seem valuable once or twice a week, but doing them more often begins to provoke the "do we have to?" response. In cases where there is a wide variation in the receptivity of the children, the activity is optional, as is the case with meditation class.

On another level we have tried to identify specific character traits which seem most conducive to spiritual growth. These traits of concentration, self-confidence, perseverance, self-control and sensitivity provide a basis for judging the worthwhileness of specific daily activities as well as a guideline for the overall manner in which the school functions. Thus the importance we place on developing concentration is reflected in one of the main rules we have (for teachers as well as students): that of not disturbing anyone who is engrossed in some worthwhile activity.

We have found the idea of freedom within structure compatible with several of our goals. In the beginning we more or less left everything up to the kids, partly out of allegiance to our initial conception of a free school and partly because we didn't have that many good ideas ourselves. The result for us was a steadily deteriorating state of chaos which seemed unhealthy for children and adults alike. From that point, we, the adults, began to impose a certain structure on the school day, trying at the same time to provide for the encouragement of initiative and self-direction.

To this end the morning is broadly defined as an academic period. On any one day a child might choose to write a letter to Grandma, play tangrams, read a story to another child or work at any other activity that can be remotely justified as being academic in nature. The role of the teacher is to provide a wide variety of materials and to keep track of each child's activities, offering help not only with specific difficulties but also where a pattern of undirected behavior or incomplete projects becomes apparent.

Currently our afternoons are set up in a slightly different way, with the teacher leading some pre-planned but alterable activity and the children free to take part in it or involve themselves in something else which doesn't disrupt the attention of the other students. Usually these sessions are devoted to making something or to a group project such as a play or a nature walk.

It seems worth noting that there were intermediate steps in setting up both the a.m. and p.m. sessions. The morning structure was started with the teacher listing four or five activities from which the children picked the one they were most interested in. This procedure became unnecessary as the teachers and children gradually arrived at an understanding of the types of activities appropriate for this period. In the afternoon we began by requiring the children to take part in the initial stages of the pre-planned activity before going off to something else. We felt this was necessary because of the reflex-like negativity some of the children were expressing toward the end of the chaotic period. It seemed to us that if they were going to exercise their free will they should have some data on which to base their decision. Our approach seemed justified when some of the same children who said they didn't want to participate became quite engrossed in the project after they found out what it was all about.



As we have moved toward our present format, we have found our discipline problems diminishing. The "gang" consciousness we used to have to contend with has pretty much disappeared. As each child learns to direct his own activities he expresses a calmer and seemingly happier attitude at school. Out of this change has evolved an aspect of the school we feel is important. Both during formal group meetings and at informal individual discussions, we work at developing the ability to introspect and become sensitive to the vibrations accompanying different kinds of behavior. Last week we had a discussion about the noise level and the conversation topics at lunch. On another occasion we talked about the differences in vibration between a snowball fight and a group igloo building project that occurred in the same afternoon. In these discussions we found that the children often shared the opinions of the teachers toward some unpleasant situation, but in the midst of the activity had been unable to make the connection that some aspect of their behavior was helping to produce the situation in question. Out of these discussions we try to help the children toward the realization that their actions have consequences and that by changing their own behavior and attitudes they can produce substantial changes in their outer and especially their inner environments.

Aside from the spiritual and financial dimensions, the other most important factor in shaping the school has been the quality of the student-teacher relationships. With a small enrollment, currently 12, and two adults present most of the time, the amount of individual attention available to each child is mind-boggling by public school standards. Now that the school and community have stabilized somewhat, it is possible to work with a child for more than the usual one year period. In addition there is the factor that since both teachers and students live in the same community, there are all kinds of opportunities for out-of-school interaction. These three factors of length, breadth, and frequency of contact make it possible for a really close relationship to develop where the deeper needs of the child as well as his interests and capabilities become apparent.

Because we never had to worry about meeting some externally imposed set of objectives, we have been able to evolve a school that is compatible with the personalities of the children and adults who comprise it. We have found that a continuing, close observation of the children is perhaps the best indicator of how the school should operate. When things are going right, there is a vibration of calmness, harmony, and joy that permeates their behavior. Whenever we stray from this centerpoint, the bickering, increased noise level, and general unrest are the surest indications that something has gone wrong and it is time to reassess what we are doing.

Perhaps it might help to illustrate all this by describing a day at the school. This particular one took place the day before this article was started.

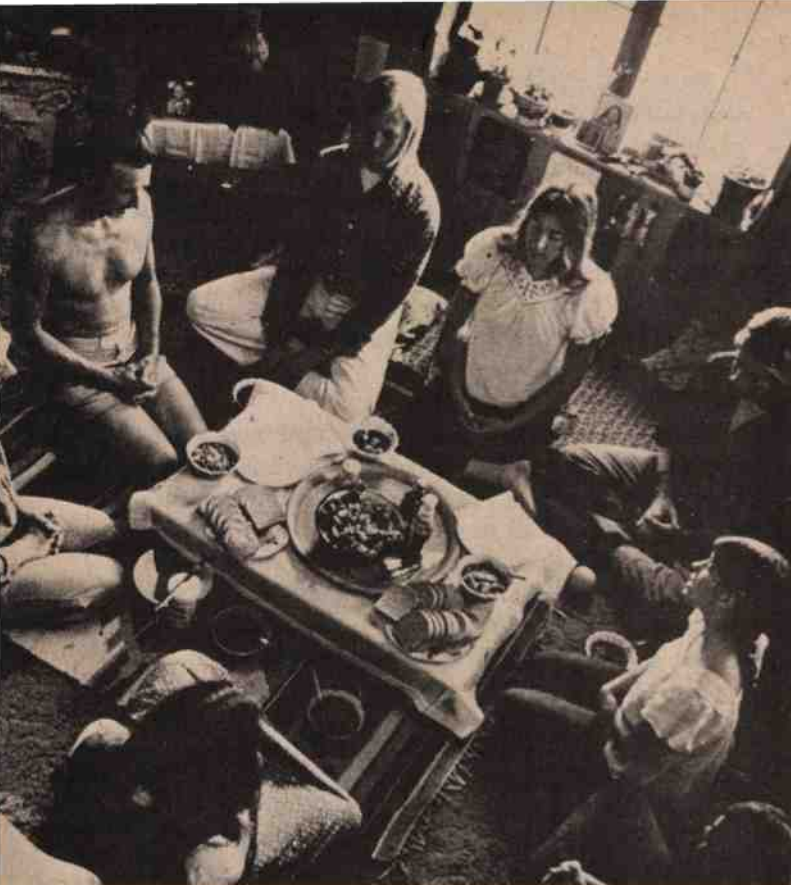
I got to school about 20 minutes early in order to make some last minute preparations. We were in the middle of one of the biggest storms of the year, and I was wondering how many of the kids would make it when Kali walked in. She said that her mother, Leslie, who usually teaches with me in the morning, had the flu and couldn't come. We were looking at some new books when the others started arriving. There were 7 that day (usually there are about 10), and they were saying how worn-out they were from walking up the hill in the storm.

We went upstairs to start and they asked if we could do exercises since they were so tired. Once or twice a week we do a series of recharging exercises invented by Yogananda. This was the first time an extra set had been requested in the two months since their initial introduction, and I had been wondering how much they were into them. It was Caleb's day to lead satsang, so he picked the chant we did, led us in prayer, and asked me to read one of the Hindu story books we have (similar to Classics Illustrated).

After satsang we started work time. Most of them had something in mind and went off to get started. Samantha, the youngest, asked if she could have something to do, so I gave her a couple of matching-type puzzles that had to do with numbers and word-rhymes. I reminded Gita that she hadn't done any math for a couple of days and said that I thought she should do a few problems before she forgot the borrowing lesson she had been learning. For about an hour I went around answering questions about their work. After awhile a couple of them decided they'd done enough and went over to play chess and work with the erector set.

At about 11:30 we convened for our daily group meeting. There was a letter we'd received from Nicole, one of our old students who had moved away, and I said I would read some more from the Viking Adventure which we'd started the day before. The chess players went back to their game, Phoenix wanted to do some more work on his reading (he was just discovering he could read) and the rest stayed to hear the story. A little after 12:00 we broke for lunch. Three of the kids came with me for a 5 minute meditation class and the rest went downstairs to eat.

After lunch there was a lot of interest in finishing the Viking Adventure, which led into an ad hoc geography lesson, finding Norway and America on the globe and a discussion of how long it would take to travel that far. Joshua was quite excited by the story, and while the others went off to do things on their own, the two of us spent the next 15 minutes talking about why there weren't any Vikings anymore and where you could go these days for an adventure like they had had. Gita came up and said she was bored. I suggested we learn some more of the Indian sign language we had started last week. Several others came over to join us and we worked on that until it was time to clean up and go home.



ANANDA HIGH SCHOOL

Regarding education, Kriyananda, in his book *Cooperative Communities – How to Start Them and Why*, writes: "Each student should be taught also the basic arts of living: how to concentrate, the beauty of kindness and cooperation, how to overcome fear, anger, and jealousy, how to meditate and develop an inner life, how to appreciate the higher values of life. These are not matters for classroom pedagogy. They will require life situations and wise, personal guidance from the teachers. But they should be a vital part of any "how-to-live" school. Kriyananda has pointed out a serious lack of modern education: its goal is to develop work and social skills, but not compassion and discrimination; knowledge, but not wisdom. School is commonly thought of as a training-ground for future employment. Though it tries to also broaden the students' intellectual horizons, it makes little if any effort to teach them how to relate personally to other people, how to achieve inner peace and happiness, how to find fulfillment in their work, or how to get along with others. Still less does it teach them how to attune themselves to universal realities, or to God. Schools ordinarily, in other words, teach karma (action), but not dharma (right action). The purpose of a "how-to-live" school is to supplement common fact-gathering with lessons on how to integrate those facts into a broad philosophy of life – how to utilize all forms of knowledge to become a more complete human being.

Ananda High School? I rarely think of this as school except in the way that we are all in this big school called life. Perhaps my definition of school has been too confined to classrooms and teachers and the gathering of bits of information. To me, the focus here is on perfecting our lives. That may include Philosophy, English and Astronomy classes, but even discovery of the infinite variety in creation. Looking at a lifetime is seeing the twenty four hours of each day. The bigger part of our time is put into small tasks. If we can't feel joy and contentment in these, where is happiness? Especially at Ananda where existence is more basic and simple, there has to be a selfless attitude for the moments of splitting wood or carrying water. At this school you can find an opportunity for studying any subject you choose, but you soon realize that the greatest treasure found in living here has been waiting in your heart all along.

Om Shanti

—Arita Miller

In order to fulfill the ideals of a "how-to-live" school, or dharma school, Ananda High School has developed a novel organizational structure, patterned after the guru-kulas in ancient India. In those old days the teacher and his wife would take young people into their home, offer them spiritual guidance and training in the art of living, as well as in the sciences of their day, and give them wise but ever loving discipline.

Ananda High School, like those old guru-kulas, is essentially a spiritual family. The resulting warm, personal bond helps to foster what India's wise teachers considered a fundamentally important life attitude for all humanity: an attitude of discipleship. For to grow – emotionally, psychologically, spiritually – one must be open and receptive to all the information and learning possibilities that exist at any time around him; he must learn to see in all things and in all men the Divine Guidance, the Cosmic Teacher, and never to close himself to further growth by assuming a "know-it-all" attitude. A true spirit of discipleship embraces also a sense of appreciation for life's countless blessings, and a wish to render grateful service in return. It implies a wish not to seize from life whatever one can get for himself, but to leave the world a little better, perhaps, than he found it – in return for the privilege of breathing its air, enjoying its beauties, and eating its nourishing food. Aś Paramahansa Yogananda said: "It is the power and extent of your inner receptivity that determines how much you can attain of true knowledge."

We often gather to cook delicious meals, or make yoghurt, or perhaps we will gather to work on individual sewing projects. Whatever we may be doing, more than just the jobs are being accomplished—real living situations are happening where we are learning some very basic things on how to live with others. Everything we do there is part of the school. Life is a school, and living with others in cooperation can truly be considered one of life's numerous lessons. In order for the high school to stay together as a family, we have had to learn to be kind to one another, to be sensitive to other's feelings, and to harmoniously reach decisions as a group. Of course, sometimes it isn't all that easy, but these things are all worth striving for. If there was nothing to strive for, how boring life would be!

—Laurie Trefethen

Our living accommodations are varied from a trailer to icosahedron cabins (and icosahedron is the basic shape for geodesic domes). There are cooking facilities in all the cabins, and a good supply of food. But about a third of the time, we eat in a common dining dome. The cabins are a bit rustic, but a good lesson in austerity. Most students have roommates, but some live alone.

Our cabins are extensions of our selves. It's where we eat, study, rest, and do sadhana (spiritual practices.) Mostly it's someplace where we come to retreat to wrap ourselves in the peace and calm of God.

—Govinda das

The classes and programs of the school change and develop as they follow the seasonal procession. The school year begins the last week of August when students are asked to attend the Week of Spiritual Renewal at the Ananda Meditation Retreat. The Retreat, which is operated by the Village, provides the school with its facilities and also is open to the public. During the summer months the Retreat offers daily classes in hatha yoga meditation, chanting and the Scriptures. The Week of Spiritual Renewal is of special importance because Swami Kriyananda gives daily classes in Yoga and it is a very uplifting and inspiring time. This week provides a perfect introduction for the new students to the Yoga philosophy that underlies the tenor of the school.

All the students and teachers spend the second and third weeks of the school camping and hiking in the high Sierras. This is always a joyous experience for the whole school. Students and teachers get to know each other and explore learning situations. The basic classes for the school year grow out of this group effort and plans for the school are formulated.

Indian summer usually lasts through October, which gives time for outdoor group projects of chopping firewood, and maintaining and constructing school facilities. Classes and school gatherings are regular but sparse, which allows the time necessary to prepare for the first snow.

The winter finds the school more indoors with larger numbers of classes, *satsangs* (spiritual gatherings), and more intensive individual *sadhana* (spiritual practices). By winter the students have had the opportunity to become acquainted with most of the members of the village, and have arranged to pursue a course of study on a one-to-one basis with some village resident. Topics covered may include traditional academic subjects, college prep courses, mathematics, creative writing, or various crafts and manual or technical skills.

The spring weather again finds the school more outdoors with greater emphasis on the continuation and expansion of individual projects. Group classes are fewer in number than during the winter, but there are more outdoor family activities like hikes and field trips.

Any Ananda resident may at one time or another be a teacher or tutor. Eight main teachers lead five group classes throughout the school year. These main group classes are all basically spiritual in content. All teachers are completely free to guide their classes in whatever directions are most beneficial to the students involved. The main classes are usually presented once a week in the morning, afternoon, or evening for two to three hours. All teachers are very dedicated and volunteer their time to teach in the school.

The school has facilities for only a limited number of students, and since Ananda is primarily a spiritual community, all the students are those who feel drawn to the spiritual path. The Ananda social environment is completely drug and alcohol free; it is supportive rather than suppressive, and conducive to rapid inner awakening and development.

While members of Ananda Cooperative Village are followers of Paramahansa Yogananda, there is here a warm respect and understanding for other paths. Yogananda, like all true modern day masters, taught the universality of the religious experience.

For more information on Ananda High School, or for an application form, please write to Dharmaraj and Meera, Ananda High School, Allegheny Star Route, Nevada City, CA 95959.

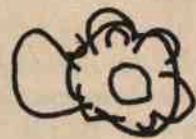
THE DAY

The sun arises in glee, radiating warmth over the entire countryside, awakening all creatures from their quiet slumber. "Awake! Arise!" cries the sun, "I am here again once more!" Morning rays of the sun seep lovingly into the homes of mankind. Lighting the new day with glowing brilliance, the day begins. Birds sing sweetly in celebration of the new day, flowers open their petals—calling out "Good morning!" to all. People begin to move about, dogs bark, fish swim, and bees buzz! A symphony of natural sounds plays harmoniously throughout the land. The wind blows, and a small trickling brook gurgles contentedly. The great sun envelopes everything in her vast, wonderful light. The sun smiles at the entire universe in the way a mother smiles at her child. She is a bounty of abundant gifts. She is life and energy. She is the sun. She is the day.

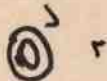
Laurie Trefethen



notes from my journal

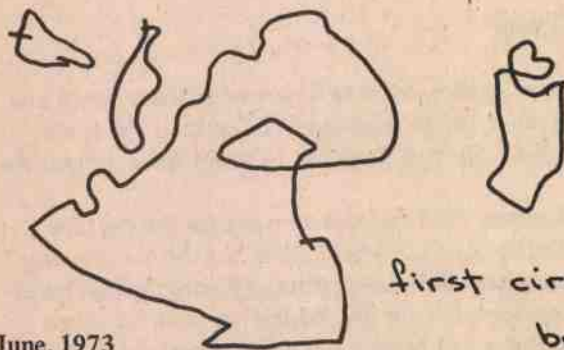


—a year in the life of a city/country woman...



May, 1973

What are my goals for the near future, this summer?
.... (d) come to terms with myself as mother more completely, more peacefully. At times I feel incredible jealousy toward others who are childless who can be freer in what they do in numerous ways. Seek better ways to share the children as the community's children. But, also, seek special ways to share myself with both as individuals.



first circles

by AARON (2 1/2 yr.)

June, 1973

Idea to get my thoughts started for the Country Women Festival workshop on "women and children":

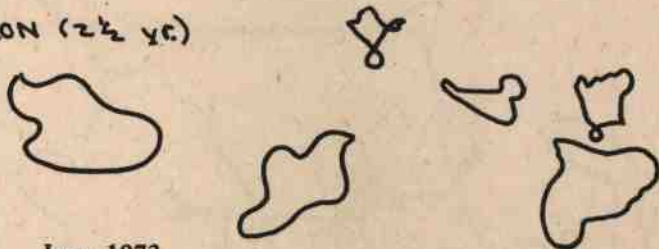
It's all a process of educating:

1. educating self
 - a. to change self-image to do more possible things.
 - b. to have/make free space-time-energy for long projects.
 - c. that growth from tension between self and circumstances leads to radicalizing of self.
 - d. to try alternative living arrangements, finances, sharing child care.
 - e. to keep journal.
2. educating community—that children belong to community, thus responsibility and joy does too. Work out arrangements for care, both short and extended.
3. educating children—for freer, non-sexist life, by mom's sharing her radicalized life with her children.

May, 1973, and earlier

For 1 1/2 years I had lived as a single parent of two preschool children. During that time I was the only adult living in the house, except for two periods, several months each time, when a second adult lived in the house too. Each of those times that other adult was willing to help with the children, but would do so only if I made the arrangements for such; if I asked for help. During that 1 1/2 year period, I worked teaching at an alternative school; my children were there most of the time, only occasionally at babysitters or preschool. All of the child arrangements were on my shoulders.

During that 1 1/2 years previous to May of 1973 and in the year following, the children have visited their dad often. For most of the time the visits have been chiefly for weekends. Lately a pattern of their being with him for weekdays close to a third of the total time has been developed. The time they are with him has been very dependable.



June, 1973

I so wanted to move into a situation where children were shared by a group. I was very idealistic about the community's sharing responsibility for children—some community, if only I could find such a group. I first tried constructing a summer of projects at the school I had been teaching at, hoping to live there and thus hoping child care would be better worked out. Those plans fell through because the site itself was legally unavailable. I next made contact with a commune I had already visited to see if we-three could tent out there for the summer. This looked appealing, as the group was a rural one with individual cabins around a communal house, and as work there was on a shared rotation basis, including daytime childcare.

July, 1973, early

I am really bitter: two summer plans--toward which I have put my hopes and plans and considerable energy -- have sunk. MAD & ANGRY & SAD & DEPRESSED.

The children and me are counted as less than 1 person.

How that devalues me and them and our growing unit.

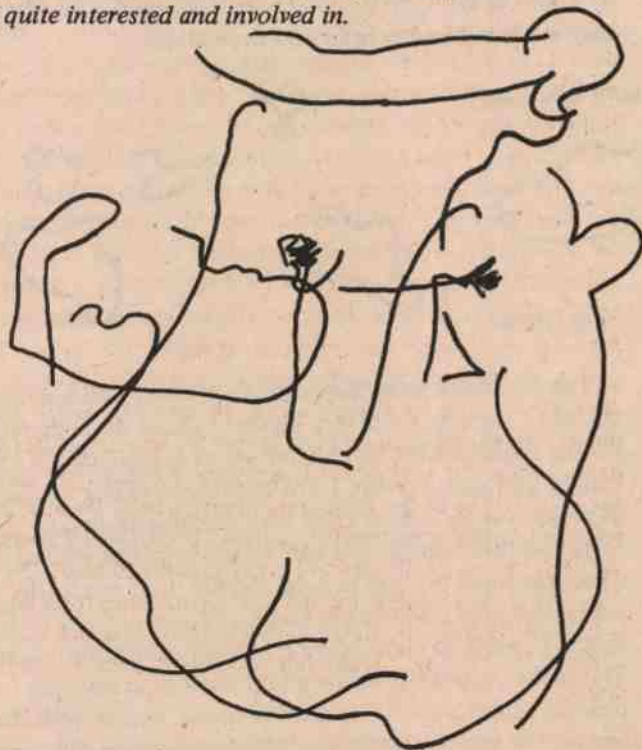
I have to move out of the house, --but what am I packing for? It's not just a matter of finding a place to live.

Its a matter of finding something to do that really involves ME, AND also involves the children in a constructive way.

Hopefully I can do something creative often enough this summer despite my uncertain homebase and child responsibilities. Hopefully too I can begin to see my relationships with the children as a more positive sharing and do something special as often WITH THEM as well as WITH MY-SELF.

July, 1973, later

I have free time in this system to be me-person-Barbara and not just me-mom-Barbar. I watch my thoughts here (in the journal) and notice that, for me, people and the child care situation should be more important than what I would be doing. This may be true, but then the people I have been meeting are in situations I basically respect and/or could become quite interested and involved in.



July, 1973, early

The response from the commune, I had thought, was yes, but the whole group didn't at first agree to that, as it would mean two more children to take care of, and thus more work.

