

RAISE THE STAKES

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URB AN' BIOREGION

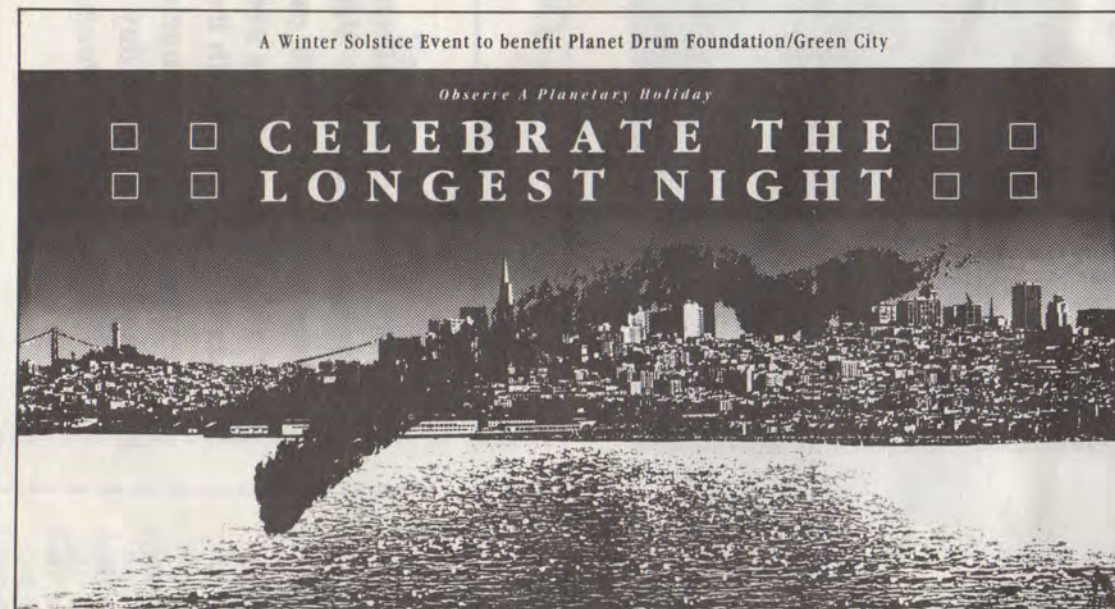
GREEN CITY



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CELEBRATE THE LONGEST NIGHT

by Peter Berg



... was the largest public bioregional event that has been held to date — but that may not be the most significant mark of the event.

One of Planet Drum Foundation's more illustrious qualities has often been its ability to narrow the gap between bioregional footwork and celebration in approaches to various public functions. More often than not, Planet Drum's gathered mixture of unusual talent and bioregional testimony have outdistanced the intended sum of its parts into the word-of-mouth realm of "one-of-a-kind" events.

On December 21, 1985, Planet Drum staged a winter solstice celebration, a fundraising benefit, and a formal Green City program kick-off entitled "CELEBRATE THE LONGEST NIGHT" which did all those things and more. The following account of the event by Peter Berg will give you a good idea why it worked on all those levels and how it will continue to work through the initiated 1986 Green City program.

—Robert C. Watts

From a distance, "CELEBRATE THE LONGEST NIGHT" was all that could be read on the poster. The image was an illuminated San Francisco swathed with a broad green paint-stroke under a midnight sky. You would have had to be intrigued enough by this to come closer and read, "A Winter Solstice Event to Benefit Planet Drum Foundation/Green City." The list of performers ranged from jugglers to clowns and poets, with musicians and dancers spicing the gumbo. The date was December 21, 1985, and the site the Wattis Hall

of Man anthropology museum of the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park. There was also a broken up invitation to "Join us for the start of a campaign . . . to green Bay Area cities and towns."