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writing

ALICIA (4)

July, 1973, later

The commune's compromise in letting us go there meant one non-parent adult was allowed to not be on their child care rotation system. My visit there was to be for the summer only.

At the commune, child care was arranged for the daytime, and I rotated through the 3-hour child care shifts as did nearly all of the others. For non-shift time (dinner through breakfast), I was responsible for my children, as were the other parents for theirs. If I became more tired from nighttime care, it was my problem, and if I needed to do something else, the arrangements were still on my shoulders. What I learned was that the adults' consciousness regarding children's needs was not much increased over adults in other situations where no child care system existed; for example, if I was assigned to dinner cleanup as one of my work jobs, I had to personally arrange for care of the children during that time.

Having daytime free from constant child awareness or from responsibility for making arrangements for such care, I gained a new burst of feeling good about myself: I had time to spend with myself doing a project or merely being with myself. However, I often noticed that I wished longer blocks of time to do my things; the short rotation times cut into my efforts.

Despite whatever shortcomings I became aware of, I considered this commune's approach far better than doing the single-adult-1-dwelling trip. I was finding enough free time away from children so that I really enjoyed being with them when I was with them.

August, 1973

I do feel good about the Big House living group. I feel OK about my putting so much energy into looking for a place for such a site. Today I'm in Sacramento, getting the children after their visit with their dad, and sitting in a park where they are drawing and playing with the tea set and I'm mending clothes and writing here. I feel good. I really enjoy BEING with the children when I'm with them.

self

face is center
hands and
fingers above
legs and feet
and toes and
toenails -
below
crotch = hatch
work at
bottom of
face, and
dot below
= bellybutton

September, 1973

Big House beginnings - 4 adults and 5 children - sharing and holding back and cry and giggle times. And much setting up of things. I'm doing a lot of the organizing here, especially in the whole child area.

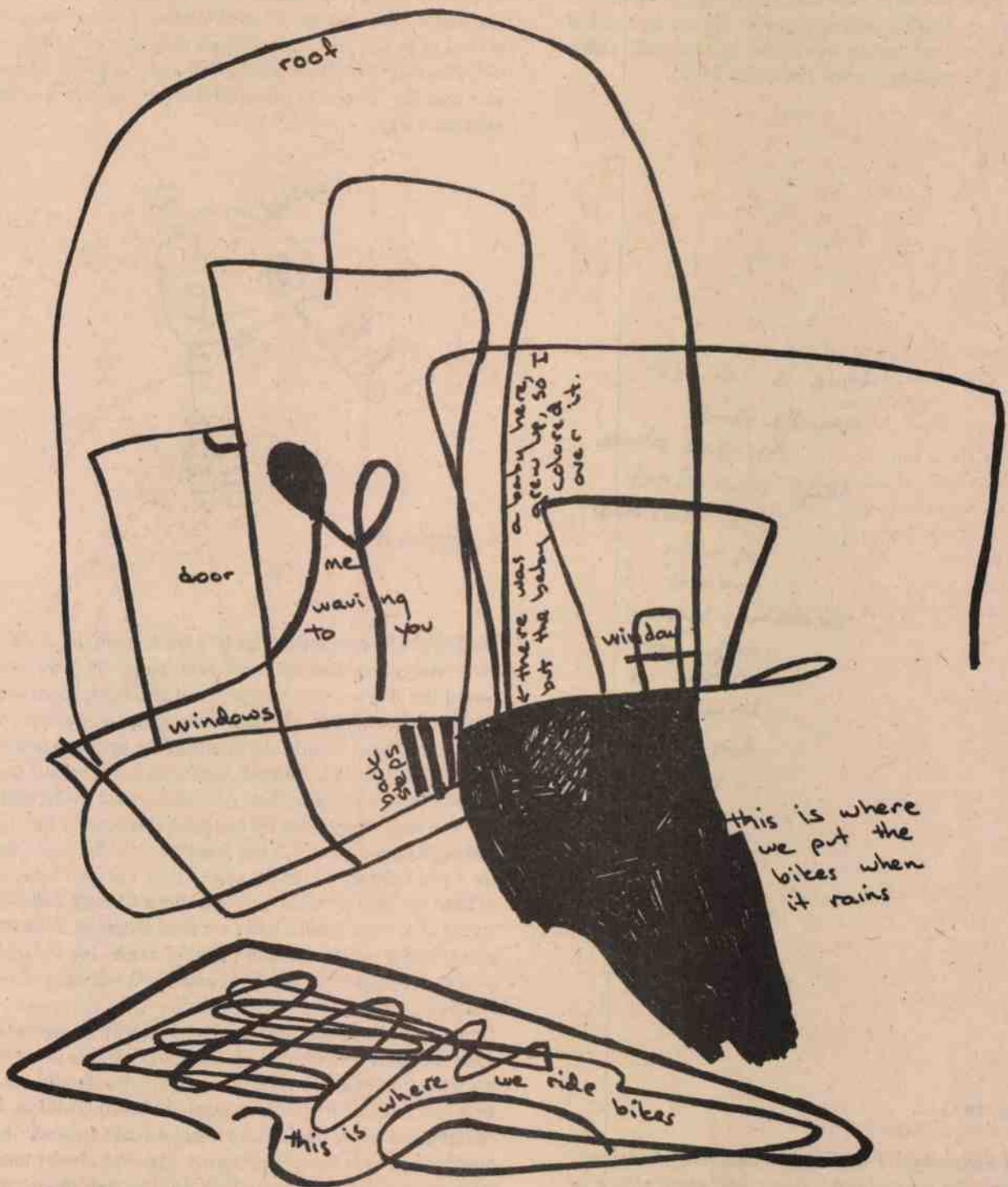
August, 1973

I knew I had to move to something at the end of the summer. By the end of August I was feeling that I would like to form with a group of people, many of whom were children, as a communal group related to the commune I was with in the summer. All but one of us adults had at least one child, several of us had two. The children ranged from 2 to 5 years old, plus an infant. We wished a living group which made sure that the child care situation felt good, in a more than minimum way.



September, 1973

We found a house on the edge of a small town. Much of the early energy was directed toward setting up what we thought would feel like a good children situation. Much space was allocated for children—sleeping, belongings, play inside, play on a porch, play outside. All adults in the house shared in the responsibility for the children, and we tried to vary it so we all did nearly equal amounts. At first we tried shifts, half a day at a time. Very soon we included breakfast in the shifts and nighttime care too. It felt good to be either superparent for a whole bunch of children or to have my own time, free to have my own projects or free to sleep through nighttime crying of my own child. Later we tried assigning night and breakfast for one person and the next whole day for another person. It felt good to see the whole day's activities of the children overseen by a single adult. We never did assign past-dinner-to-bedtime care, but left it free for whomever had the most energy. We worked hard, many more hours than the work load times at the rural commune, partially because we were just setting up our place, partially because we had many children and many diapers and many mouths to feed. The other adults were doing preliminary organization for a business venture and were doing bulk food buying which meant a trip to the big city. I really felt good about what we were doing.



November, 1973

This fall has gone so fast and so slight—and at times it feels like I'm merely catching up with myself with the growth I made last summer, and at times I become aware of the super amount of growing I'm doing now.

And Orange (Big) House has changed—down to 3 adults and 3 children.

I do still wish to go on a trip myself, childless—and maybe I can arrange for them to be with their dad on both weekends and Orange House with Ruth or Marcia as extras to do the middle 5 days of the children. —yes.

Regarding my goals from last May: (d) myself as mother—Orange House has helped me share my children

I wish to do more special things with the children—less special children's things, rather share my adult (real people's) doings with them.

They ask for alphabet and especially counting lessons and it's a fun project to do with them.

Alicia wants to work with wood (as I am)—she hammered in her own nail yesterday all herself.

This a.m. we went twice—me and the children—to scrounge free rocks and gravel to make a path in the mud in front of the barn.

I do wish a trip minus kids, but it might be neat to take one and share it with that one. ?

wild thing

December, 1973

6 adults and 3 children at Orange House. The house feels good to get back to. Had a super HIGH 10 cay trip away, 9 days without children. Doing that 9 days without children felt good—and gave me enough free space-time so that I can enjoy them more now.

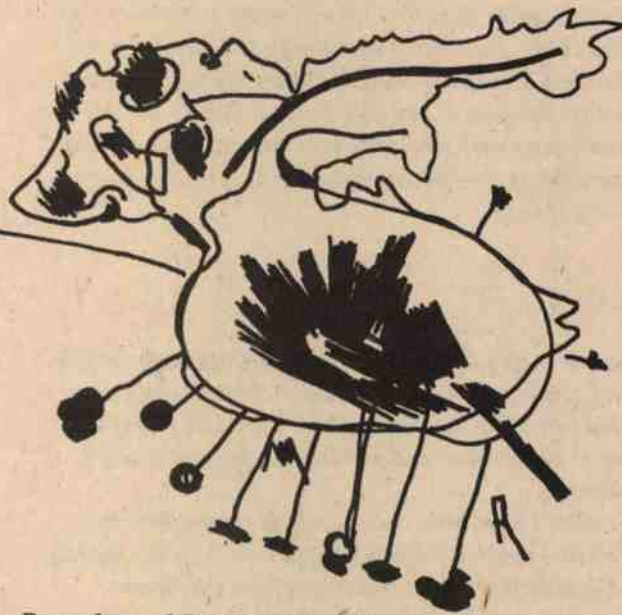
January, 1974

Right now the children are still out with their dad for the weekend. I feel like I'm gaining non-parent strength and patience to be a better parent and do wish to be and share with the children. For sure, I will never get into a nuclear family, 1-adult-dwelling again.

November, 1973

With the house down to 3 adults, I felt as if I had to arrange for an extra adult to be at Orange House if I were to leave my children there for 5 days. Other adults had had trips away from the children, and I was deciding the trip was definitely worth my efforts to arrange.

I was feeling much less jealous of non-parents and feeling pretty good about the living situation—good progress compared with my earlier life situation.



December and January, 1973–74

From September until April, the population at Orange House had shifted—
from 5 to 7 to 3 children, and
from 4 to 6 to 3 to 6 to 3 adults.

With fewer children we've shifted to a child care pattern of 1 adult per day doing "house and children," which means child tending where needed, children's meals, all dishes, laundry, and other house chores, up until supper.

Introducing a new non-parent into child care responsibilities and awareness was not an easy effort, and one of these adults in December finally came to the opinion that he did the best child relating if he wished to, which wasn't very often. My response to that was (and is) — yes, that's true for all of us, and that means if no adult does the trip then children-in-need come to me-parent. Then I-adult have not enough free time to take care of me, which has happened upon occasion in this system.

February, 1974

One thing I'm becoming more aware of and gradually more realistic about is my responsibility for the children. As long as others are free to come and go as they like and need, the children are at the mercy of changing people. Some of these people I'm very fond of, love dearly, depend on for my support, but they are mobile-type people. And these people have the free choice to do what they need and wish. Thus, I-adult may sort of see what sends them away or brings them back, but for the children I'm sure its mystifying and very beyond their control, and thus very undependable. I wouldn't be surprised if the children would be surprised each time Ruth or Marcia returned. 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. I basically wish to share the children with a community; however, I can only fully and freely do this after time passes with a consistent community to deal with. My responsibility thus becomes clearer to me and I, perhaps, am fighting it less.

March, 1974

Just read through the whole of the journal thinking on passages which relate to me-mom-and-my-children and the relationship of that to me-person-Bara. I've come a long way, spiraling to a place near and yet very far beyond where I began last may.

Now I realize I have been compromising myself here by living in not a feminist enough situation so that the rest (the living, the sharing, and the child care) feels OK, sometimes good, sometimes not-so-good.

But am I now willing to take on more child care, for instance, in trade for living and sharing with more feminist women persons?

At Orange House presently, 3 adults and 3 children. Alicia at dinner asked where the other people were who use to live here. Yeh. Well, I know and I'm not particularly asking for them back. I'm just, I guess, wishing for a different situation

April, 1974

Just returned to Orange House after a week's trip with the children. Alicia and Aaron were really fun companions, so good and mellow. It was really important for me to take them around since they are part of my reality. They are incredibly beautiful people.

February, 1974

Orange House was back to a total of 6—half adults and half children.

I felt good enough about the situation at Orange house to be glad enough on most levels that I and we were there. On days when I was not there or busy there, I knew the children were well taken care of, at times even creatively.

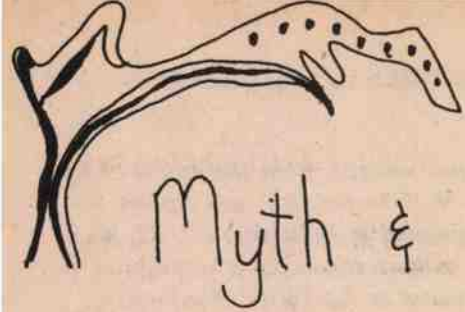
This issue of responsibility has felt more settled, in my mind, since this entry. I guess I've taken it more into my regular consciousness that it—the basic child situation—rested ultimately on me. Were the children the community children, really? Not then, and they would become so only if they were older and felt that was what they wished or if I felt the community were a together place in constancy over time and adherence of people to a viable total living situation.



March and April, 1974

I can see so clearly, having waded through a year's feelings relating to this whole issue, that a living situation for me, with concurrent child care soundly based is so important to me—both parent-me and non-parent-adult-me—that at this point in time other aspects of my life may be compromised if that first is well done. And that is the scene right now. Some aspects of my total being are not well cared for, not challenged enough. Yet my parent vs. non-parent adult conflict has been minimized. My jealousy and bitterness of a year ago is negligible—at least as long as I feel in my guts that this situation is stable enough. If it is not, my past and well embedded feelings surface in my mind and present feelings.

And, I realize that the children grow older and more responsible for themselves, I change continually, and the counter-culture's (if not the world's) available alternatives increase. And so, the situation of now doesn't have to be the only one for a long time.



Myth & Reality

People seek community for many reasons – not all of them positive. In fact, much of the motivation for community is reactionary – as much against where we have been as for what we hope to become.

We come to community with high expectations. Often the expectations are unrealistic – we suffer, we grow and sometimes we go. Some return to straight society – embittered “realists.” Others, like Sharon and Dale with their son, can use their experience as a vehicle for defining what they want from community and what they are able to give.

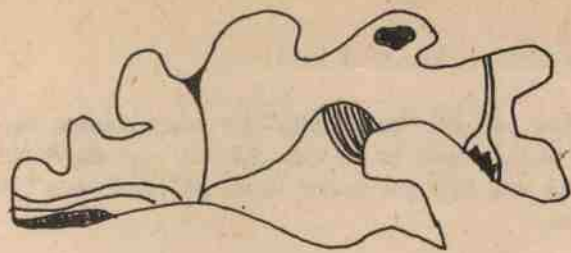
INTENTION — fall of 1973

Our primary reason for wanting community is that we feel the only valid way to bring some sanity to our world of frantic self-destruction is to actually live an alternative which people can see and feel to help them realize that there are workable alternatives to the wage-slavery and consumerism of corporate capitalism.

We feel the nuclear family as we know it is responsible for many of our failures in personal and social development. The alienation it produces adds strength to the corporate state, encouraging further human manipulation. To the extent that heterosexual monogamy fosters the nuclear family, we oppose that also, altho we'll probably carry our hang-ups thru our lives.

Instrumental in perpetuating the oppressiveness of our psychotic society is the state-controlled system of public education. We think education must be taken out of the hands of bureaucratic authorities before there can be significant progress in individual realization and development. It is presumptive for us (products of the very system we oppose) to assume we are sufficiently free of our own dehumanization to provide and structure effective, objective and meaningful alternatives, but must start somewhere!

We try to think of children as young PEOPLE and strive to relate to them with the same respect we have for adults, especially regarding the use of force and violence! They should be encouraged to learn what they think they want to know, and we should be prepared to help when asked.



REALITY — December of 1973

It's so hard to write about what's going on here. I'm still waiting to talk about raising young people. I feel that's a good place to start. Maybe not to start but I'd at least like to hear how others hope to do that sort of thing. If I seem to jump about things, it's because I'm confused about things, how they are and why they are. I've seen people moving mattresses from upstairs to downstairs and outside and back in again. I've seen people sleep with different people for so many different reasons. None of which I understand. I've seen people feed themselves things that are easy & expensive but not necessarily healthy. I've seen people in leadership roles which they don't want to be in. People working around catshit rather than cleaning it. Each of us is doing what each of us wants to do rather than doing a community thing. Some people would rather move miles down the road for more space than make the space that's available useable, so we can all be together. Maybe it's my mistake in feeling that the whole group should live where there's everyday contact. I could go on and on because I am bothered about what we came here to do. I feel that if we can't even get it together to go down the road to the nearest dairy farm and make arrangements to get fresh whole milk, how can we expect to get an undefined community together? I could go on and do these things myself and I probably will when I feel the community is supporting me and my ideas. I'll not do it if I get the feeling that if I don't do it, it won't get done. That's where it's at for me now.

There have been times of growing. Times of sitting around the fire talking till 2 or 4 A.M. and really feeling good. The feeling that something changed for the better and tomorrow we'll do it. Tomorrow isn't here yet! I don't understand why. It's just me expecting too much. But when I see that Dale and Gabe's needs are not being met by people other than myself I'm going to meet their needs before anyone else's. Maybe that's where we all are. Maybe not. I suppose I should say something about the split that has happened. I miss being with those people. I've loved them. I miss some more than others. One I don't miss at all. But they needed the split and they've got it. This is what I'm feeling now on December 3, 1973. Tomorrow things may be different. I need us to get our shit together soon, before I run out of energy to help.

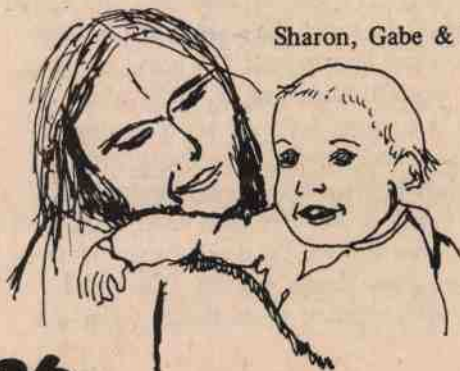
We've now left "community" for many reasons, but most of them have to do with children — young & old — and the way they get treated in many "community" situations.

Most of our experience with "community" has been with new communities where the struggle for survival is more important to the group as a group than the needs of any individual. It's one thing when you're big enough to take care of yourself, & quite another when you're absolutely dependent and unable even to express yourself in a verbal manner.

We've seen some fine things happening to young people in communities from Vermont to Tennessee and we're still hoping to find one where all 3 of us can be parts, but the things that seem to be negative outweigh the positive in our perception. Maybe our perception is overly colored by our love for Gabriel. Maybe he'd be better off suffering the abuse & neglect that seem to be the lot of the helpless. But he seems happier, healthier and more spontaneous now that his involvement is limited to just two people — both of whom feel that he is as important as they.

We have yet to find a community where the community didn't require more energy and have the capacity to demand it than a non-mobile, non-verbal individual. So the child is left to get along as best it can — and soon learns to respond to its own situation in a generally contrived and negative manner of aggression and competition — the very things we hope to be able to escape!

It seems to us that the only real place for children in any kind of community will be in a community that exists primarily for the children. Where, when the chips are down, every decision is made on the basis of the needs of the least of us. When we are able to find a community like that, we'll hope to become members. As it is we only have the capacity to extend the size of that type of community to 2 or 3 other people plus occasional visitors.



Sharon, Gabe & Dale

CONTEMPORARY COMMUNAL CHILDREARING A First Analysis

The following are two excerpts from the article of the same title by Charley M. Johnston, B.S. and Robert W. Deisher, M.D., first published in Pediatrics, vol. 52, no.3, September 1973. The authors conducted a sociological study of twenty communes in the Pacific Northwest.

The section on historical perspective gives insight into the motivations for and potential advantages of communal living in relationship to contemporary American society. The section on the children presents the results of the in-depth study of ten of the communes.

The article is of interest because it confirms many of the personal experiences of communards within a formal and scientific context. For those of us who are enmeshed in the day to day hassles of living in community with children, it provides some fresh perspective. By accident and intent, however imperfectly and with all our false starts and misdirections, we are creating positive alternatives to conventional models of childrearing.

For a reprint of the entire article, write Dr. Deisher, Child Development and Mental Retardation Center, Clinical Training Unit, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195.

For many, the nuclear family is accepted as the natural, time-proven, and right child environment. As this assumption can lead to a naively premature judgement of communal child rearing as irresponsible experimentation, it seems important that the subject of community and communal living be put in historical perspective.

Anthropologists and archeologists agree that our earliest human ancestors were tribal beings. Early in human time, they say, selection came to favor those who could cooperate with others of their species in procuring nourishment and in providing protection from both human and non-human dangers. From these origins, humans came to possess a basic need for a sense of community, for a sense of belonging and brotherhood, which would prove in time to be a central force in the determination of the structure of the human environment. With the passage of thousands of years and the advent of spatially stable life styles, collective relationships in the tribe or clan came to take new form in the village and small town. A sense of community was maintained.

The human way of life was transformed once more by the beginnings of industrialization and urban growth. To fulfill the human need for community, the neighborhood and the extended family emerged as important social units. From man's origin to well into the twentieth

century, from tribal existence to the extended family, the child's world was one in which a variety of adults played important roles; where peers of many ages provided companionship and example; and where feelings of belonging, security, and purpose—which are central to the group experience—were supported.

The traditional extended family has largely dissolved for most Americans. The interpersonal sense of neighborhood has fragmented. Many are not aware of the names of those who live in closest proximity to them. What remains, then, as the social unit of the young child is the nuclear family, which has emerged as the last remnant of a once complex, interpersonal childhood world. It is from this milieu that contemporary, communal efforts are coming into being.

THE CHILDREN



The majority of the children demonstrated a high degree of maturity, self-confidence, and self-reliance. With the exception of four children, three of whom had had contradictory and nonsupportive parental situations, physical clinging, crying and whining, and attention-getting behavior were rare. Early psychological maturation seemed the rule. The two older children observed were accepting nearly adult roles in their groups by the ages of 13 or 14. With a few notable exceptions, children expressed both by their words and by their actions that they felt they had a meaningful place in the commune. Lack of fear of unfamiliar people and confidence in interpersonal relationships were pronounced. At one group the observer was given a tour of the commune on his arrival by a 2½ year-old. The children dealt effectively with unfamiliar or traumatic experiences. For example, one 10 year old talked openly about his parent's upcoming separation and stated that, although it was an unfortunate situation, he felt both his mother and his father would be happier if they were not living together.

The children were interpersonally adept for their ages. Ability to cooperate with other children and to resolve conflicts without adult attention developed early. A general openness and willingness to express ideas and feelings freely, even when contradictory to adult opinion, was evident in almost all post-toddler children.

Intellectual development showed considerable variation. Abilities which held daily significance in these children's lives—how to build or repair a house, knowledge about animals and plants in the area, how to play a musical instrument, or how to cook breakfast for 10 people—were learned very early. Verbal skills also came very ear-

ly. Levels of acquisition of traditional academic skills—reading, science, mathematics, and so forth—correlated with the models presented by the adults. In three of the five groups with school-age children, the adults were highly educated people, including seven former professors or teachers. The children at these three groups received a strong exposure to traditional skills. The academic education at the fourth group was reasonably good until the age of 10 or 12, at which time other interests often took precedence. At the fifth, the atmosphere was strongly anti-intellectual. While the children at this group did attend public school, the group attitude was such that little seriousness was attached to it. With the majority of children, a high curiosity level and willingness to learn new things was apparent. Children responded to the marionette puppet, dulcimer, and compass which the observer brought on each visit, not by wanting to be entertained but rather by asking to be taught in detail how to make each of these work. Competition motivation was considerably lower on the average than with most children.

Among all groups with three or more children of more than 2 or 3 years of age, a phenomenon referred to by one group member as the "society of children" played an important role. Children did many things as a group, providing for each other much of the support and teaching that would traditionally be provided by the adults. At one group the children had their own room in the common house that adults could enter only with permission of the children. At another, the children were given the common house during the day as their focus of activity. At a third, about 15 children between the ages of 7 and 12 requested a house of their own and in time were taking care of their own food acquisition and preparation, governance, and maintenance of the building. The "society of children" provided both an opportunity for children to teach and care for other children and a training ground for the learning of interpersonal responsibility.

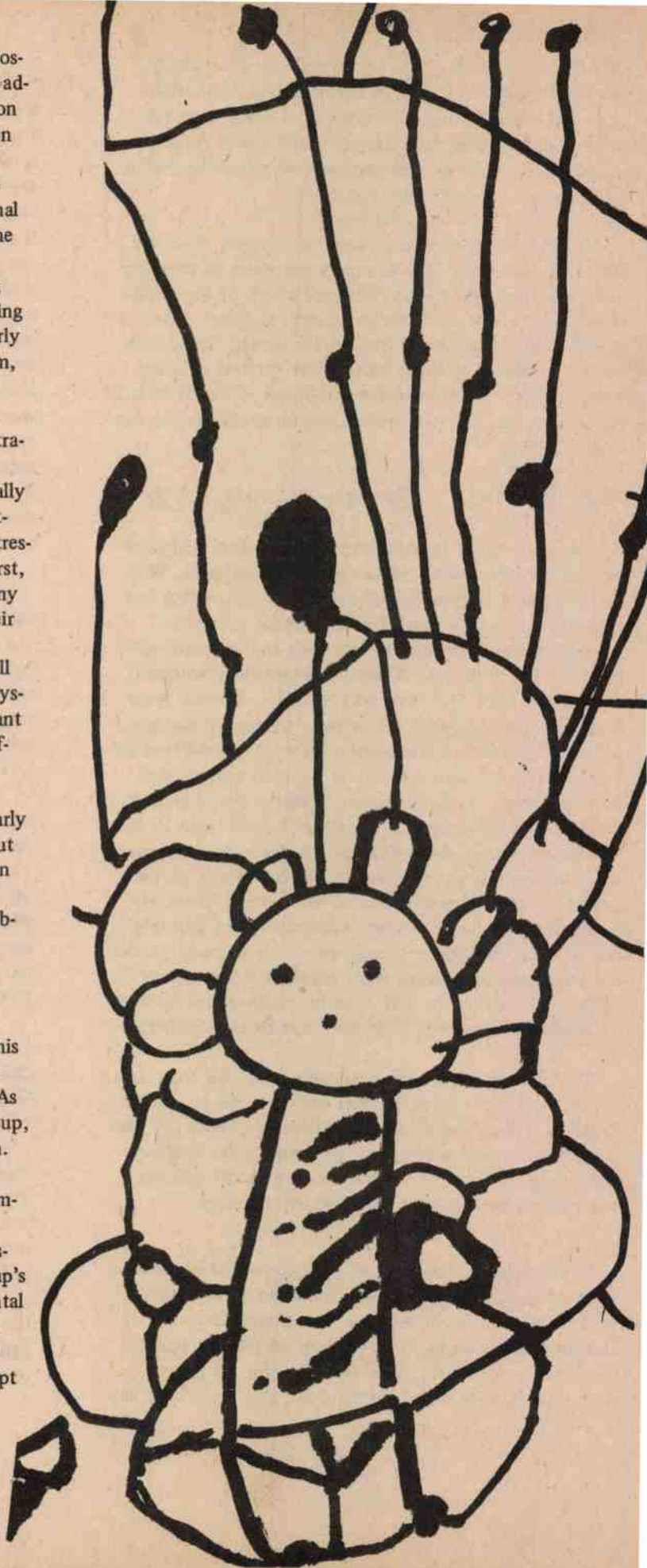
In two of the four groups with a number of older children, sexuality had come to be expressed very early. With parents who spoke openly about sex and with no taboos against physical contact, exploration of each other's bodies and actual intercourse took place between most children in these two groups by the age of 5 or 6. These children related to sex as something interesting and enjoyable, but not of central importance. They would alternate between periods of enjoying sexual experimentation and periods when sexual activities seemed of little interest. They seemed casually open about their sexual activities to both adults and other children, but there seemed little stigma against children who did not wish to engage in sex.

In response to the observer's questions about the possible harmful effects of early genital sexuality, several adults expressed concern that early sexual experimentation might lead to early development, thus cheating children of valuable childhood experiences. Most commented that they had seen no evidence in the behavior of the children to indicate that genital sexuality and traditional childhood activities were in any way contradictory. The potential difficulty of sexual interests interfering with the children's educational progress was recognized, but this effect had not been observed. The difficulty relating to the sexual mores of the traditional culture after early genital exposure was seen by other adults as a problem, but one not separate from the general problem of adjustment to the multitude of differences in behavioral conventions between the communal environment and traditional society. For the most part, parents expressed surprise at the rapidity with which the children a usually quite nonjudgmental awareness of the behaviors acceptable and not acceptable when off-commune. Parents stressed two positive aspects of early sexual expression. First, in being freed of the moral structure that has left many in our society incapable of complete fulfillment in their sexual lives, these children may have a great asset in terms of personal happiness. Second, these children will be spared much of the adolescent conflict between physical readiness and social prohibition. It will be important to see, as these children develop, precisely what the effects of their early sexual experimentation will be.

In the remaining two groups with older children, early sexual experience included mutual body exploration but not intercourse. The only significant difference between their experience and that of most traditionally raised children was their frequent contact with and comfortableness with both adult and child nudity.

• — — — • — — — • — — — •

Space has necessitated that the principal focus of this paper be on generalizations between communes, rather than an in-depth description of particular communes. As a result, deficiencies or assets peculiar to only one group, unless of great significance, were not commented upon. For example, in one group, the "macho" attitude of many of the members conditioned children toward competition and interpersonal distance rather than the reverse. At another, a 10-year-old boy had voluntarily assumed complete responsibility for the care of the group's 200 chickens and ducks. In another, a particular parental situation resulted in one child being very insecure and manipulative in contrast to other children in the same commune. The implications of generality should be kept in mind when evaluating the content of this paper.



COMMON (?) CONVERSATIONS !!!

Alicia (age 4)

" Are you still on childcare ? "

" Well who is ? But you were. "

" Yes, but Aaron (2½) can't. "

" No I can't. I'm not sponsible. (then more indignantly) I'm not sponsible. "

add- action in the kitchen now:

Richard (21)

" Yeah that's a good idea (gaining enthusiasm) YOU can be on childcare for awhile. "

Marlene (25)

" Of course you can be on childcare. You didn't do errands today. You didn't wash the dishes. You didn't do the laundry. You can do your own childcare now. "

Sean (age 3)

" Who's on childcare ? "

Alicia

(silent during all of this , then) " But kids can't be on childcare. "

Aaron (age 2), sprawled on cushions " Go away. "

Bara (32) , in bathtub ,

" No "

" Yes, until dinnertime, but now no big person is. Maybe you should be. You can take care of yourself. "

" You can help take care of Aaron. "



Marcia (age 26)

" Do you need help up the ladder ? "

Alicia

" No. I don't need help. I have a vagina. "



Aaron (age 2)

" This not mine. " pointing to overalls on him.

" Erbodies. " Pause. " That not yours " pointing to clothes on Bara.

" This is yours. (braided rug in living room) And Erbodies use-it. "

(sewing machine) " This yours-Erbodies use-it. "

Bara (age 32)

" They're everybody's. They used to be Joannas. "

" Yes they are mine, but everybody can use them. "

" Yes. "



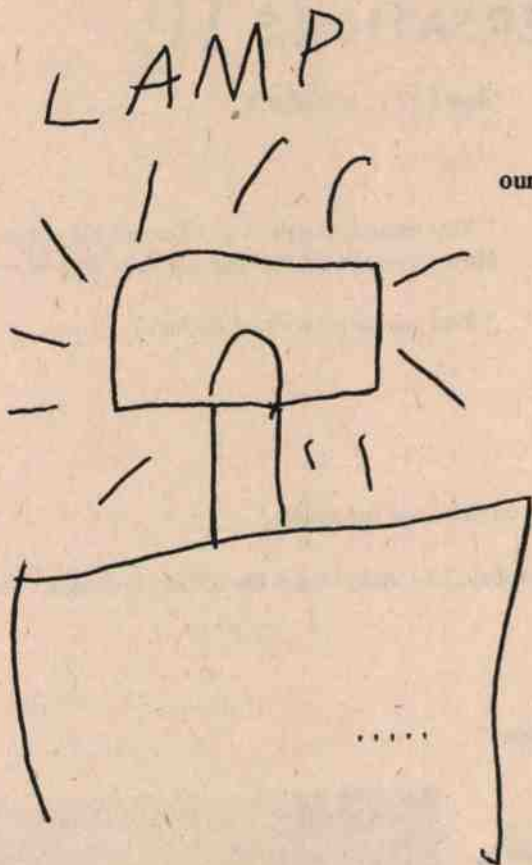
1974

february 28th and 27th this page is by steven bouton

MACCABEE FARM
Virginia

ourfa—

our family newspaper



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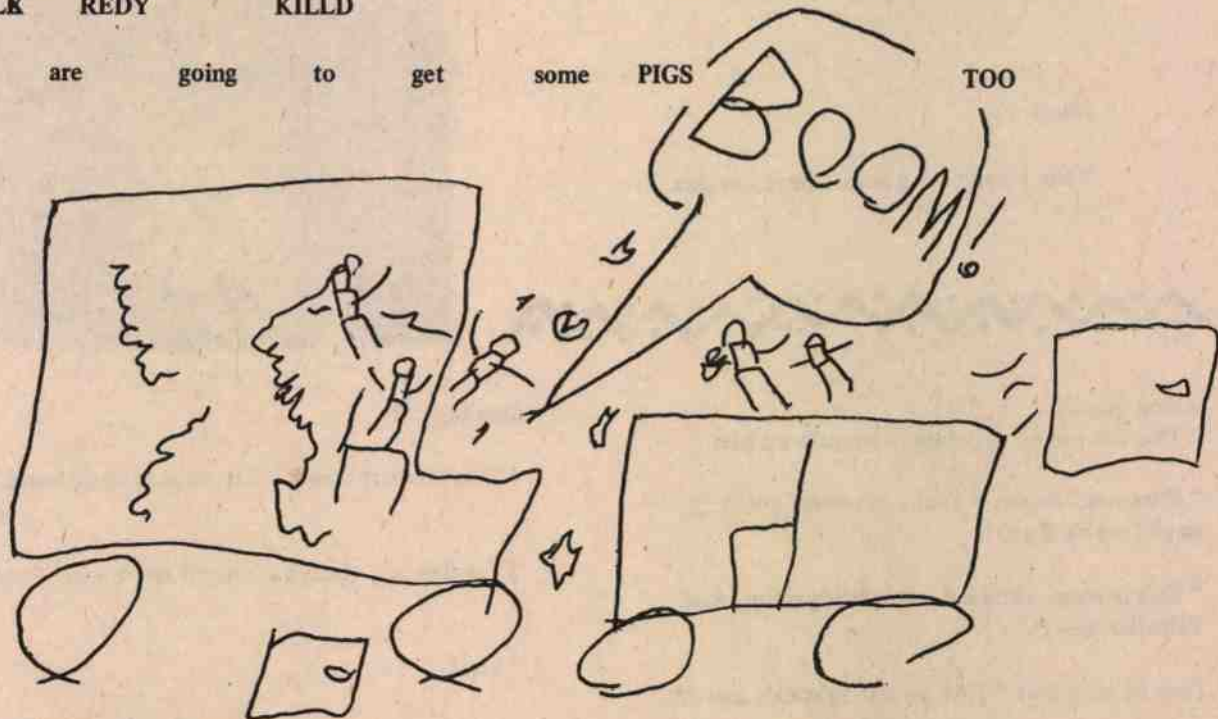
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rug the attic has been moved into we have a new
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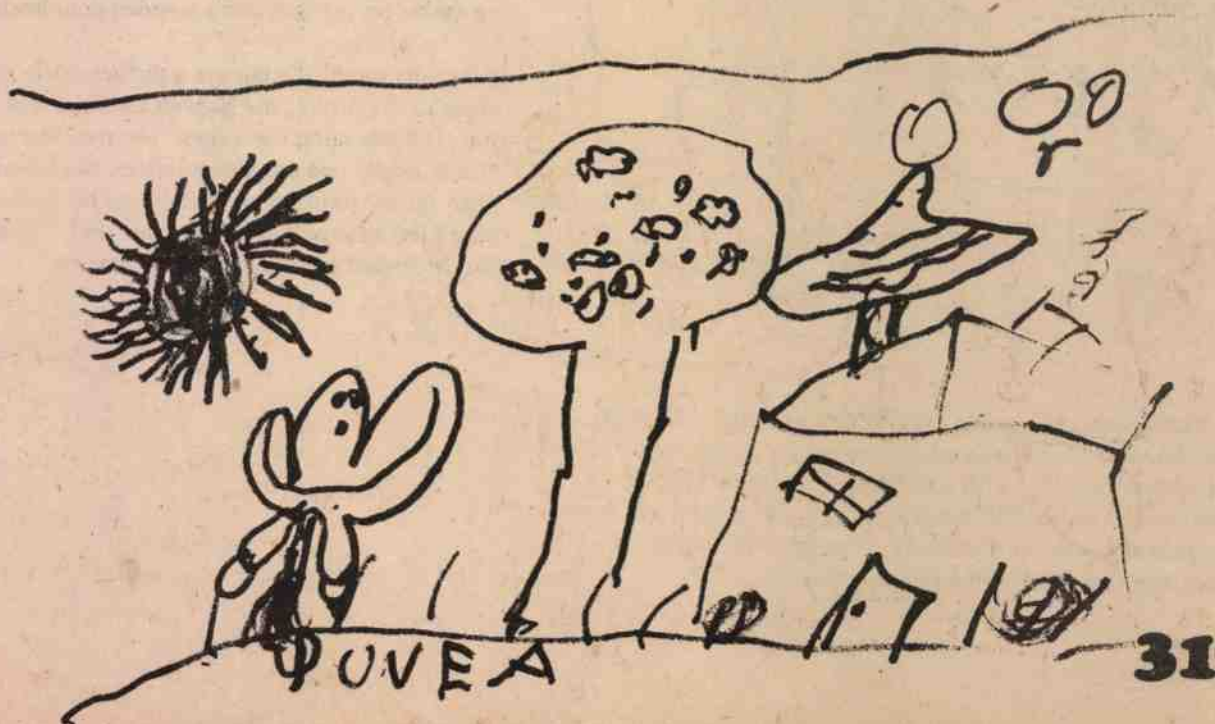
we are going to get some PIGS TOO



18 thatg s your news

If I could fly into
The sky, like you, I would
go with you into the sky
so blue, and I would be free
as can be, I would fly like
an eagle, in the beautiful
blue sky, I would fly any
where, I could go high and low
so low I might go to low
and will touch the ground
and land in a pool of water
I would turn around in
till my eyes turn blue
then I will fly away
again into the blue sky

written by Nicky Kramer

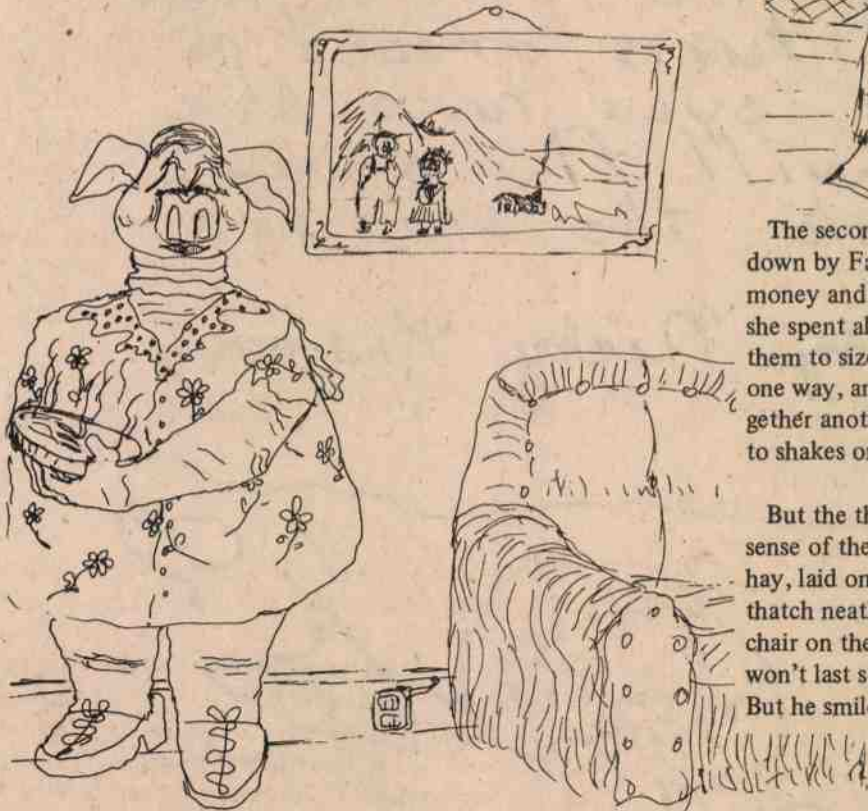




THE NEW Little Pigs

by Elaine
Sundancer

Once upon a time there were three little pigs who lived with their mother in a house on the road. They picked berries in the summer, and their mother made jelly; they chopped firewood in the winter, and their mother baked pies. By and by, when they were all grown up, their mother said to them, "Well, my dears, it is time for you all to set out in life. I still have a small store of money laid by, enough for each of you to build yourself a house. Tell me where and how you will build."



The eldest little pig was a sturdy and responsible little pig and he said, "I will build a house of bricks, on the corner of Shadytree Lane." So his mother gave him the money needed and he built his house solid and strong, with windows of glass and wooden shutters to cover the windows, and a carpet in the parlor, and a fireplace in each room.

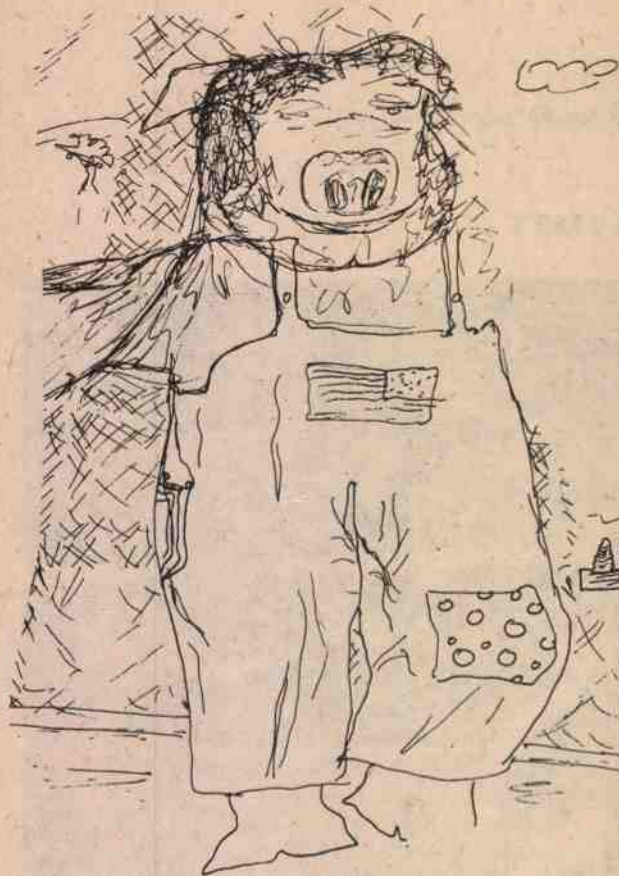


The second little pig said, "I will build a wooden house down by Farmer Jones' woodlot." So her mother gave her money and she bought a hammer and a saw and an axe, and she spent all summer cutting down her trees, and trimming them to size, and notching them and fitting them together one way, and then changing her mind and fitting them together another way. By fall her house was finished, even to shakes on the roof and a wooden door latch.

But the third little pig was a shiftless little pig, with no sense of the future, and he built his house out of bales of hay, laid one upon the other. The roof was made of straw thatch neatly laid upon pine rafters, and he sat in a rocking chair on the front porch, and played his flute. "This house won't last so very long," his mother said. "It will sprout." But he smiled at her and went on playing.



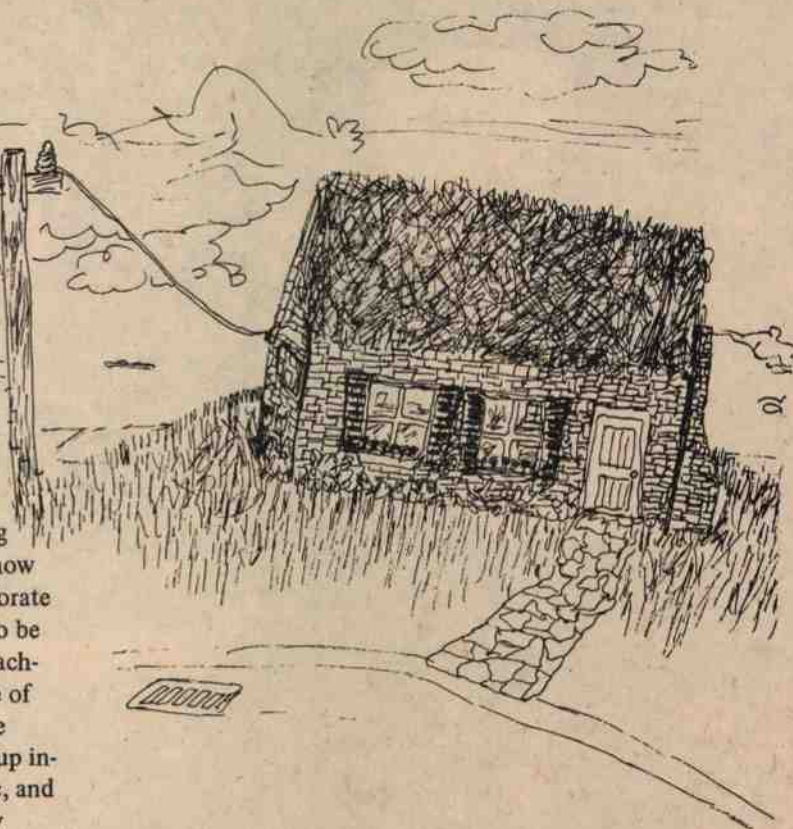
The second little pig was sitting in the kitchen when the earthquake came, braiding onions and garlic into strings and hanging them from the rafters. Her house began to creak and groan as the earth rocked underfoot, and the long poles that held the roof began to come apart at the corners. She hid behind the iron stove as one pole and then another came crashing down. When the neighbors came by they found that her shoulder was badly bruised, and she had a bad cut over one eye that needed bandaging. But all in all she wasn't too badly hurt, and when they left she was saying that all she needed was a few more logs, and she'd build her house again.



So each little pig was established in life, and went along his/her way, casting a glance aside every so often to see how the other pigs were faring. The eldest little pig held elaborate card parties for the folks uptown, and he was rumored to be engaged to Ms. Porklyheart; a young lady pig of unimpeachable character and background; her father had a fortune of ten thousand dollars. The middle pig worked hard in the woods every day, cutting down trees and bucking them up into firewood, but the third little pig liked wine and music, and every rowdyman in town came by his house on Saturday nights.



By and by there was an earthquake. The youngest little pig was sitting in the rocker on the front porch when it happened. He jumped up and watched his house fall apart. Bales of hay went tumbling in all directions, and thatch was falling everywhere. The house was so loosely built that it fell completely apart, but the little pig wasn't hurt at all, and when the neighbors came by to see if he needed help, they found him sliding down his new haystack.



The third little pig was in his parlor when the earthquake struck, sitting on a horsehair sofa and passing a plate of cookies to a visitor. "The aniseed ones are especially good," he was saying, when all the mantle piece ornaments started jumping up and down, and the walls began to shake. The little pig and his visitor started to run out the front door, but the walls came crashing down before they could escape, and the house was so solid and well built and heavy that they were killed dead.



THE END

"... Come away, O human child!
To the waters and the wild
With a faery, hand in hand,
For the world's more full of weeping than you
can understand."

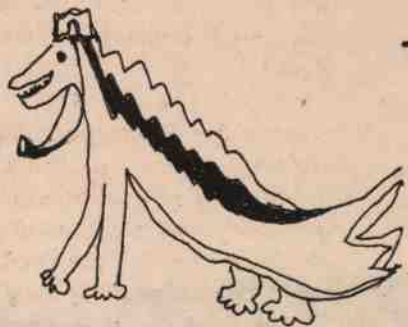
W.B. YEATS



We "grown-ups" who have chosen to live in "communities," "communes," "collectives," have done so for many reasons—and one of those reasons is for our children. We have rejected the lifestyles of our parents in hopes of finding different and better ways to live. We question the ideals that make this society, in general, what it is: capitalism, materialism, sexism, rigidly institutionalized education, competition. We want to share our "wealth"; we want to live more simply; we want to be free of conditioned sex-roles; we want to learn by seeing & doing; we want to be open & honest with each other, share our feelings instead of fear them, be together as sisters & brothers, not as competitors. Most of all, we want to enjoy living, and we want our children to enjoy living.

Today, it seems that children are being forced to "grow-up" sooner & sooner. In some ways that's alright but in other ways it seems too bad. The insights & innocence & joys of childhood are things we tend to easily forget—why rush them? By choosing to live in community, we are choosing a way of life which we hope will respect children & childhood, & in turn we hope that our children will respect and appreciate life all the more. We want our children to learn & grow—freely & strongly, aware of the worlds around them & also within them. By leading this "new" style of life with our children, we will learn & grow **TOGETHER**, and that seems to be a worthy thing in itself.





THE DOCTOR AND THE DRAGON, by Barbara Danish, Feminist Press, ages 2-7 years.

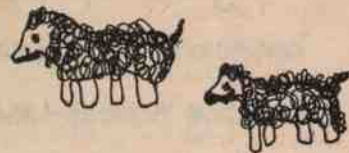
This is a delightful story of a he-dragon who has a sore tail, "Ow, Berschmertz," and seeks help from a she-doctor and her brother Thomas-the-nurse. The dragon gets fixed and they all go to a party and share their good feelings.

The young hearers of this tale remember the catchy phrases easily. As the parent-reader I find I'm very willing to read this story repeatedly: it's fun to read and to look at the easy going illustrations. I also appreciate it as the characters are in unusual and non-sexist roles — and it's rare to see a patient treat a doctor to a pleasant time at a party.

PENELOPE GOES TO THE FARMER'S MARKET, by Shirley Boccaccio, Joyful World Press, ages 3-9 years.

Clever illustrations help make this book — a nice blend of real photos of Penelope and Peter meshed with gay drawings of Sally Salamander and Rac-Racracoon and their activities.

These four have a household of only themselves. They have problems and handle them in a radical way. They have learned to be responsible and to cope with situations in an unusual manner.



WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE, by Maurice Sendak, Harper & Row, ages 2-6 years.

This book is fairly old (1963), but I included it because the little people love it so, they ask for it to be read to them over and over.

It's about the imaginary adventures of a boy who travels "through night and day and in and out of weeks, and almost over a year to the land where the wild things are." He soon tames the wild things and they make him their king. He reigns happily until he follows good smells back to his own room where he awakes to find his dinner waiting for him



THE MAGIC HAT, story by Kim Westsmith Chapman, illustrations by Kitty Riley Clark, Lollipop Power, ages 2-8 years.

Polly finds a magic hat at the dump. She gets whisked away to a land where boys and girls are unhappily confused because a nosy Busybody has separated them and their toys. The children solve the problems in the magic land and Polly is returned to the real dump recreated by the vision.

What a refreshing book! I'm glad to read it and introduce Polly to children. Polly faces real quandaries and copes with these situations.

Children repeatedly wish the book read and quickly claim phrases from it as their everyday own.

THE SHEEP BOOK, by Carmen Goodyear, Lollipop Power, ages 2-6 years.

This is a very simple book about a real baby sheep — about the real wool, clipped, carded, spun and knitted into a sweater, and about her own baby sheep of her adulthood.

I like to read such a straightforward tale which shows relationships of how one thing is made from another — which adults often take for granted. The pleasant drawings clearly show the simple self-sufficient way of rural life of this she-farmer.

Preschool children repeatedly ask to hear this read — they like the cycle of the baby lamb becoming mother and the lamb's wool becoming a sweater.

FIREGIRL, by Gibson Rich, Feminist Press, ages 4-10 years.

Firegirl is the story of an eight year old girl who is extremely eager to become a firewoman. Everyone just laughs at her, ("Girls can't be firemen") until one day when she hides in the fire truck, puts on an oxygen mask, and goes to a fire with the firemen. Once at the scene, she proves her worth by entering the burning building and saving a pet rabbit. After that the firemen, her family and friends recognize her ambitions and treat her with more respect.

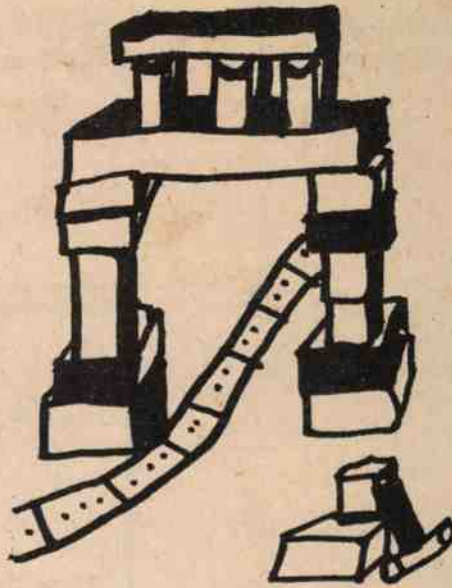
THE SUNSHINE FAMILY AND THE PONY

by Sharron Loree, The Seabury Press, N.Y.
Ages 3 and up.

"It's a true story about my family and friends. All of us had spent our lives in cities, so it was quite an adventure when we moved to a farmhouse way out in the country. I wanted to write about that, and about friends living together and a changing lifestyle — that it is possible."

This book is not only non-sexist, but also gives us a beautiful alternative to "Dick and Jane" and to the middle-class-kid-next-door stories. In these days of changing lifestyles it is really refreshing to be able to read to our children a story they can realistically identify with. The illustrations, simple but bold (also by S. Loree) are also very relevant to the kind of existence our children are in tune with, i.e. mats on the floor, people sleeping in sleeping bags, etc.

I see a parallel in the way the Sunshine family very humanely decided not to ride the pony until she was ready, with the way we try to treat one another from day to day, i.e. when one is not ready to partake of something, one is not forced into it. A delightful find — especially from a public library.



JOSHUA'S DAY, by Sandra Sur-
owecki, Lollipop Power, Ages 2-6
years.

What a good story of a young boy who spends his day in the early morning at home with his mother at a day-care center with his friends, in the evening walking home, cooking dinner and sharing time with his mother. Joshua gets vocally angry and another child, Larry, comforts him while another, Marie, suggests building highways and bridges. The teacher Sue initiates city designing and building while the teacher Ron does the snack and lunch chores that day. Joshua's mother, too, seems to enjoy her day as a people-photographer as well as her sharings with Joshua. Very refreshing to see the non-stereotyped roles of everybody.

There is another positive note: healthy food—soybeans and apples are mentioned rather than sweets or empty food.

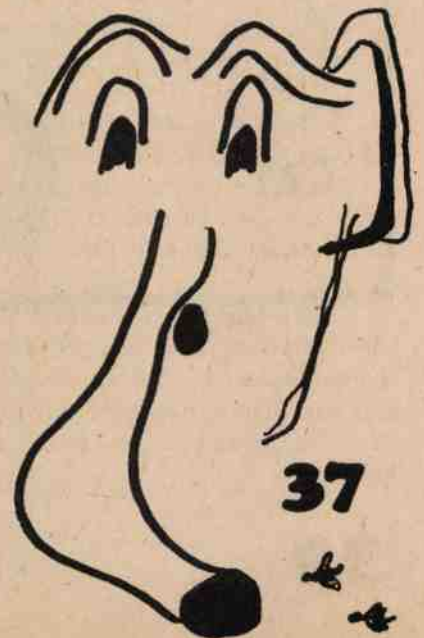
Children love the book. They watch avidly as Joshua gets angry and cries, listen to his telling his mother in the evening and hear her acceptance of him.

ELEPHANT POEM COLORING BOOK, by the Women's Press Collective, 5251 Broadway, Oakland, CA., 94618. Poem by Judy Grahn. Ages 4-?

Large line drawings that illustrate this poem make it attractive to children with crayons or marking pens, but the main content of the *Elephant Poem Coloring Book* is the "Elephant Poem" by Judy Grahn—which is somewhat sophisticated in words and politics for children. It is quite delightful for adults though ("...we must be flies in the elephant's nose—" the Man elephant?? the government elephant??)—a good book to have around for everyone, therefore!

The "Elephant Poem" is one of many poems in another book by Judy Grahn—*Edward the Dyke*. The poetry in *Edward the Dyke* is good to excellent—the short prose piece at the beginning, "The Psychoanalysis of Edward the Dyke"—a sarcastic commentary on Shrinks treating dykes—made me want to laugh and cry together.

Feminist poetry seems to be "coming out" in great quantity these days, and Judy Grahn's work is a fine example of it. Words of advice, words of pain, words of pleasure—words of woman-ness—all worth reading.



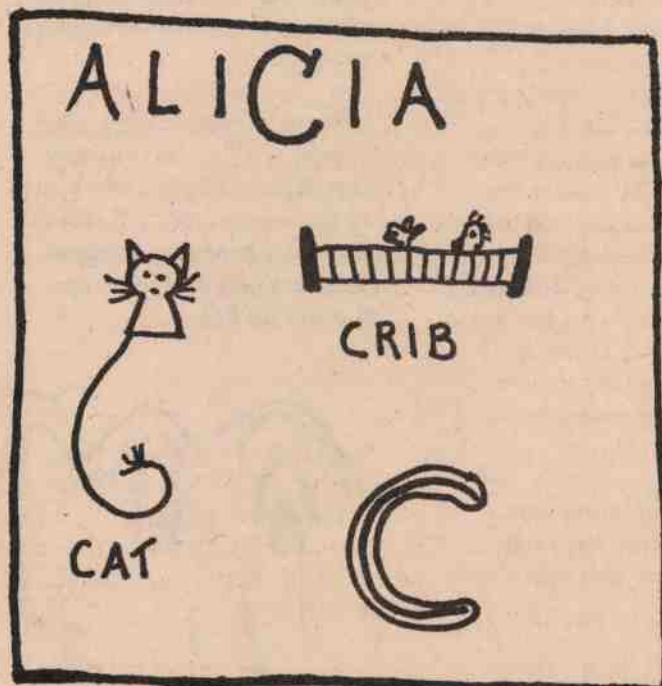
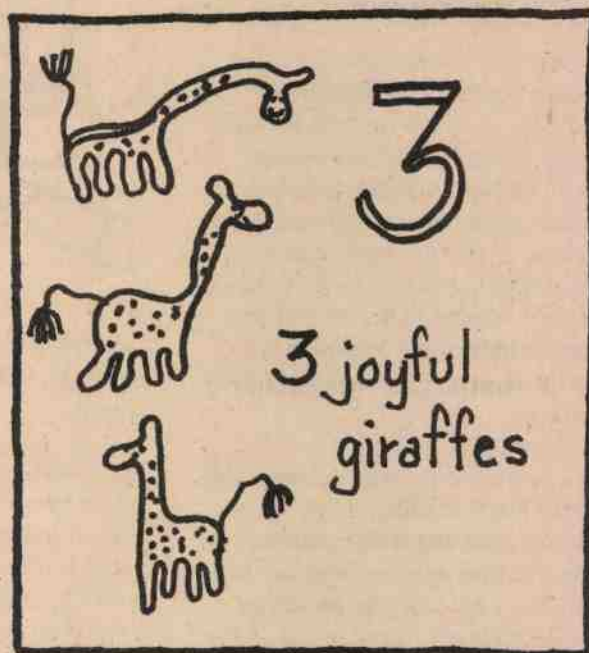
OTHER ALTERNATIVE PRESSES: YOURSELF
Books you can make by yourself for children

A. NUMBER BOOK

One page per number. For ages 2 to 4, go from 1 to 10. For ages 4 to 6, go up to 25 or more. Child counts the number of creatures (or any item) and then can learn to read the number.

Materials:

Drawing or construction paper, with magic markers or felt pens
Cardboard or manila folders for covers
Punch holes and bind with yarn



B. NAME LETTER BOOK

One page per letter in child's name, with illustrations to reinforce that letter.

C. CHILDREN'S OWN ART-STORY BOOK

Construct a book using the children's own drawings, especially including the child's verbal statements of what the drawing means.

D. YOUR OWN GIANT BABY BOOK

In a scrapbook, paste in photos of the child as a baby and growing youngster—and do the same for parents, yourself, siblings, close friends and people in the living group. Do it thematically: eg. Obie and his 4 legged friends, Obie and his 2 legged friends, Obie travelling. OR do it chronologically, more and more yesterdays coming from way way back to nearer yesterdays.

resources

EDUCATION JOURNALS

WHAT IS EDUCATION?

The following lines were excerpted from "A New Catechism" by Alan Glatthorn, as it appeared in The Instructor magazine, Feb. 1969.

What is the teacher?

A guide, not a guard.

What is learning?

A journey, not a destination.

What is discovery?

Questioning the answers, not answering the questions.

What is the process?

Discovering idea, not 'covering content.'

What is the goal?

Open minds, not closed issues.

What is the test?

Being and becoming, not remembering and reviewing.

What is a school?

Whatever we choose to make it.

For more information on education or child-centered communities, consult the commune directory in issue #7 of COMMUNITIES.

ALTERNATIVES FOR EDUCATION

Newsletter, PO Box 1028, San Pedro, CA 90733. See ad.

CENTERPEACE, 57 Hayes St. Cambridge, MA. 02139.

Info on radical reform in both alternative and public schools.

EDCENTRIC, PO Box 1802, Eugene, OR. 97401. Links education to other liberation movements. Extensive resource directory.

NEW SCHOOLS EXCHANGE, Pettigrew, ARK. 72752. See ad.

OUTSIDE THE NET, PO Box 184, Lansing, MI. 48901. Radical ideas in education theory & practice.

PRISMA, 467 O'Farrell St. San Francisco, CA 94102. Issues in private and alternate education. Resource directory.

WASHINGTON AREA FREE SCHOOL CLEARINGHOUSE, Summer School Bldg., 17th & M Sts., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036. Ideas and info on many Special Approaches in Juvenile Assistance.

ZEPHYROS, 1201 Stanyan St, San Francisco, CA, 94117. Non-profit group of teachers, parents, toymakers, circulating materials like good lesson plans.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

In the past year several alternative newspapers and magazines have devoted issues to children - alternative life styles, free schools, parent-child relationships, non-parent-child relationships, trials and tribulations. The following are particularly noteworthy

THE BUGLE AMERICAN, May, 1974. 2779 N. Bremer, Milwaukee, WI, 53212.

Features section on alternative education for kids. Articles on forming, funding, running co-op schools, an interview with Dr. Spock on "Violence, Child-care, and Sexism." 25¢ outside Milwaukee area, 15¢ within.

FAMILY SYNERGY NEWSLETTER, Jan., 1974, PO Box 30103, Terminal Annex, LA, CA, 90030. Articles on "Children in group marriages", "Children's Views of Group Marriage Families", and "Kids' View of Utopia."

NORTHWEST PASSAGE, Mar. 25-April 8, 1974, PO Box 105, S. Bellingham Sta., Bellingham, WA 98225. Issue on "Young People" includes regional reports on co-op schools & tips on creating with kids.

WIN, Feb. 21, 1974, Box 547, Rifton, New York, NY, 12471. "How Radicals Raise Their Children" is issue theme. Section on books to raise parents by, including some to avoid. See ad.

resources

ALTERNATIVE PRESSES

Most of the presses listed specialize in childrens and/or feminist publications. Some of the presses offer discount and/or free books to alternative schools. Write for book lists.



AGATHON PRESS, 150 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10011. Books on Education: Open Education, Child Development, Adolescent Education, Educational Policy. Also, three professionally made films on the open classroom are available. For rental and purchase information write for mail order form.

CHANGE FOR CHILDREN, 2588 Mission St., Ste.226, San Francisco, CA 94110. Not a press, but a library of books and photographs. A bibliography of nonracist nonsexist picture books and young fiction may be purchased by sending 35 cents to the above address.

THE FEMINIST PRESS, SUNY/College at Old Westbury, Box 334, Old Westbury, NY 11568. Feminist books for children and adults. From the beginning we set out to provide materials strategic in altering what women learn. We decided to publish high-quality, low-cost paperback books that would work well in evolving classrooms, sparking the imaginations of Americans interested in freeing children from sex role stereotypes.

1st THINGS 1st, c/o Susan Sojourner, 23 7th St., S.E., Wash., DC 20003 "...books for women...fe-mail order house..."

FREESTONE PUBLISHING CO., Box 357, Albion, CA., 95410, is a small collective for useful, clear, honest, spiritually-expanding books. The first book on, and still the only book from within, the alternative 'movement' is *Raspberry Exercises—How to Start Your Own School (and make a book)* is into its 7th printing and is regarded by critics and educators alike as a classic. Write for a brochure listing our publications.

LOLLIPOP POWER, INC., P.O. Box 1171, Chapel Hill, NC, 27514, or find them in your nearest women's bookstore or center. "LOLLIPOP POWER" is a women's liberation collective that works for the liberation of young children from sex stereotyped behavior and role models. Price: most are \$1.75.

THE JOYFUL WORLD PRESS, c/o Ms. S. Boccaccio, 468 Belvedere St., San Francisco, CA 94117. We proudly announce publication of our second book, "*Penelope Goes to the Farmer's Market*". We are offering parents, educators, feminists and most important of all, children, alternatives to the overwhelming mass of sexist literature presently available from commercial publishing houses. Send for brochure/prices.

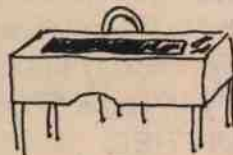
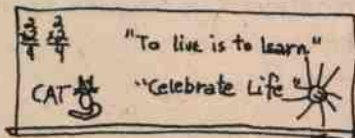
KNOW, INC., P.O. Box 86031, Pitts., PENN, 15221. KNOW now carries a wide range of topics, including our Female Studies Series—collections of course designs (I, II, III) and essays related to the Female Studies field (IV, V). We publish a list of "Reporters You Can Trust", and a list of feminist periodicals and special publishing projects.

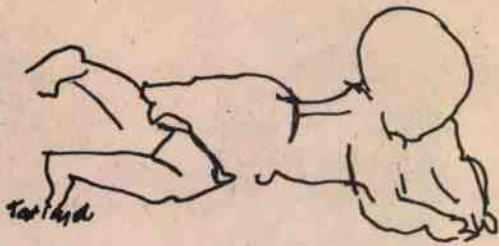
TIMES CHANGE PRESS, Penwell Rd., Wash., NJ 07882. We especially emphasize sexual politics; information about material relating to other aspects of personal/social change can be obtained by writing for our complete catalog.

US MAGAZINE—A Florida Feminists Monthly, has incorporated both the newsworthy achievements and the artistic and literary endeavors of feminists both state and nationwide. Currently, US is sponsoring an established feminist artist in her production of greeting cards, provides copyright services for feminist songwriters, is preparing a directory of Florida feminists, provides low-cost typesetting services to other feminist publications, and will eventually establish a Feminist Foundation to fund feminist-oriented endeavors.

WOMEN ON WORDS AND IMAGES P.O. Box 2163, Princeton, NJ, 08540. Publishers of "*Dick and Jane as Victims*," a study of sexism in children's readers.

NEW SEED PRESS, P.O. Box 3016 Stanford, CA 94305. NEW SEED PRESS publishes children's books free from stereotyping, books that portray all kinds of people, living in all kinds of ways, and books that encourage thinking about how the world could be different...and how to change it. Write for a free catalog.





I really hope that someday soon the entire baby food and formula section in our grocery stores will be replaced by freshly bottled certified raw milk, literature on breastfeeding, fresh fruits and vegetables, food grinders and juicers with instructions on how even the busiest mother can easily prepare healthful food for her baby.

I cannot emphasize enough that no pediatrician trained in nutrition would recommend commercial baby foods and no mother who has taken the time to inform herself about the nutritional needs of her child would use them. Everytime I pick one of those can or jars up, I'm amazed that with all we know about nutrition today the contents of the label remain the same—sugar and salt, refined fillers—cornstarch, white rice, noodles, plus unlisted additives. Even the real foods (the good ingredients) have been irreplaceably damaged by heat

Adelle Davis covers the advantages of a raw mild formula in "Let's Have Healthy Children," now available in paperback for \$1.75. She tells of the excellent skeletal structure of children raised on raw milk and their overall better health. She also adds that when doctors and mothers are violently opposed to a certified raw milk formula it is because they have not taken the time to find out how carefully this milk is produced.

Other formulas she recommends are made from or contain yoghurt or acidophilus, which break milk sugar into lactic acid, which increases calcium absorption. Gas-forming and disease-producing bacteria cannot thrive in the lactic acid thus formed. She emphasizes that if the formula is adequate, the bottlefed baby, like the breastfed baby, needs no solids until around 6 months.

We need to also keep in mind that the health of a baby is to a great extent determined long before he/she is born—even before he/she is conceived. During the year prior to conception, both parents are paving the way for the genetic inheritance of their child.



HEALTH

Thanks to La Leche League, every mother who desires to nurse her baby can be successful. If she does not wish to nurse, then, from the standpoint of nutrition, the next best thing is an adequate formula of certified raw goat's or cow's milk. No matter what those tempting canned formulas say, the difference in the vitamin and mineral content between unheated raw milk and heat damaged canned formulas remains spectacular.

The baby's health reflects the mother's lifelong health. The pre-conception diet, the pre-natal diet, and then the physical and psychological care a child receives from birth to around 5 years, lays the foundation for his/her health or lack of it throughout his/her lifetime.

We all know how hard it is to break unbeneficial eating habits. By the time a child is 5 years old, his/her eating habits are pretty well established. The mother's way of introducing solids, and what these solids consist of, can thus establish relaxed, healthy eating habits or ones that create problems. Trust the child's instinct.

My son began solids around 5 months—mashed avocado, mashed banana, bits of watermelon. I did buy some baby food not knowing what I know now, but ate most of it myself. He continued to nurse until he was about two and a half years old. I remember days when all he wanted to eat was cottage cheese and slices of cucumber, other days it was cherries or strawberries. If a child's taste is not perverted by excessively salted and sugared foods, he/she will choose for him/herself a 'balanced' diet, IF only unrefined, natural foods are around the house.

Some specific suggestions: Around 6 months, baby needs iron-rich foods—softly cooked eggs preferably from healthy groundfed chickens, teaspoon of yeast in his/her juice or milk, blackberries, or apricots, for example. All freshly made juices are excellent, bottled unsweetened juices next best. Nutrients in juices are harmed by heat also. All mashed or chopped RIPE fruits unsprayed if available. Fruit and yoghurt. Vegetables such as steamed zucchini, baked or steamed potato, peas, any vegetable which you cook for your family can be mashed, liquified, to suit the baby.



NUTRITIOUS SCHOOL LUNCHES AND SNACKS

From asking the kids I gather that the lunch that goes along has to be quick and easy to eat (doesn't fall apart), has to look as much like the other kids' as possible and of course has to taste good. According to seven year old Beau, "The other kids always get real good stuff like bologna sandwiches, potato chips and chocolate pudding with a Twinkie." Last year Beau traded most of his sunseeds and peanuts for Twinkies and almost busted up with his best buddy because he kept on forgetting to bring an extra Snack-Pac.

We don't want our kids to feel deprived. If your child trades his/her apple for a Ding Dong — well, at least somebody's eating the apple and you can give your child another when he/she comes home. Here are some suggestions hopefully your child will enjoy.

Bags of toasted nuts and seeds — Place 1/3 cup sesame, sunflower, pumpkin or other kind of fresh shelled nut or seed on a cookie sheet. Toast at 250 degrees until barely golden brown. Pour at once into a jar with a tight lid and add 2/3 cup additional raw seeds and nuts. Let stand awhile at room temperature and then refrigerate. All seeds and nuts will have a toasty taste but most will have all nutrients intact. (Note: Those small bags of salted nuts are a waste of money, purchase fresh seeds and nuts in larger quantities, store in airtight containers to prevent rancidity after shells are removed).

Stuff celery sticks with crunchy unhydrogenated peanut butter, or a mixture of good quality cottage cheese and grated cheese. Sprinkle with paprika.

In a wide mouth thermos: cottage cheese, small bits of cucumber, tomato, celery heart. Homemade potato salad (very simple, just steam potatoes, cool, dice, but don't peel, add a little good quality mayonnaise, slice olives, small bits of raw vegetables that the child likes, herb salt). Or yoghurt with fruit.

Drinks: raw milk, fresh orangejuice, or unsweetened juices partly diluted with spring water. Send along a baggie of granola and a spoon and the child can mix it in the thermos top.

Other additions: cheese strips, carrots cut in sticks, fruit salad of sliced pears, banana, orange wheels, grapes, baggies of mixed dried fruits and nuts, whole fresh fruits.

Candy bars: about 1/3 part unhydrogenated peanut butter, or sesame or almond butter, 1/3 part tiger's milk, 1/3 part fresh unhulled sesame seeds plus enough raw honey to sweeten and bind all ingredients. Shape into bars and refrigerate. Make a week's supply ahead of time. This is good instead of a sandwich.

Sandwiches: use a variety of whole grain breads. Children used to white, mushy bread may prefer the less chewy breads in the beginning, although later, the chewier the bread the better. Spread with unhydrogenated peanut, almond, or sesame butter, sliced banana and honey. Cream cheese and dates are especially good if your child has a sweet tooth. Use only raw or good quality naturally-aged cheeses.

My five-year-old's favorite sandwich is simply mayonnaise and alfalfa sprouts. We put alfalfa sprouts on almost every kind of sandwich — instead of or in addition to lettuce. 39 cents worth of store bought sprouts cost about 5 cents if you grow them yourself. Buy or find a wide mouth jar with a tight fitting screen or cheese cloth top. Use alfalfa seeds made for sprouting from a natural food store. Put in about one tablespoon, cover with water, soak overnight, drain in the morning, rinse twice a day, cover jar with a dishcloth and in about four days you'll have fresh sprouts. Leave in the light and they'll turn green and then refrigerate. We always have them growing on the counter.



TREATS KIDS CAN MAKE

What in the world can you say to your kids when they're eyeing all those heaps of 'Good 'n Plenty's, tootsie rolls, chewy-chewies and what not, so conveniently placed at the supermarket? Or what do you do when your youngest has already unwrapped a Mars bar and half eaten it while you were busy weighing the apples and bananas?

Above all, don't make a big deal out of it. One lollipop eaten in front of you is better than eight behind your back. Children are bound to be curious about the tastes of these concoctions, they come in bright wrappers but the novelty and appeal will wear off if you provide children with wholesome, happy meal times and offer them plenty of natural sweets.

Peanut Butter Candy

½ cup crunchy peanut butter

½ cup honey

¾ to 1 cup powdered milk or Tiger's milk

Combine and mix well. Turn on to buttered wax paper and press to thickness of ¼ inch. Cut into cubes.

Baked Fruit-Nut Sticks

1 cup pitted prunes, dates, or dried apricots

2 cups walnuts, almonds, or cashews

2 eggs, beaten

1 cup honey

Grind fruit and nuts. Blend with eggs and honey. Place on lightly oiled cookie sheet. Bake at 375 degrees for about 10 minutes. Makes 2 dozen sticks.

You may want to give simple explanations of why you don't eat lollipops yourself. Ultimately it is your example, not what you say, that influences children. Avoid continually telling them what is bad, what will make them sick, etc. Rather, be positive and tell them which foods make their teeth and bones strong, help them to grow and give them energy.

Here are some easy treats your kids will enjoy preparing, with a little tactful guidance.

Fancy Cream Cheese Bonbons

1 cup cream cheese tiny pinch of salt

2 tablespoons honey ¼ cup chopped nuts

½ cup coconut shreds

Mix all ingredients together. Shape into balls. Chill. Makes 2 dozen bonbons.

Uncooked Fruit and Nut Bars

1 cup figs

1 cup raisins

1 cup pitted dates

2 cups cashews

1 tablespoon lemon juice

1 to 2 cups coconut shreds

Grind the fruit and nuts and place in a huge bowl. Add lemon juice and roll in unsweetened coconut shreds. If mixture is too dry, add more raisins and a bit more lemon juice. For variation, try apricots in place of figs and almonds or walnuts in place of cashews.

Don't be naive when you go shopping. So what if the astronauts drink Tang — let the people on the moon do what they like — people on the earth should eat food grown on the earth, not concocted in the factories. Read the label and remember that there's a lot the label doesn't say.

by Suza Norton

CHILDHOOD DISEASES: A Less Pedantic View

Shortly following the birth of her child every North American mother is told by local health authorities that she should have her baby "immunized" against such afflictions as tetanus, polio, diphtheria, measles, rubella and whooping cough. It is usually proposed that shots should commence at about age two months.

Generally, pressure is exerted to see that parents "conform" to this procedure, with the inference that the child's health will be seriously threatened if there is hesitation. In a time when many young people feel urged toward a more natural life, there is increasing doubt of the validity of this attitude which implies that the world in which we live is full of dangers, all awaiting the chance to pounce on us if we do not take the most stringent defensive measures. All human problems have a direct relatedness to man's separation from the natural rhythms of life. For example, babies that have been bottle-fed tend to develop twice as many infections, during the first year of life, as those that have been breast-fed. Mumps, measles, polio, many respiratory infections and diarrhea all are far less likely to affect the breast-fed child. It could also be noted that artificially fed babies suffer from allergies twenty times more often than breast-fed children.

In society the idea has been promoted that a person may do whatever he desires, without regard for his inherent capacity to seek out what is right, and medicine will provide a means of escaping the consequences. No doubt, in this matter of infant immunization it is assumed that the child is bound to follow this philosophy as well, and so had better be protected from the beginning! However, where care is given to such elements as breast-feeding, careful diet, and sanitation from the start and, most important of all, where there is tranquility of emotions and a true atmosphere of home, the handling of childhood diseases becomes a matter of considerable ease. Generally, sickness is minimal, with lack of crisis or lasting effects.

There is a natural rhythm to all living things — a fact that man is belatedly, and grudgingly, admitting. Mumps, measles, chicken pox, etc., tend to come into a child's life in a certain sequence that perhaps is not at all by chance. To arbitrarily decide at a specific time to force the body to handle a variety of ill conditions through an immunization program, while at the same time doing nothing to support the child's basic state of health, clearly cuts right across life's design — and the physical reactions are frequently severe. Perhaps this is symbolic of our intent for the child's

training in all the days to come! Far better, it would seem, would be the willingness to cooperate with life, to acknowledge that in many ways all of us have been out of step with the universal order (and common sense!). A respect for the actual needs of body, mind and spirit, now, leads to a discovery of what those needs are and how to fill them. Inherent in this experience is assurance that every circumstance can be handled with joyous ease. Life is a friend: it is up to us to be friends with life!

by Michael Cecil

reprinted from the January, 1974 issue of

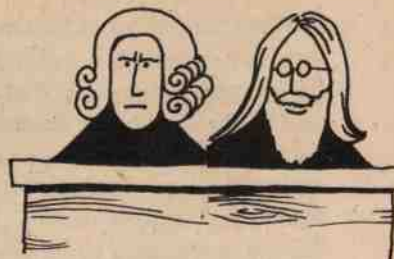
Ontological Thought, P.O. Box 328, Loveland, Colorado

80537.



The following is excerpted from Communes and Commonsense: A Legal Manual for Communes written by Lee Goldstein and published by New Community Projects in Boston. The book is available through our Bookshelf, and should help considerably in understanding the complexities of the law as they apply to communal groups. In future issues, we'll be publishing chapters dealing with holding property in common, setting up corporations, etc.

legal



COMMUNES AND THE CONSTITUTION: PRIVACY, FREE ASSOCIATION, THE FIRST AMENDMENT AND OTHER HYPOTHETICAL RIGHTS

Communes don't "fit" America yet, which is why they have legal problems.

Most of the legal problems stem from a literal lack of fit. Communes do not fit in. They make conventional people nervous. Neighbors, police, the authorities do not know quite what to make of communes, even when the communes do nothing to attract attention to themselves; and the communes do not quite know what to make of their neighbors and the authorities either. It is all a confusion of stereotypes and prejudices, overreaction and gracelessness, Vietnam and Watergate. The result is the methods of harassment of communes in subsequent chapters of this law manual for communes. These include selective enforcement of building and zoning codes, police harassment through searches and enforcement of dusty sex laws, and the whole range of ways that governments can make trouble for their citizens.

But communes do not fit in a larger sense as well. Governments (and neighbors) almost automatically suspect infidels, whether imaginary or real, and do what they can to keep them moving on, but the law has a larger role than annoying outsiders. It must also arrange the institutions of society in ways that best suit the society and the people living in it, and there's not quite yet any slot or pigeonhole for communes.

The standard American family is Father, Mother, Dick, Jane, Spot, Fluff, the house, the cars, and the bills. This arrangement has very little appeal to the average commune member, not to put too fine a point on it. The conventional family seems economically inefficient and psychologically burdensome, having few advantages that the commune does not also have, and many disadvantages. Its members consider the commune to be a considerably improved and updated version of the family. The ties between members are surely as strong as those that result from the genetic lottery of the family; the commune has chosen to be together, not forced together by law, social convention, or shotgun. The

commune is founded on free choice. Its members consider it a sensible and healthy response to current conditions, an institution to cloak them, just as conventional families cloak others.

The law disagrees. The law loves families.

A federal judge in California, faced with a commune arguing that it was a family, stated the law's feelings about families succinctly:

"There is a long recognized value in the traditional family relationship which does not attach to the 'voluntary family.' The traditional family is an institution reinforced by biological and legal ties which are difficult, or impossible, to sunder. It plays a role in educating and nourishing the young, which, far from being 'voluntary,' is often compulsory. Finally, it has been a means, for uncounted millenia, of satisfying the deepest emotional and physical needs of human beings."

Family law is one of the great gathering places of the law, like the law of property, the law of commerce, admiralty law, criminal law. The law prizes families. There are few important barriers to marriage, but many restrictions on divorce. Husbands and wives cannot be made to testify against one another. An undesirable alien can become desirable simply by marrying any citizen of the other sex. Parents may be responsible for their children's debts and damages. The social security system is built around families. Draft exemptions are granted the last surviving son. The military makes allotments to the spouses, children, and parents of servicemen. Taxes are less for families. Families mean social stability; the law exists to promote social stability. This chapter will touch on a few "family matters" such as extended and gay marriage, adoption, and so forth.

On April 3, 1972, the Supreme Court ruled that Peter Stanley, an unwed father, should be given the right to fitness hearings as guardian and custodian of his two natural children (*Stanley v. Illinois*, 40 U.S.L.S. 4371. The decision reversed that of the Illinois Superior Court at 256 N.E. 2d 814.) Stanley had been living with the mother of these children for 18 years when she died. Illinois has not recognized common-law marriages since 1905, so the couple never obtained legal, contractual recognition as husband and wife.

When the mother of Stanley's children died, Illinois instituted a dependency proceeding and the children were declared wards of the state. Wed mothers and fathers and unwed mothers cannot be deprived of their children unless they are shown in court to be unfit parents. Since Stanley had not been accorded this privilege, he claimed that he had been denied equal protection. The Illinois Supreme Court claimed that Stanley could properly be separated from his children simply because he had never married their mother. "Stanley's actual fitness as a father was irrelevant."

Illinois presumes that all parents other than unwed fathers are fit parents. It presumes that all unwed fathers are unfit parents. The U.S. Supreme Court granted review to determine whether this last presumption was constitutional. The court held that "under Illinois law, Stanley is treated not as a parent, but as a stranger to his children." Stanley would have no priority in adoption proceedings - he would have to prove himself the most suitable of all who might want custody, and with no allowance made at all for the fact of his biological parenthood of the children.

And even if Stanley were granted guardianship of his children, (again, he'd have to prove himself the most suitable guardian), he could be removed from guardianship at any time "without such cause as must be shown in a neglect proceeding against a parent." (Ill. Rev. Stat., Ch. 37, Sec. 705-8).

The U.S. Supreme Court, recognizing that the Illinois dependency proceeding caused Stanley to suffer deprivation of his children, and the children to suffer dislocation and uncertainty, concluded that, "as a matter of due process of law, Stanley was entitled to a hearing on his fitness as a parent before his children were taken from him." This decision declared unconstitutional sections 702-1 and 702-5 of Chapter 37 of the Illinois Revised Statutes.

So now in Illinois (with a precedent set for all states, an unwed father must be accorded equal status with all other categories of parents. His children can be taken from him and declared wards of the state only after a hearing and proof of neglect. An unwed father is presumed (unless and until proved otherwise) to be as fit a parent as a wed (or divorced) mother or father or as an unwed mother.

This decision has broad implications for communal rearing of children and, in particular, for a change in traditional attitudes toward marriage and the mother's rather exclusive role in child care. You don't have to be married and/or a mother to be a good parent.

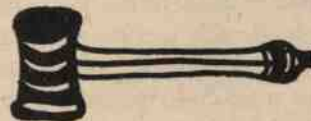
The Stanley decision, however, is probably not the last word on these matters. In many cases, unwed fathers do not take an interest in their children or their children's mother. The Stanley precedent leaves open the possibility that missing fathers may show up after many years, upsetting adoptions, a nightmare that child-placement agencies fear greatly. It's a good wind that blows no ill.

FULL HOUSES: 3 OF A KIND AND A PAIR

Courts in the United States have consistently upheld the traditional view of marriage of one of each sex and no more than one to a customer. A leading legal encyclopedia defines marriage as "the voluntary union for life of one, man and one woman as husband and wife to the exclusion of all others for the discharge to each other and to the community of the duties legally incumbent on married persons." In one court decision (*Hooks v. State*, 197S. 2d 238), marriage is even more specifically defined as "a legal state of wedlock or union of two (or more?) persons of the opposite sex associated together as husband and wife for the purpose of establishing a family."

In following the traditional definition of marriage, the law makes no provision for marriages between people of the same sex. In *Anonymous v. Anonymous* (325 N.Y.S. 2d 499), the opinion of the court held that marriage between males was a nullity on the basis that marriage "is and always has been a contract between a man and a woman."

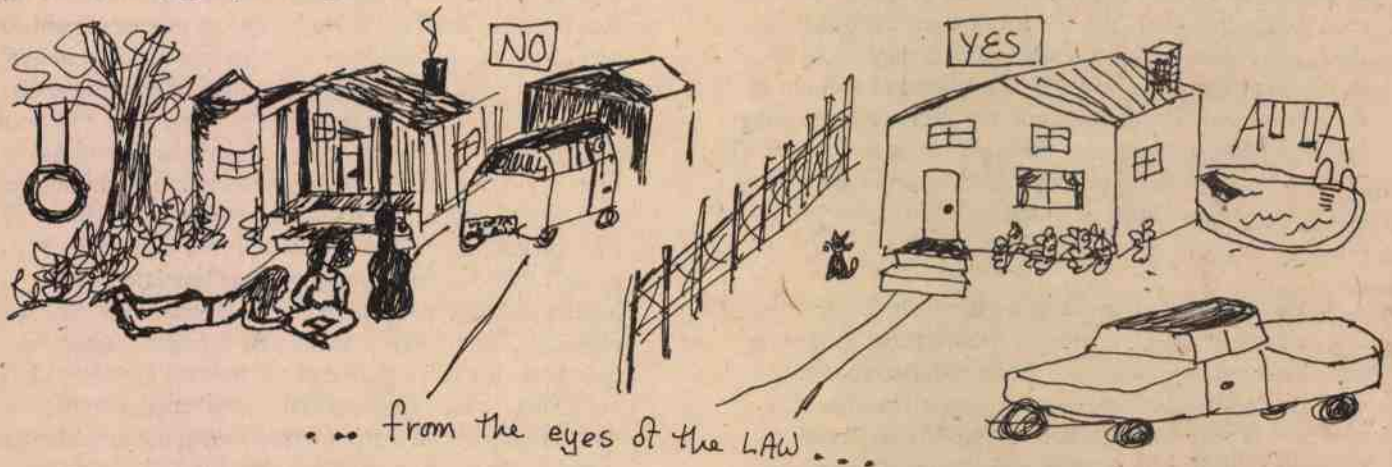
The legislature can, on the basis of its power to regulate marriage, prohibit polygamy. This was certainly shown to be the case in *Reynolds v. US*, (98 US 145) in which George Reynolds, a Mormon, was prosecuted for practicing polygamy despite his contention that this practice was based on his religious beliefs. Chief Justice Waite, in writing the opinion of the Supreme Court, said: "... laws are made for the government of actions, and while they cannot interfere with mere religious belief and opinions, they may with practices. . . Can a man execute his practices to the contrary because of his religious beliefs? To permit this would be to make the professed doctrines of religious belief superior to the law of the land, and in effect to permit every citizen to become a law unto himself. Government could exist only in name under such circumstances.



In *Long v. State*, (137 N.E. 49), the court disagreed that bigamy could be sanctioned on the basis that the accused considered bigamy part of his personal beliefs. The court opinion said that despite the fact that there was no criminal act involved, the party charged with the crime was aware of the fact that he was breaking the law and so was criminally responsible.

In the case of *Cleveland v. U.S.*, (329 US 14 (1946)) the petitioners, Mormons practicing polygamy, were found guilty of violating the Mann Act, which prohibits the interstate transportation of "any woman or girl for purpose of prostitution or debauchery, or for any other immoral purpose," because they travelled with their wives across state lines. The case was affirmed on the basis that polygamous practices were not out of the realm of the Mann Act since the court had always outlawed polygamy in American society and that "the establishment of polygamous households is a notorious example of promiscuity."

It is interesting to note that Justice Murphy, writing a dissenting opinion in *Cleveland*, at least recognized untraditional forms of marriage. He did not desire to defend marriages outside of monogamous ones; however, he felt that the court was unfair in classifying marriage institutions of other cultures in the same realm as "prostitution or debauchery." He wrote, "There are four fundamental forms of marriage: 1) monogomy; 2) polygamy, or one man with several wives; 3) polyandry, or one woman with several husbands, and 4) group marriage."



Murphy goes on to say that polygyny historically has been dominant.

We must recognize, then, that polygyny, like other forms of marriage, is basically a cultural institution rooted deeply in the religious beliefs and social mores of those societies in which it appears. It is equally true that the beliefs and mores of the dominant culture of the contemporary world condemn the practice as immoral and substitute monogamy in its place. To those

beliefs and mores I subscribe, but that does not alter the fact that polygyny is a form of marriage built upon a set of social and moral principles. It must be recognized and treated as such.

Based on past court decisions involving marriage, it would seem that any person desiring to legalize a marriage that lies outside of that institution's traditional form would be unsuccessful; unfortunately, the judicial decisions seem to reflect the prevalent hostile attitudes toward group marriages and gay marriages.

Almost any action that the government takes will be a discriminatory classification. Any kind of classification is discriminatory; any kind of discrimination is a classification. If the government pays farmers support prices for their crops, it also denies the payments to non-farmers. Everybody isn't included in everything. People over 65 are eligible for social-security retirement. People over 18 are eligible for the draft. People who have invented something are eligible for a patent. People who earn money must pay income taxes.

Classification and the discrimination that inevitably accompanies it are not unconstitutional; they are even expected. However, while everybody is not eligible for farm supports, everybody is eligible for freedom of speech.

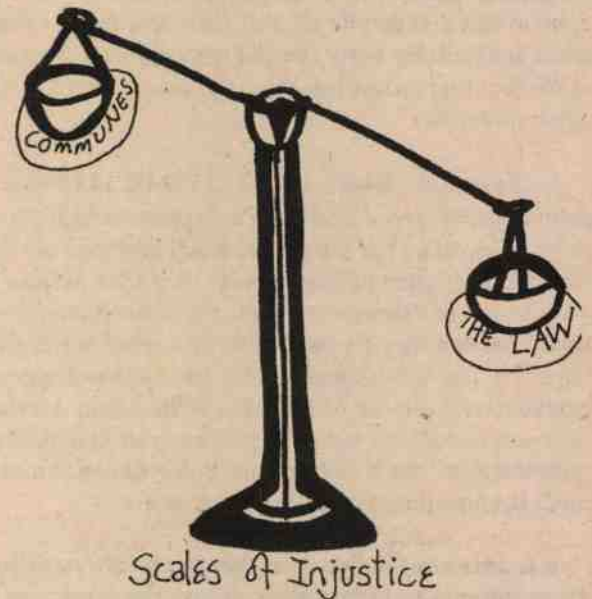
The government cannot subdivide fundamental rights. These rights include all the various rights listed in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights – freedom of speech and the press, freedom of religion, the right to trial by jury, and so forth. Also included, however, are various rights not listed specifically in any document – the right to travel, to send children to private schools, the right to marry and have children, the right to a full legal defense. These rights announced in court decisions are considered to be

implied by the constitution. Among the most important of those unlisted fundamental rights are the rights to privacy and freedom of association.

One recent implementation of the right to privacy and freedom of association will be of particular interest to commune dwellers. The case, heard by a three-judge panel of the federal District court of the District of Columbia (subsequently affirmed by the Supreme Court) involved an amendment to the Food Stamp Act and accompanying Department of Agriculture regulations that limited distribution of food stamps to households "all related to each other." The court held the statute and regulations invalid, reasoning as follows: "While Congress may have the power to legislate its conception of immorality in some contexts (interstate commerce), its power to do so at the level at which this statutory provision operates--in the household--is doubtful at best. Recent Supreme Court decisions make it clear that even the states, which possess a general police power not granted to Congress, cannot in the name of morality infringe the rights to privacy and freedom of association in the home."

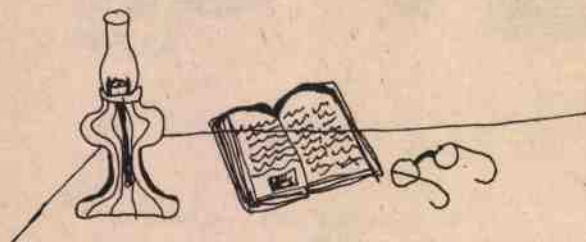
In this case, the government had made a classification: homes where everyone was related and homes where everyone was not. Only homes where everyone was related were deemed eligible for food stamps. The government stated that the classification was necessary to prevent fraud and waste in the food stamp program. The court did not say they could not do this, but only that they could not do so by barring all unrelated groups from the program. In barring such groups the court said, the government was violating the rights of potential recipients to live as they chose and with whom they chose without being called to account by the government. The government, the court said, was denying them equal protection of the laws, taking away from all of them their protected privacy and freedom of association and giving some of these potential recipients food stamps in return.

Traditionally, equal protection cases include a presumption in favor of the government's classification, so long as the overall purpose is rational. Irrational classifications, whether Red-Headed Leagues or segregated railroad cars, have always been considered unconstitutional. Classifications for the achievement of unconstitutional purposes are also considered unconstitutional. Classifications that have no bearing on the purpose intended are also unconstitutional. Still, with all that out of the way, in traditional equal protection cases the government has a presumption in its favor. If the classification is rational and related to the achievement of a legitimate governmental purpose, the courts would sustain it.



However, when fundamental rights come into question, this "old" equal protection standard has been judged to be lacking. Fundamental rights call for more protection than that provided from the ordinary actions of government. In such cases, the so-called "new" equal protection standard is brought to bear. Under this standard, the classification affecting fundamental rights must not only have a rational, legal purpose, but the government must also prove that there is an overriding need for discrimination, a need more powerful than the right being affected. In the **Moreno** case the government was unable to prove that its need to protect the food-stamp program from unrelated households warranted the violation of the rights of the potential recipients. Everybody is not eligible for food stamps, but everybody is eligible to find out if they are eligible without giving up their fundamental Constitutional rights. Where fundamental rights are threatened, the presumption is against the government's case, not for it as under the traditional equal protections standard. Basically, the old equal protection standard covers economic interests only, while the new standard covers fundamental rights. Most of the controversial Supreme Court decisions of the 50's and 60's -- on school desegregation, the rights of defendants, voting rights cases, and so forth -- were brought under the new equal protection standard.

book review



TEACHING SCIENCE IN AN OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT, by Phyllis Gross and Esther P. Railton, Univ. of California Press, 1972. (pb. \$2.95).

Teaching Science is a good handbook for a live education through the study of the environment. The book is the 30th in a 20-year series called "The California Natural History Guides." Though its resources and references are geared toward California, most of the studies and activities can be done anywhere, by anyone with a minimum of skills and materials.

The first chapter focuses on education, seeing its value in terms of "experiencing, discovering and thinking." In spots here, and later under the heading of Conceptual Systems and in references to other guides, the book gets more involved than some readers may care to; these areas can be skimmed without losing any understanding of the activities, though.

The next few chapters are in preparation for the trip, where to go and how to make the best use of things. Most of the rest of the book is covered by the various activities—38 in all. "Effects of wind," "developing a nature area," "mapping bird movements," and "making a solar still" are just a few of the wide-ranging activities described.

Each of the activities is arranged and outlined in a clear and fairly simple manner which includes:

- objectives of the activity,
- things to do,
- equipment to use,
- meanings of the events and "findings," and
- related things to do when back indoors.

All in all, this is a good book for getting 'back to the land' and to understanding the life patterns about us. *Teaching Science* is of value to children of all ages from about 10 years and up. The many drawings and photos throughout help to clarify and illustrate the activities.

BIRTHRIGHTS by Richard Farson, MacMillan Publishing Co. Inc., 866 Third Ave., New York, N.Y., 10022
248pp., \$6.95

Do you have an enlightened, humanistic view of how children should be raised, or do you advocate a firm, no nonsense approach? Whatever your present viewpoint, by the time you finish reading this little book, you'll probably have had a consciousness-raising experience that leaves you slightly unnerved. Prejudice against children is so pervasive in this society that none of us can be free from it.

The author deals with basic human rights he feels are being wrongfully denied to children. He has chapters dealing with our tendency to have a double standard of morals and rules to apply to children and to adults; our failure to take into account the existence of children in designing public places; and the failure of public schools to provide child-centered educational opportunity. Some other rights he feels should be granted children are dealt with in chapters entitled "The right to alternative home environments", "The right to freedom from physical punishment", "The right to sexual freedom", "The right to economic power", "The right to political power", and "The right to justice".

The author feels it is impossible to be a good parent in a society as organized against children as ours is. He puts his hope in the possibility of redesigning the American way of life. New communities who are experimenting with radical changes in life style will do well to read and discuss this book. The idea of children as one more oppressed minority needing liberation may strike you as a comic absurdity, or as a threat to your vested interests as an adult, or as a dangerous notion invented by people who don't really love or understand children. But the issues raised and the sad statistics quoted in this book are not likely to go away by themselves. An expanded awareness of what childhood is like today and how we actually experience and relate to children is very much in order.

In addition to being about an important topic, the book is highly readable, and guilt-ridden, overburdened-type parents may get a pleasant foretaste of how nice parent liberation will be when we escape some of the stereotypes of what good parents have to do.

Elaine Simpson

reach



(1974?)

*When they put down
their signs, and pick up
their books, in weariness,
who can blame them?*

*When they take off
their bluejeans and put on
the white coat or the necktie,
who can blame them?*

*When they turn away
from soothsayers and look to
the soothing cherubim,
who can blame them?*

*When they tune out
psychedelic fantasies and drink to
the good old days,
who can blame them?*

*When they give up
living in fives and sixes and go off
in twos and twos,
who can blame them?*

*When they break off
the hard fevered talks and take up
the hand of matrimony
who can blame them?*

*When they come in from
everybody's meadow and lay out
their quarter-acre plots,
who can blame them?*

*When they throw out
their mismatched furniture and paste up
a flowered wallpaper,
who can blame them?*

*When they turn off
their electric sound and look back
to mouse-eared, houn' dog days,
who can blame them?*

*When they pull out
the dandelions and fence off
their newly-seeded yards,
who can blame them?*

*When they leave out
the dark-faced ones and tend to
the whitened faces,
who can blame them?*

*When they put off
their brave idea and sign up
for a two-week vacation,
who can blame them?*

*When they settle their lives,
who of us can blame them?
But then again,
who can praise them?*

*christa hansen
community exchange
c/o number nine
266 states st.
new haven, ct. 06511*



Ten mamas and ten papas - ten kids - ages 0-100. Orphans—mamas without papas - papas without mamas. Each kid would have five mamas and five papas. No one excluded—singles—monogamis's—plurals, etc. No one excluded. Except, if you don't like kids - don't come. Kids are number one. We rent a big farm house, mansion in the hills and do it. We make a big garden - no fooling around - no putterin. Goats and cows and hens.

How did this all start? Well, I got tired of seeing kids pushed around—welfare mothers neglecting the kid. Communes neglecting the kids, except the Bruderhof and Stevens Farm. The kids there are raised better. Morning Star was a dream of David Spielers, and he and the Diggers and some other folks made it happen. Oh yes, a lot of mistakes. Now we know how

not to do it. Kiddie commune will happen too. There are too many parents dumpin their kids at nursery-private schools, etc. Lets make a home for the kids - let them express themselves—lets do it. If it works, it will be a pilot commune and we'll start more. David and Kitty and I did it for a weekend and it worked.

Let's do more weekends—then a week—then we can buy/rent a place and do it. I've been in 150 communes in my life. Some good, some bad. I live in a make believe commune now and want to make it for real. With kids. I have a kid 3 years old. I'd like to talk to you—write to me and we'll arrange a weekend with our kids and we'll do it. **Calvino, 1640 Mercy St., Mtn. View, CA. 94040.**

We are seeking commune builders, longterm committed people, not for a dropout subsistence group but for a business corporation or multiples of such, functioning close to the mainstream of society with humane methods. Even with the imperfections and horrors in the USA today we feel that here exists, if wisely used, both enough tools and freedom for building highly idealistic tribal type communities. We will try and build high degree direct democracies for our living groups as well as our business corporations.

We presently wish for any aged adults. Our children will come later and will be children of the tribe, they will not be owned and controlled by biological parents. Our children

will also be given high degrees of freedom and equality. Both single people and married couples are welcome, however, we recommend married couples who believe and practice the concepts as written in the book, "Open Marriage" by the O'Neills.

One concept we wish to try is the time commitment plan, where all members commit to a plan or project of specified length, then re-evaluate, re-negotiate, re-commit or split. We wish for seekers, humanistic, rational, experimental and growing, not religious followers or others who already know the one way for humanity to live. Our study of communal failures urges us to form our nucleus group slowly with people who share the same basic ideologies. Our present plan is to gradually come together in San Francisco in 1974-75-76? Out-of-state people can, perhaps, come for visits on yearly vacations before they move here (or persuade us to move to another place). We will rent, hopefully, in one area, inexpensive flats and apartments and house as many people in each as is harmonious and practical. We will start working for wages and operating small businesses for profit. By living communally with low degree materialism and not having children to start, we should be able to build capital rapidly.

To start, we hope for an unequal system of capital building in the form of stock purchases whereby skilled and professional people can put as much money as they wish into the new corporation. All people will have equal voice and power in all of the groups' policies. Disenchanted members who wish to leave will have the legal option to sell their stock back to the corporation for book value.

For an illustration of building capital; a hundred people with a monthly average stock purchase of \$200 per person will collect \$20,000 per month, that equals \$240,000 in one year.

One plan for us is, as soon as possible, to purchase a warehouse which we will build into residence house/recreation center, as well as a central location for business ventures. This should give us near ideal privacy and security for both living and working.

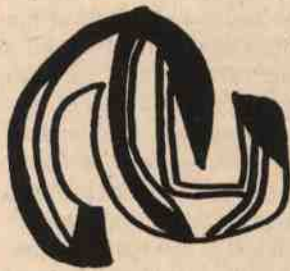
All the while our membership would be growing and harmonizing and our capital would be increasing.

Our directions, then, can become as wide as the minds of our people; farms, ranches, manufacturing, publishing, communications, shipping (sail?), etc., etc. We could perhaps move en masse to a small populated county and gradually gain a political majority. The possibilities are truly endless when large groups of people work together for common goals.

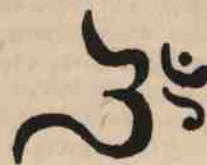
People by the thousands are now forming such groups all over this country as well as many other countries. We soon expect federations of such groups and even multinational corporations to appear and become functional and strong and thus truly make the counter-culture a humane, viable and vibrantly alive reality.

To realize these dreams will take many people, endless hard work and problem solving with discussions, confrontations and much patience, understanding, compassion and compromising.

Please send self-addressed stamped envelope for all communications. **Martin**, for Zanderland, P.O.Box 6084, San Francisco, CA 94101.



We are now accepting applications for 1974-75 American Odyssey Learning Teams. — The American Odyssey is a work-study-travel program for students who wish to earn two years college credit with an interdisciplinary team. The team will conduct a 60 week series of seminars and research projects while earning all its travel and living expenses in field experiences across America.



CREDIT: Students enter 30 credit hours of individual learning contracts in their own academic areas and 30 hours of team contracts covering broad general curricula. Team contracts are supervised by facilitators traveling with teams and students maintain frequent contact with faculty supervising individual learning contracts. Credit for completed learning contracts is awarded by Washington International College. Students from schools with mechanics for awarding off-campus credit may arrange to participate on an audit basis.

ADMISSION. Students admitted from all academic disciplines or undergraduate grade levels. Selection based upon diversity of team and evidence that the applicant has a well thought-out educational plan, a realistic understanding of the Odyssey and of his/her own abilities, and a clear purpose for participating in the Odyssey. (W. I.C. has a three week seminar designed to help students plan their program and learn to study efficiently in the context of a self-directed learning program. Most applicants will need to take this seminar and develop a plan.)

COSTS: Academic costs for students receiving credit from W.I.C. are \$2000 per academic year. Living and travel costs will be earned "on the road" except for a \$200 deposit to the team treasury to cover the initial living costs.

DATES: The next learning teams are scheduled to commence July 1, 1974. **The American Odyssey**, 3920 "W" St., N.W., Wash, D.C., 20007 (202)333-6886.

The purpose of CCA is to use the powerful and flexible structure of the corporate entity to provide the framework and supportive assistance for individual, family and community needs. Together, we can arrange it so that those people who wish to live in voluntary groupings will be able to gather in intentional neighborhoods and make those living arrangements that they themselves find most congenial. The intentional neighborhood would therefore be a living, growing circle of friends working together to form a community of choice rather than a group of neighbors who are virtually unknown to each other. When a number of such neighborhood groups are formed, they have the option to coalesce into an incorporated community—owned, operated and governed by its own members for their sole benefit.

Although it is too early to predict the exact development of these neighborhoods and communities, we can anticipate an eventual expansion that would be truly breathtaking. In all probability, they would include many varieties of homogeneous and heterogeneous groups. Socially, this type of expansion would provide a much greater range of choice for the overall membership. With a view toward the larger perspective, as communities spring into existence in different parts of the country, members could visit or migrate with ease and confidence, at a savings to time and money.

The social and economic implications of a national system of hundreds or thousands of CCA communities is nothing short of awesome. The creation of such a network will in many ways, bring about a gentle but fundamental restructuring of our society that will make our lives more secure, less hectic and complex, more pleasant and more acceptable to our children and coming generations.

If you wish more information or want to become an observer or active participant in the CCA movement, please send in to let us know of your wishes. **Corporate Communities of America**, 7501 Sebago Rd. Bethesda, MD 20034 (301)229-2802.

-or-

David F. Lawrence, Executive Director (202)581-3600.



The Rap: We are a small community (five adults and a child at present) in the Appalachian foothills of Southeastern Ohio near Athens. We have 35 acres of land on which we have a garden and are planning to add to our existing house. We gain economic sustenance from an organic vegetarian restaurant in Athens. We are interested in expanding the community. We would like to meet people who are interested in organic foods, community living, and any formal meditation. (Many of us follow Trungpa and TM) Please write if you would like to come to visit us and/or live with us and help with the restaurant and live on some truly beautiful land. Meditation in Action. We especially welcome visitors this summer. But please come only if you have made a real commitment to community living and meditation. Peace. **Hamsa Community RR1 Box 31 A Stewart, OH 45778.**

The Shalmoonwater Church is devised to restore man's faith in God and religion. We have ten years experience in managing cooperative communes. The behavior and hypocrisy of the historical churches have turned people off to religion.

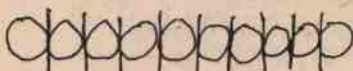
Democratic Socialistic Capitalism is the governmental compromise concept to unite major powers of the world. All the wisdom needed to end suffering and injustice throughout the world is in the books of the Shalmoonwater philosophy. We have not yet found a way to publish Shalmoonwater's philosophical books.

We have innovative institutions designed to solve the problems of crime slums, poverty, pollution, prisons, prejudice, sin, Nixon, war, confusion, exploitation, violence, cities, the rat-race, unemployment, hard dope, etc., hunger.

Anyone can consider themselves a member. There is no collection basket. Animals should not be slaughtered under conditions of pain and fear. Instead they should be gently put to sleep to soft music. The American Indians apologize a prayer to the animals they have to kill for food or shelter.

THE SHALMOONWATER WORLD PEACE PLAN AND INNER PEACE IDEOLOGY—The World Therapy Corps builds Home Farm Moshav Schools, which are non-compulsory. This all purpose ideal behavioral environment is the replacement for destructive cities. The ideology is cooperative, and non competitive. A Moshav is a commune where each family or person who wants a private farm, can have some acres. The orientation is good Karma, medipraytion, non violence, compassion, and spirituality.

The innovative institution which replaces prison cages is the Rehabilitative Therapeutic co-ed Kibbutz farm. The compassionate sensitive Samurai Therapy Service replaces and retrains police.



The rat-race will be gradually replaced by an agrarian cooperative nature worshipping economy of generosity.

Democratic Socialistic Capitalism is the ultimate form of coalition world unified government. With all nations unified in a compatible ideology. . . Many excuses for wars of oppression will be exposed. In our extensive philosophical writings, various problems are solved.

By joining this church and organization, we can change the world. By not joining, is to help to destroy man's chance to rise out of the mire our grotesque history has blazed in red fire, and blood. Religion should unite people, not divide them.

Len Freitag, Shalomoonwater Church, 1535 Central Park Ave., Yonkers, NY 10710.

Since July, 10 adults and 4 children have been living on a beautiful 117 acre farm in Virginia. We've raised sheep, made hammocks, done construction and painting jobs and mostly changed and grown.

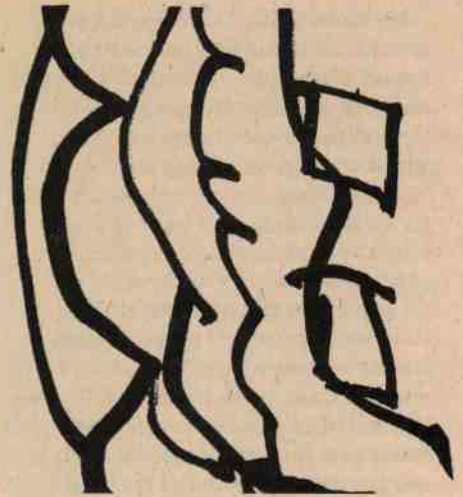
In the beginning we often said, "whoever makes it through the winter will stay together." So now the winter's over and 4 adults and 2 children made it. We also have 3 prospective members.

Right now we're in the process of deciding whether to buy this farm or another one. Grey Gables, the farm here, has a big house, pastures and woods, a 3 acre lake and the most beautiful views of the sunset in the East! To stay here we need another small group of people to buy and work the land with us. We envision the group having their own household in a separate building but working together a lot. We also want more members for our group who are interested in growing personally and spiritually and developing close relationships with both adults and children. We have 2 7 year old boys.

Another major need we have is people who can contribute to the work of producing the Community Market Catalog, which is a mail order catalog of goods made by communities across the nation. This entails research, layout and graphic work.

Virginia is an ideal place to be because of all the other communities nearby who we exchange labor, tools, support and ideas with.

If you're interested in visiting, call or write us. We'd love to see you. Peace. **Tom & Emily, Grey Gables Community, Rt. 5, Box 202, Louisa, VA 23093. (703)967-1142.**



We would be very happy to cooperate with other groups in information exchange and also to participate in cooperative efforts. We would even be willing to host a Mid-America conference some time this fall, for groups that live too far to get to either the East or West Coast.

So far there are only six of us but we expect some other permanent homesteaders in the coming weeks. We have over 1000 acres of beautiful land on which we have a large variety of farm animals and a large organic garden. We rent one acre camp sites during the summer for cash income and we have several small industries that are in the development stage.

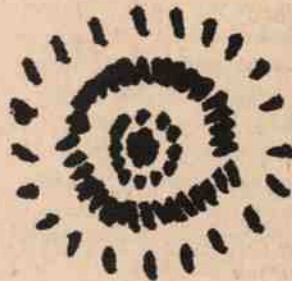
We use a work credit system, make decisions by consensus except for specific day to day operational decisions which are delegated or made by a majority vote. Our Land is held in a Land Trust and there is plenty of room for Homesteaders that want to either do their own thing or work cooperatively with others.

The Land Trust makes it possible to get back to the land without large down payments and cooperative homesteading enables each person to share the expensive equipment.

We have literature available about both Cooperative Homesteading and Communal living at U and I Ranch. Anyone interested may write & give their specific interest to **U & I Ranch, P.O. Box 1011, Lebanon, MO 65536. (417)286-3735.** Since this literature is rather extensive we ask that you send at least 50 cents to cover postage. Sincerely, Rod at U & I Ranch.



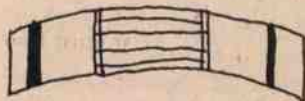
Co-op garage manager wanted. Garage is in good shape, several mechanics. Wages are decent. Located in urban Palo Alto, CA. Living situation up to you. Must have experience at managing, helping people deal with automobiles. Send a letter. We're not a commune but a slowly growing urban federation of co-ops, living situations and small scale alternatives. **Briarpatch Garage, 2901 Park St., Palo Alto, CA. 94306**



My name is Joe Corrow and I am doing time in the Wisconsin State Prison. I have my wife and five children living in Long Island City, NY. Here at the Prison, I have a hobby which consists of making jewelry (earrings, rings, necklaces), which I try to sell but do very poor at since I have few customers & much competition inside the walls here.

I got 4 sons and none have bikes, and I am determined to sell enough jewelry to buy a bike. To do this, I wish to run an ad in a paper. Will you give me some advise as to the best newspaper (underground preferably) and the cheapest paper as far as the cost of my ad? And if possible, the address of the newspaper?

Thanks much for consideration of my request. Hope this note finds all going well with you. Respectfully,
Joseph Corrow, Box C, Waupun, Wisc. 53963.



I am eager to hear from any groups of people, who are interested in helping an ex-con in starting a new life in the free world preferably in some type of commune. Please get in touch with me. Frank E. Bruce, B-50541 Tamal, CA 94964.



IN MAY 1974, I will be released from federal prison, and I will have a large personal inheritance. Several personal friends plan to join me here in Springfield, Missouri area and plan to form a farm co-op. This means that we will raise farm animals and have a large organic garden.

In addition, we plan to form a unique mail order business to sell imported products to the readers of the alternative press, as we will advertise in each alternative newspaper. The farm profits and the mail order profits will be used to help others.

We will form a tax-exempt foundation and avoid all taxes. Then we will fund grants to projects or programs that help people—workers, poor people, prisoners, etc. Each person on the farm will have an equal voice on how the grants will be made.

We will be living close to nature in a free, easy life style, yet also be helping others less fortunate in our work too. The more people that will join us, the more that we can accomplish. So I invite anybody who would like to join a natural, free life style close to nature and to help others to write me soon. CLOVIS CARL GREEN Jr., c/o Education Cept., U.S. Medical Center, Box 4000, Springfield, Missouri 65802.



CO-OP CONTACT. A contact list of people interested in cooperative ventures (farming, communes, pooling resources) in the general Portland area will be published soon. To be included and to receive the list, send a paragraph (100 words maximum) about your interests, \$1 to cover costs, and a self-addressed envelope to: CO-OP CONTACTS, P.O. Box 19142, Portland, OR 97219.



I am desperate for help. I need a place to live that is not paid for with money. I got ousted from my teaching job for my nonautocratic methods, and at present am completely without funds. I have been surviving on charity, which I hate.

I am looking for an intentional community I can be a part of in which I can teach in an alternative school. But for now I'll take anything. Martha Schafer, 600 Cambridge Ave., Dayton, OH 45407.



EARTHMIND IS a federal non-profit corporation, a family, an idea, a nexus for needed changes. We are researching Bio-Dynamics, wind, methane and solar power, establishing slide & education programs for groups, writing about these areas, and others, and working toward the light of the sun. We have a library containing many rare and out-of-print books which is available for public use.

We are also looking for skilled people, able to actualize themselves, and able to create love, situations, positive results and a modicum of money.

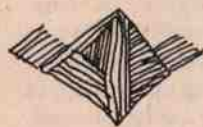
We're growing slowly, and would not wish for, nor be able to well use large sums of money just yet. Millionaires, please keep your millions. (For the time being, anyway.) EARTHMIND, Josel, Saugus, CA 91350 (805) 251-3053

Donations are being sought for the intended foundation of a non-denominational but naturalized monastic community retreat, which will be open freely to those intently seeking spiritual enlightenment. Needed are money for/or: approx. 300 acres of land, tools and equip. for building and farming, spiritual and back to the land literature and concerned people. Send donations and requests for more info. to The Truth of Love Retreat, c/o Jerry Gomez, 5738 Wood Dr. SW, Albuquerque, NM 87105.

I want to live in a rural cooperative, sort of a USA kibbutz or moshav. Do you know of any that exist? or of anyone else of similar mind? I'd like to correspond about this, and I'll put everyone who replies in touch with each other. I prefer the Rocky Mtn. and south west areas. **Gloge**, 337 Tenth Ave. San Francisco, CA. 94118.



I am an 18 yr. old male who would like to live with a large group of friendly people, preferably including several other teenagers and older children. I would like to have my own room there and also be able to have at least a part time job outside the living arrangements. I'd be happy to devote my love and energy to the growth and development of the community. My past includes a rich variety of experiences which might come in handy. These include a summer as counselor at a children's camp, a year of college, and numerous small jobs. Also, I'm great at learning new skills and adaptable to many types of situations. Eager to hear from you. **Keith Langevin**, Box 755 Ferland Dr. Dayville, CT 06241.

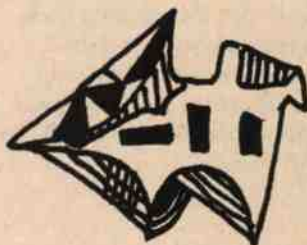


I'm cook for a group (of artists & others) that stays together to support the production of anti-establishment art making and works against individual studio production & marketing by private galleries. I'd like a group with a common studio and a common pooling of skills & tools that tries to produce an open public art, give-away art, public media and ad-art, mural art and figurative art. If you want to be part of this please contact me. Box 512, Pacifica, CA. 94044. **M. Thuma**.

We are Christina (24), Paul (32), Sundance (3), and Isaac Sparrow (3 weeks). We're seeking to meet people who would like to become part of an extended family with us. Our concept of an extended family is that of a close, supportive, non-monogamous community, in which strong ties between people do not form barriers to similar ties with others; in which members can honestly offer each other the warmth and commitment of a family.

We have 26 wooded acres along a small river in the coast range in Oregon. There is already a growing consciousness of alternative lifestyles in the area, and a natural foods co-op is in operation. We hope that soon the time will be ripe and the energy ready for a free school.

We hope to hear from anyone with similar ideals who is into farming, building, and growing together. **Christina and Paul**, 535 Pearl St., Eugene, OR 97401



I am looking for (or wish to help develop) an intentional community with emphasis on personal group growth and re-education. I desire a combination of organized activities (ie. food getting, meals, child care) and individuality (ie. separate housing outside employment or involvement). I desire a gradually changing place rather than a radical approach (no rigidity, mysticism, heavy drugs). I desire families with a variety of backgrounds. I desire (but not necessary) a place that attempts organic self-sufficiency. Most of all, I desire people that are *committed*.

I'm a nut for nature, gardening, (good food!) children, crafts, honesty, and learning. I'm an isolated divorcee (27) with a 5½ year old son (Shad) who desperately needs a rich environment, brothers sisters and male figures. I have a BA in Home Economics, food & nutrition. I've

worked as an instructor (adults w/ H.S. completion) therapeutic activities director (created program) and Arts & Crafts Director. I've grown up among Christian ideals, social work practice and diverse communities.

I am extremely innovative on the practical and intellectual level and with this, I can add a great deal to a community. I am spirited, energetic, but most of all, committed and loyal. I have been studying alternative lifestyle community development, etc., to prepare myself for a new life, to live out my ideals and add to a new home and group. **Charlotte Vanderlinden**,

Hi! Referred to you be life members of M. Earth News. Please - by Sept/October at the latest must find my right place in the woods, but not in isolation like a hermit. Can you help? My needs are extremely simple.

- 1) Am young 57, non-obvious post-polio, finally thru with "medical research", swimming all summer for muscle therapy, then I'm free to realize my life time dream:
- 2) A small, weather tight cabin, in the pines, on a stream. If it's basically solid I'll spend money on and install a Franklin stove if I have a good landlord.
- 3) Low, fixed income so need low rent/lease on permanent basis.
- 4) Can offer approx. (for attendant care to some gal who helps me with physical things, errands, etc.) \$150 per mo.
- 5) I'm not seeking drug oriented nor religious type groups, rather just middle-aged or random aged people who also feel as I do about nature, peace & quiet near people but away from the city rat tace!
- 6) I've lived in Paradise for two years and one year in Grass Valley, so am familiar with snow, etc.

Please help if you can. I must find my place before fall and dig in, and go fishing! **Irene**, 1777 Woodland Ave. No.28, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

We, Rich (28 yr. old lawyer) and Laura (26 yr. old teacher with a degree in sociology) (into camping and hiking and other forms of worship of Mother Earth) are interested in corresponding with people who want to form and live in an intentional community with basic rules and government somewhat like that of *Walden II* and *Twin Oaks*. In other words, we don't want a "hippie" commune or one that advocates anarchy or totally negates technology.

We envision a rural community near a town or small city in which most things are commonly owned but in which each person can have a separate room and privacy if desired.

Initially, we hope to find 10 to 20 people, single, married or otherwise committed who have a minimum number of children. Gradually we expect to increase the number of adults and children. The people we are looking for are willing and able to contribute capital of around \$5,000 (for land and buildings) and would agree that we all must work outside the community until we become self-sufficient via some combination of farming, craftwork and general "industry".

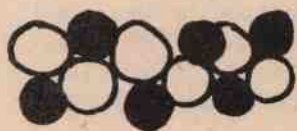
We don't eat meat, are not into tobacco, alcohol or drugs and don't go in for astrology or organized religion.

We would like to hear from craft persons, farmers, mechanics, white collar workers—all those who presently have marketable skills, who are prepared to work conscientiously toward the goal of increased common leisure, good will and security.

We are willing to learn to cooperate and to be gentle in relationships with people and nature and, if you feel the same way, please contact us.

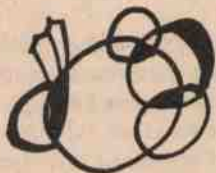
In addition, we are eager for constructive criticism and ideas for the planning, formation and maintenance of this community and to learn of any presently existing communities which are based on the above principles.

Rich & Laura Cohen, 46 West 73rd St., New York, NY 10023.



We are a group of six people (18 to 21) years of age who are planning to form out our own commune, or become part of one now forming already. We are all in the Coast Guard, except for the female part of our group, but we will all be out soon.

We would like to find or form a community that is simple or basically structured, a rural life style with at least some farming, possible although not necessarily isolated, where equalization ideals are believed in. Where people would work together and still respect and maintain individualities. We (the six of us) are liberal politically, and don't mind hard work if it is constructive and worthwhile. We would very much like to hear from you and any comments, suggestions, ideas or advice that you might care to give would be appreciated. We have experience in farming, construction, radio operations, electronics, painting, nurserie work and other odds and ends. Sincerely yours, through community, Carole DeLantonia, Ron Gamber (Satch) Eric Miemi (Ziff) Pattie Johnson, Shannon Dunn, and Salli Coates. (Write to: Ron Gamber, USCG Lorsta, Marcus Island, F.P.O., Seattle, WASH 98782.)



Assuming materials continue to be available as at present, possibly I could offer some slight assistance toward your goal since I am in a position to channel around fifty thousand dollars worth of labor, over the next one and one half years, into a community—but—the commune would have to be in this immediate area on account of quality control.

Should you have contact with groups here who might be interested, please have them contact me, or, if you prefer, send me their addresses and I will contact them. Yours for a better tomorrow, Joe Mayberry P.O. Box 1803, Cave Creek, Arizona 85331 (602)488-9672.

Very small commune — two of us — looking for members, preferably with engineering or technical skills but who don't want to be restricted to only "professional" work and regular hours. We have 20 acres with house, well, organic garden and electronics business (our chief means of support) building special purpose equipment for audio/music applications — 10 miles from a city of 40,000.

We try not to be fanatic about anything, except living in harmony. We're omnivorous; don't smoke but do drink and hope to start a vineyard for home wine making. (There were many vineyards in this area 50 years ago before cotton became a more profitable crop.) We're nudists — mostly for convenience in this hot, dry, fairly isolated area — but that's a matter of choice. We're interested in music (both for fun and profit), all sorts of crafts: metal and woodworking (we have a machine shop for both and a photographic darkroom), jewelry, clothing sewing and dyeing, alternative sources of energy including solar, and what-have-you. In fact, any activity that makes a contribution to life. Ron and Virginia, TDL of Las Cruces, PO Drawer H, Las Cruces, NM 88001 Phone 505-382-5574.



MENDOCINO FARM, to be established not far from Mendocino, Ca., will hopefully be the first community of a federation to be known as the Crocus Commonwealth. The community as a whole will function as an informal folk school, the educational content being a reflection of the particular needs, interests, and capacities of those present. It will also be the permanent home for the Martin Buber Institute.

As presently envisioned, Mendocino Farm will initially include perhaps 25 resident individuals. In addition to homes there will be guest cabins, accomodating temporary residents. Permanent residents will administer a community association. This association besides being involved with building and operating the guest cabins, will engage in other income-producing activities including agriculture, alternative energy, crafts, publishing, etc. It seems reasonable to assume an ultimate maxi-

mum population of approximately 150, including temporary residents and guests. This would allow the presence of a library and meeting house, a tiny store, a small inn, a children's house, a medical emergency vehicle and other desirable facilities. When it reaches its full physical development, the community will occupy 70 acres.

While a program is here sketched for Mendocino Farm, a second somewhat similar community is envisioned in Sebastopol. Others may wish to build compatible experiments elsewhere and these may readily become part of an evolving federation to be known as The Crocus Commonwealth. The criterion of economic viability will help to screen ideas which have not been adequately thought through. The history of communities that did not survive shows this to be both necessary and desirable.

I am seeking funds primarily on a loan basis, although donations would also be welcome. Loans can be for any period in any amount from \$500 up and I will be happy to pay interest at whatever rate is specified up to and including 10% per annum, the legal maximum. I am seeking to secure a minimum of \$50,000 within the next 60 days. I will personally obligate myself to repay these loans. The proceeds will be used for acquisition and preliminary costs for the first 46 acres of land.

Plans call for any funds that are donated for the development of Mendocino Farm to be ultimately repaid into a rotating guarantee fund. This guarantee fund will be available to insure loans to future groups. Thus, as the federation develops, practical possibilities for growth into a world wide social movement will be advanced. The Martin Buber Institute is being established and will administer these funds. Donations can be made through The Portola Institute if tax-exemption is important. Please contact: MARK GOLDES, P.O. Box 880, Sebastopol, CA. 95472 (707) 823-0135.

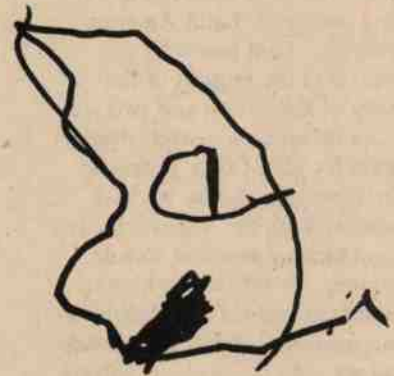
We are writing a source book which will be an educational tool for individuals interested in the different organizations actively concerned with land ownership, growing practices, processing and marketing in agriculture. A shift in present trends may be possible if enough consumers take an active part.

As the years have passed Americans have moved farther and farther from the land; once an agrarian nation, large urban centers now house our society. Our food is grown on farms far away from these urban centers and transported to giant chain supermarkets. Emphasis on higher yields has led to pollution of our air, water, and land, as well as erosion and ever-expanding acreages of exhausted soils. The rapid depletion of international fossil fuel resources is having a significant impact on our Western agricultural system which is heavily dependent on large inputs of this source of energy for fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, machinery, and transportation. The results are frighteningly evident on our supermarket shelves. Abdication of the individual's power is a by-product of the new monocultures.

We are particularly interested in the needs of cooperative enterprises, minority group rural development schemes, farmers, food conspiracies, and consumer concerns related to food. We look forward to hearing from others who share in these concerns. Contact: **Alternative Agricultural Resources Project**, c/o Isao Fugimoto, Dept. Applied Behavioral Sciences, Univ. of Calif., Davis, CA 95616.

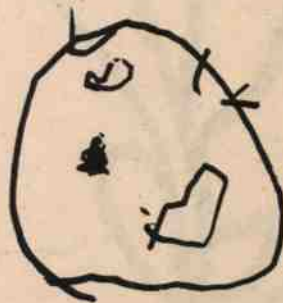
I have not located any group containing some middle-aged people and dedicated to a Socialist philosophy so I bought and am establishing a small homestead on my own in Northern Minnesota. I am having a bawl getting this place ready for a self-subsistent lifestyle.

I would enjoy sharing this place with one to three others, so if you hear of anyone over 30, with a Socialist outlook on life and would like to build and share the "good life" in Northern Minnesota, have them write me. Comradely, **David Venitsky**, 77 Willard Rd., Duluth, MINN. 55803.



I am a widow on Social Security and am a self-employed seamstress. Living expenses are too high here and I want a place of my own with like minded people. I cannot buy now but can pay up to \$100 a month rent to a group arrangement with the rent helping the group and also helping me to buy. I am an avid organic gardener and want a plot of land or work with others to grow organic fruits and vegetables. I am very much interested in helping the young folks with growing good food. I am very health minded.

I feel it foolish to pay rent and build up the place when the people are not organically or health minded. I only have rent receipts. Any help will be appreciated. Thank you. Sincerely, **Agnes A. Dorich**, 601 N Fisher, Fresno, CA 93702.



No doubt that small communities can be helpful for personal development, for providing meaningful relationships with other people, for exploring alternative life styles, and for struggling with the production and distribution problems of lifes' necessities. And it may be true that these communities and monasteries such as Lindesfarne will be necessary to preserve the culture in the coming tumultuous years. But the need continues to exist for solutions to social problems and for new models at the national and international levels.

My own interest has been in developing countries, Latin America in particular. I am presently in Venezuela at the request of the Ministry of Education and two colleges coordinating a masters degree program for about fifty people in higher education. So far we have concentrated on the Venezuelan reality and various problem solving techniques. We talk about human development instead of developing human resources. Small group techniques are used for problem solving as are sustems analysis and other research methods. The program is student centered and individualized with very little group lecturing-if you will pardon the educational jargoneze.

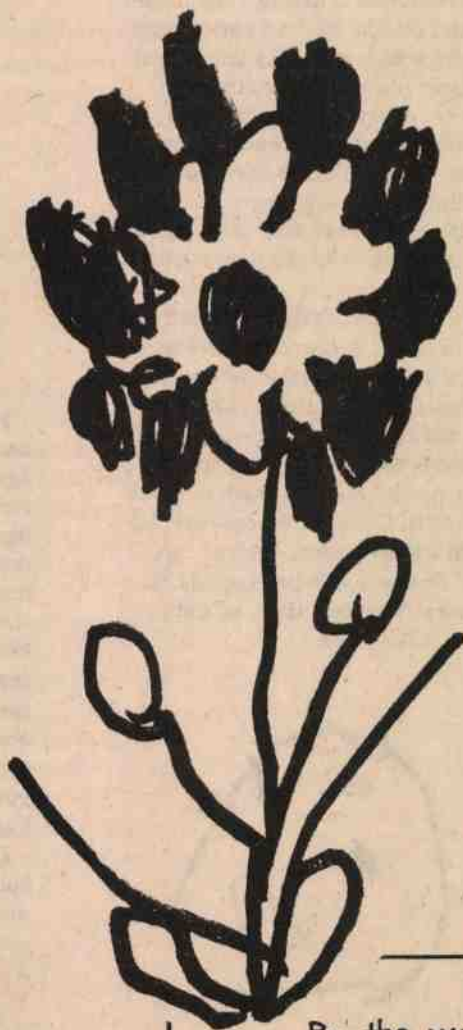
Venezuela is a rich country with the highest per capita income in Latin America. However, it has serious problems common to most developing nations: one of the highest birth rates in the world; rapid urbanization; and the majority of the people living outside the economic mainstream, i.e., most people do not earn enough for minimal food, clothing, and shelter as defined by the economists.

It seems to me that many of the alternative life styles being explored by the readers of this magazine could serve as potential models deserving of consideration along with the "establishment" model of the U.S. by developing nations. I would love to include such information in the degree programs here. The problem is that the few publications available, such as *Communities*, are

in English.

What I need is information and all kinds of publications in Spanish. I need to hear from Spanish speaking people with ideas about transfer of ideas, experiences, and models. I need to locate Spanish speaking persons with something to offer who can serve as consultants. I need to find people who are interested in publishing about alternative life styles in Spanish: newsletters, magazines, books, articles, study guides, audio tapes, videotapes, movies, slides, microfilm and microfiche, etc.

If you think that you might be interested, please write to me by air-mail. Sincerely yours, Robert Jones, Avenida 20, No.10-43, Quinta Coromoto, Barquisimeto, Venezuela.



Harbin Hot Springs is still open to new people, though on a somewhat more restricted basis. We now require at least fifteen hours per week of work on community projects decided on by a community meeting, which governs all our decisions. We will accept money contributions rather than work if work is in some way a hardship.

We have about fifteen adults and eight kids with space for more. We do not have a regular community kitchen as yet, and members must provide their own food. A number of people have formed their own community kitchen. We have plenty of sun, land and water for gardens, and lots of fruit trees. Those who wish to roam or build secluded habitations have over 1,000 acres to play with. We are completely isolated, four miles from a town and eighty from San Francisco, and have absolutely clean air.

We are rather decentralized as communities go, more by the nature of the property than by choice. We do less in common and have more freedom and variety. There is no particular line or way of being that everybody is supposed to follow. We feel enriched by variety and would not want everybody to be the same. We welcome the old and very young as well as standard community ages. We have been going only a year and new people will participate in choosing our future direction.

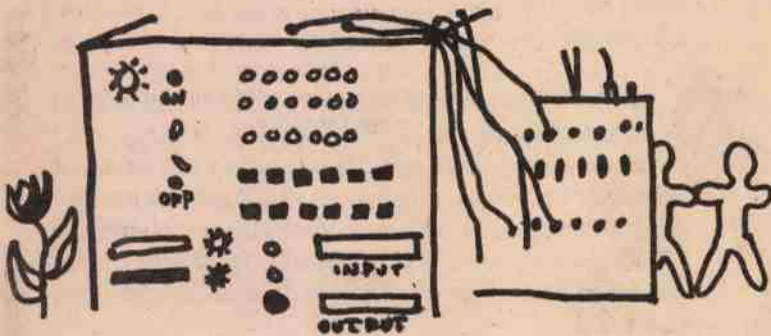
We want people who want to build a community rather than just have a nice place to stay. We hope people will do more than the minimum amount of work and become owners by doing so. We are serious minded people who want to build something bigger than ourselves, and live a fruitful life and grow. At the same time we want to enjoy life and each other.

Sunday is our regular visiting day, and we like visits to be on a Sunday or include a Sunday, which is one of our community work days as well. We find that people get to know each other quickest and best by working together. We do not have any red carpet for visitors as we are just too busy and too many people want to come, so we have to be a bit formal. Please write or phone before coming, so we will know when to expect you. Please no dogs. Harbin Hot Springs, PO Box 82, Middletown, CA 95461. 707-987-3747.

... By the way, **COMMUNITIES** is currently accepting paid advertising. \$25.00 for a 1/4 page, for instance. See inside back cover for mailing addresses...

grapevine

RESOURCE ONE



Resource One is a dozen people confronted with complete control and total responsibility for fifty feet of grey boxes called an XDS-940 time-sharing computer. The milieu is anti-profit and directed towards social change with decisions made by consensus at weekly staff meetings. The basic tensions of the situation center around the problems of a politically diverse, self-managed working group with heavy commitments and considerable resources, and they center at the fundamental tension between person and machine:

Can this tool of a militarized society be made directly useful to people?

How?

Are the costs of being body-servant to the Beast worth the unclearly defined gains?

Are we risking dependence on an overgrown, high-level technology?

What should we do with all the technological tools we've acquired?

It's a unique situation, rarely has any alternative group controlled so much "hardware" that's so difficult to use well. It's rather like a play with a set, setting and characters but no script.

So far the dialectic has produced a Directory of Social Services in San Francisco, an information retrieval system useful for indexing, searching, sharing and manipulating data for groups doing research directed toward social change, a public access information sharing network, a collection of government (census, housing, election, etc.) data about San Francisco made available to individuals and community groups, many burn outs, arguments, late nights of hard work, disgust with the whole thing and a continuing feeling of challenge.

This is a people-controlled machine or remarkably close to it. There are no rules of membership to Resource One; anyone who can more or less get along with the current staff and survive in the chaos can join the process by making a contribution to it through work and the development of new uses. Anyone who wants to use the machine can approach the staff; access is allocated on the basis of usefulness to people, energy drain on Resource One, staff interest and the economic reality of having to feed both the machine and people in order to get work done. There are lots of possibilities and we need a lot of help. What real work would *you* do with a computer?

The prime motivation of the Resource One work collective is to create new techniques and add new tools to the ones now being used by organizations and people involved in social change. Some of the specific projects we get involved with are somewhat hard to view from that perspective, being done mostly because they bring in money, but even those projects can help us understand how to survive in the environment we're part of.

It should be clear that there are many opportunities for involvement by people who are not now part of Resource One. Most such situations call for people who can afford to volunteer their time; in some cases, where the mutual advantage is very clear, some money is

available for subsistence. Of course, we are always open to proposals from people who want to use our tools in constructive, innovative ways, as part of a project of their own.

At this writing there are lots of possible projects to which people would be welcome to contribute their energies. Only a few of these would require any special computer skills, since most of the basic programming has been done. Examples of what people could do:

organize a comprehensive (or fragmentary) education program at Resource One or elsewhere, designed to promote discussion of how computer technology could better be used in the community, and information on how it is misused by business and government

organize the internal information flows of Resource One keeping track of what other organizations are doing through correspondence, making sure that correct information is being kept in Community Memory, coordinating information about R/O projects.

enter research data for projects like NACLA and the legal information system.

help design environments for Community Memory terminal locations, to help people learn how to use CM quickly and without fear.

attend Community Memory or other public terminals, helping people use the program and explaining how computers work.

investigate new locations for Community Memory, and new areas for Resource One to serve the community.

RESOURCE ONE, 1380 Howard St., San Francisco, CA 94103

Bonsilene



How did it get started? Two women, cutting loose from confused situations met each other at a commune weekend at Clarity Farm. Their ideas about why they wanted to live with women only for the time being crossed, crossed, and built on each other. Things like: finding yourself, getting support from women friends, a "different level of struggle," independence, were the essence of it all. We vacillated, fantasized about just two living together, or being with one man, or living alone, city place, country place, etc. But finally

one evening sitting on the front steps of a city point commune we decided to get a house in Woodmont. Many women were more or less interested, and we started discussing things. Meanwhile one of us found the rundown, delapidated Bonsilene house. We took one disgusted look at it and wanted it. Soon five of us -- Rosemarie, Sioux, Fran, Susan, Ginger -- were committed to the venture. On a beautiful May evening we gathered together in Woodmont for Chinese dinner, made a deal with the houseowners and carefully chose rooms (finding the Tarot cards agreeing with us).

... And then we took a long look at the house... it was a wall to wall clutter and sorely in need of paint. Undaunted we continued working until we discovered a piece of meat that had been living in the freezer for 6 months without benefit of electricity. With plugged noses the removal committee ceremoniously removed it, and the cleanup committee went to work using every remedy evolved for deodorizing refrigerators.) Soon, with help from many friends, and 2 truckloads of trash later, the house was ready.

Division of chores happened fairly easily. We all liked to do different tasks (or all hated doing different tasks), so chores were assigned for an indefinite period to be changed when they became unbearable. Our dish arrangement still leaves others in a state of shock. It's voluntary. After dinner someone volunteers to wash dishes and, unlike mixed houses some of us have experienced, it gets done and shared pretty equally.

Beyond these kinds of typical communal struggles (who does the dishes and how often variety) we've tried to focus on the ways we provide support to each other, as well as develop an understanding of what it is we share as women, as a commune, as individuals.

Several dialogues have grown out of this emphasis on support and sharing:

Continuing interpretations of what it means to be a "women's house"

How intentional is each person's involvement; is it more than just a comfortable, friendly place to live?

How much more?

Also discussed: the level of incredible busy-ness of every woman who lives at Bonsilene; sexuality; differences in our daily rhythms and life cycles; ways we deal with anger/negativity.

Bonsilene has been important to us because we've had time and space to think about our evolution as women who are breaking through oppressive roles, patternings, ways of being.

BONSILENE, c/o COMEX, Unschool Corp., PO Box 753
New Haven, Conn. 06511



After three years on Sunrise Ranch all I can say is "It's been a gas! There's no where else on earth I'd rather be. And, in the words of a once popular song: 'Life gets more exciting with each passing day'"

Sunrise Ranch is a community of about 130 full-time residents nestled in Eden Valley at the foothills of the Rocky Mountains near the town of Loveland, Colorado. It has been in operation since 1946 and is the international headquarters of The Universal Institute of Applied Ontology. And what on earth is that? Just a fancy name for living fully and creatively. Ontology is defined as "the art and science of true being," and so what we're into here is simply releasing life to the highest of our potential. Actually only one thing is required of those who live here (and in any of our centers throughout the world) and that is "Be who you are."

Recent months have seen a lot of expansion on Sunrise Ranch. We just acquired the farm to the north of us, bringing our total acreage to around 350. There are plans to move most of our animals (dairy cattle, beef cattle, goats, and hogs) to this farm so that our living area won't be quite so close to the barnyard. We are also in the process of constructing a \$130,000+ geodesic dome that will serve as a meeting hall for ranch personnel and the many in the surrounding area who are associated with the movement. Plans are being made for the expansion of our kitchen and dining facilities and for the construction of a new administration building.

There has also been considerable development in the cultural area. Our choir director is receiving special training at a nearby university. A fine orchestra has been formed featuring several professional musicians. Separate art classes in drawing, water color, and sculpture have been organized by three outstanding artists affiliated with our program. A gallery for the display of their works has been provided on some land we own at the other end of the valley. In the field of publications, our magazine *Ontological Thought* has been increased from 24 to 36 pages and the general design has been improved with art work and photography. The format of our newspaper has also been enlarged.

This year our 5 acre organic garden promises to be more productive than ever. Those who work in this area develop more sensitivity each year. Last year we harvested almost a ton of peas alone and equally impressive amounts of other vegetables. Another thing we are doing is experimenting with pyramid-shaped structures for food storage, yogurt making, and promoting the healing of sick animals.

Everything functions here on a note of harmony. Would you believe that I have yet to see or even hear of any kind of a hassle in my three years here? And you wouldn't believe the high energy level, both physically and vibrationally. Everyone is full of enthusiasm and zest for life. I guess this is only to be expected when you get people together who are interested in only one thing—expressing integrity to the highest of their vision from moment to moment. We spend our time serving each other and when 129 other people are serving you, you certainly don't have to think about serving yourself.

We can't handle too many visitors but if you're really interested or would simply like to contact an Ontology center near you, write me (Jerry Kvasnicka) c/c **SUNRISE RANCH**, P.O. Box 238, Loveland, Colorado 80537.

Center for Conflict Resolution

During the last few years we have encountered a growing interest in group living and particularly in the idea of forming intentional communities. All sorts of people are considering building new lifestyles with all sorts of other people, including elderly, parents, single parents, teens, young professionals, couples, religious people, gay people, veterans, and nearly everyone else. We're asked a lot about the advantages and problems of forming intentional communities, so we thought we'd provide a partial list of each here. Of course these are just private thoughts out of our experience and can't be taken as gospel.

Advantages

Variety of people to relate to
closer interpersonal relationships
shared work, thus more free time
wider range of skills and resources
leverage for change in society
more simple, ecological living
build a new style of life
better quality and less expensive
human values instead of materialistic
greater emotional satisfaction
alternative to alienation
equitable, less authoritarian, less sexist
chance to live out real values
more control over own life
more adult models for children
more honesty, sensitivity
stimulates personal growth

Problems

overabundance of people
personality clashes
those who may shirk responsibilities
diffuse responsibility
threatens status quo, security, stability
conflicts over degree of simplicity
unspoken assumptions
mutually exclusive visions of community
not enough privacy
greater emotional investment
isolation when you're a minority
unconscious or subtle power plays
pressure to live up to ideals, be perfect
more heavy responsibility
confusing variety of childraising principles
hurt feelings
group puts some limits on individuals

No intentional community can realize all the potential advantages, and none can avoid all the problems. What may help is a clear recognition of the time and energy each person must invest in order for a new lifestyle to work. Group living is experimental and requires a substantial commitment, but its rewards can be very great.

Marx and other early socialists may have had a good point when they criticized the utopians of the nineteenth century. Although the history of the communal movement contains much we can learn from, its effect on society was so small as to be virtually unnoticed. Far from providing models for positive social change, the communes were regarded as the exceptions that prove the rule: freak, isolated cultures, deviant from the rigid norms of the times, attracting flocks of curious voyeurs yet remaining largely irrelevant to the social mainstream.

Rural living is a good alternative to the usual city tensions; a neighborhood land trust can also provide that alternative. A city land trust could have ties with rural people; it could support food co-ops as outlets for farm goods, its people-power could help stop the cancerous urban sprawl which threatens to swallow peripheral farmland, and as a network of support it could provide alternative jobs in counter-institutions. Ultimately every individual might have access to both urban and rural lifestyles at different times. — CENTER for CONFLICT RESOLUTION, 420 North Lake Street Madison, Wisconsin, 53706 (608)263-1747/4843

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CHILDREN/MEN

New Solutions and New Problems
in two special issues of WIN Magazine



Photo by Richard Kalvar

Can Child Raising Be a Revolutionary Activity?

In country communes and in cities, radicals are coming to grips with the problem of raising sane, healthy kids in an unhealthy society. The February 21 issue of WIN documents the task of applying what has been learned in social struggles to this crucial challenge. Included is an exclusive interview with Dr. Spock.

Are Men in Need of Liberation?

The April 11 issue of WIN looks at what might be a changing men's consciousness. Included are first person reminiscences of the masculine life in America, and information on the growing number of men's collectives, conferences, and consciousness raising groups around the country.

These exciting issues are only two examples of the kind of reporting and analysis of concern to the radical movement that WIN serves up *every week*. No wonder that New York's *Village Voice* calls WIN "the liveliest magazine on the left."

So that you can follow WIN's continuing coverage of these important topics, we will send you *both* the kids issue and the men's issue for free if you subscribe now for a full year.

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NSE is a national clearing-house for the exchange of ideas and information about alternatives in education. Our primary purpose is to continue and expand communications / organization among schools and individuals at all levels of alternative education. We publish a bi-weekly newsletter (except July and August) which contains articles, information, and lots of good things about people/places/events. We also publish the only annual Directory of Alternative Education in the United States and Canada. This directory is free to all NSE subscribers and is continually supplemented through the newsletter

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ALTERNATIVES FOR EDUCATION NEWSLETTER
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bookshelf

If you're interested in community building and communal living (and you must be, since you are reading this magazine), then you might want to read some of the books we sell. We're listing a few of them below. Write us for a free brochure if you'd like to know the names of the 40 other books we think are relevant to living cooperatively.

HEY BEATNIK. Stephen and various crew chiefs tell how 650 people are making it on 1750 acres in the heart of Tennessee. They talk about farming, neighbors, childbirth, the motor pool and much more. The layout is delightful and the content, thought provoking.

104 pages, 150 photos. \$1.95.

THE COOK AND THE CARPENTER. By the carpenter. "I couldn't have said it better myself," said the cook, "though I would have said it differently." A feminist novel set in a politically active Texas commune.

180 pages. \$3.00.

COMMUNITY MARKET CATALOG, 1973. In this new, expanded edition, the community market collective presents goods produced by, and articles about, various cooperative efforts. More than just a catalog, this book tells a lot about the economic state of the communal movement.

160 pages. \$2.45.

A LEGAL MANUAL FOR COMMUNES. By Lee Goldstein. Lee, a lawyer on the staff of New Community Projects in Boston, carefully describes the relationship between the law and our efforts to live communally.

\$2.95.

COMMUNE DIRECTORY. By staff of CPC. The most exhaustive and up-to-date list of communes and institutions of service to communes in existence. Phone follow-ups of many of the listings were done this past winter.

\$1.00.

A WALDEN TWO EXPERIMENT. By Kathleen Kinkade. Kat's account of the first five years of Twin Oaks community is now out in paperback. Her frankness and wit have made this a big seller.

\$3.25.

CELERY WINE. By Elaine Sundancer. This is a beautiful book about life on a "hippie commune" that has survived past the heyday of such ventures.

\$2.50.

about this magazine

Our vision of the job of editing this magazine is to function as a clearinghouse: to collect material, select what's most relevant for the folks who read Communities, and take charge of the production and distribution tasks.

This means we don't want to be writing all the articles, taking all the photos, and preparing all the graphics for each issue. We hope this material will come from the people who see this publication as a tool or resource which is available to them, especially to those living cooperatively. Send us whatever you are doing or thinking: cartoons, articles, a letter you wrote to friends, black and white photographs, news for Reach and Grapevine. The magazine will continue only as long as this kind of material flows in from all of you to those of us who put Communities together.

Issue #10, now in preparation, will have a focus on work -- how to get it done, what work means to different communities. #11 will deal with issues surrounding land, its proper use and the need for and methods of returning control of it to the people. Material for this issue should be submitted to Communities/West by September 1.* We hope to highlight spiritual communities and overseas communities in future issues.

Beginning with issue #10, Communities/West will begin handling bulk distribution. If there is a market for the magazine in your area, but local bookstores don't handle it, have them contact us at our West Coast address.

*In the past, usage of personal pronouns in our articles has been inconsistent. In material submitted for publication, we would appreciate your using the neuter personal pronoun 'co' (designating he/she) rather than the masculine pronoun when not referring to a specific gender.

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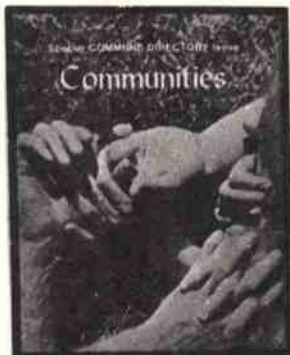
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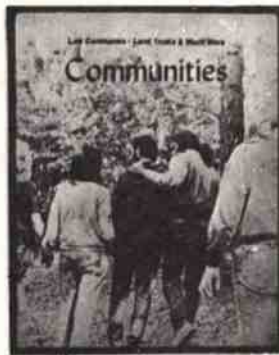
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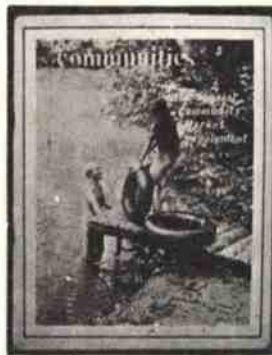
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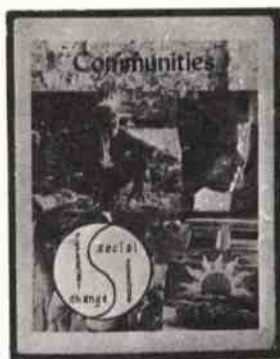
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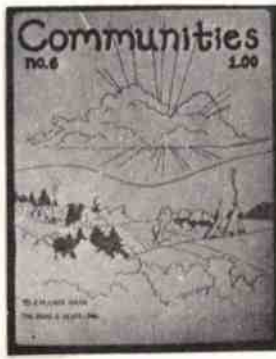
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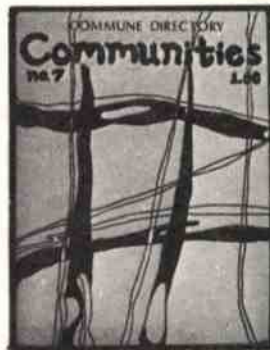
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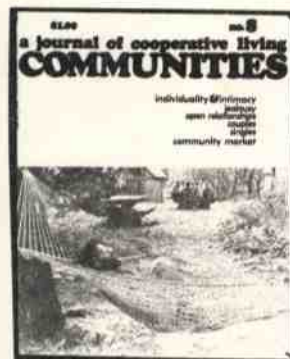
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