Over seven hundred and fifty people (half again the legal capacity of the Hall, sometimes standing outside for an hour to get in) put it all together. They were met at the door by a costumed jester, threaded through a courtyard past a huge dolphin fountain and astronomers with

telescopes vainly seeking Halley's comet, by a chanting poet in a condor costume to the corridor of an aquarium with lit fish tanks in the walls, and finally to life-size exhibits of Maoris, Hopis, and Eskimos in the Hall of Man. A Greens Brother had handed each of them a package of native flower seeds on the way. Programs gave a little of what some found to be desperately needed information to make sense of all this:

CELEBRATE THE LONGEST NIGHT

sunset 12/21 — 4:53 PM
sunrise 12/22 — 7:22 AM

Welcome to a celebration of the real New Year's Eve in the Northern Hemisphere.

Winter Solstice (literally "sun stands still") occurs when the arc of the sun appears to stop its day-by-day wintery descent southward: after tonight it will gradually rise again and the days will become longer. This is one of humankind's oldest holidays and was simultaneously observed by both native North Americans and European Druids.

It's also the appropriate time to begin Green City dreams for Bay Area cities and towns. We're part of the places where we live and there are more sustainable ways to live in them. Where would food and energy come from in a Green City? What would happen to wastes? Would 40% of urban land be taken up with parking spaces and roads as it is now? How far can a Green City go toward restoring creeks and marshes, native plants and animals? Would more people be employed in recycling, solar retrofitting homes and buildings, planting community gardens and orchards . . . and where will support for Green City Work come from?

You have your own questions and some answers to others. Let's share them tonight.

The Hall of Man had been divided up like a three-ring circus into a stage area, a display corridor of "Things That Work" and a hallway with a row of tables on one side for a wine tasting poured by six small-production vintners and on the other side for "Best of the Bay" desserts donated by local bakeries and restaurants (samples of bioregional wild snacks and drinks were also available). "Things That Work," for sale as holiday gifts, included native plants and seeds, packages of manure compost from the zoo (ZooDoo), maps contrasting San Francisco two hundred years ago with what exists today, and a calendar featuring endangered plant and animal species on a Bay Area mountain threatened by development. The San Francisco Conservation Corps showed how to build sidewalk planter boxes and the League of Urban Gardeners provided a chart of vegetable planting timelines that was adapted specifically for local growing conditions.

From the stage, film actor Peter Coyote, one of the evening's emcees, introduced the program by confessing, "We don't know what a Green City is so we're inviting you to tell us. Add your visions and dreams into the suggestion box and we'll all begin the greening of San Francisco." Radio news announcer and fellow emcee Scoop Nisker immediately volunteered, "Put frogs in the big fountains downtown so that all the shoppers at night will hear this croaking, this great croaking chorus."

Ecotopian writer Ernest Callenbach was the first speaker and provided his own wish list. "Green Cities would be full of trees that comfort us by reminding us of our origins in the forest, protecting us from wind and smog and the dullness of our rectangular architecture. Creeks would run through them and not through concrete pipes so that their water would remind us of our dependence on the great cycle of evaporation and rain and all the rivers returning to the sea." In the dimness away from the stage lights a model of an Australian aborigine sitting in meditation of The Dream-Time seemed to have been deliberately arranged for tonight as a tribute to ancient ancestors.

"Paint the town green," responded Scoop Nisker and brought on The Steppe Sisters to juggle with Indian clubs. Shifting from serious speakers to circus acts other performers continued for the rest of the evening. Poet Jerry Martien followed the satirical songs of Girls Who Wear Glasses (as in the Dorothy Parker poem "Men don't make passes at . . ."). Comic David Simpson and clown Lorenzo Pickle preceded guitarist Alex De Grassi, who was followed by regional food expert Sibella Kraus. Poets Susan Griffin and Michael McClure (he had helped dream up this event during a trip to the zoo to see giant pandas) were followed by belly-dancer Jamie Miller. I exhorted members of the audience to call out the names of the watersheds where they lived, congratulated them on their "matriotism" to Ma Earth for being there, and promised a participatively-developed Green City political platform in the new year. Shamanic Bob Carroll closed out by bringing the crowd to its feet chanting and stomping "To the Spawning Grounds" from his Salmon Show.

What had really happened during those five hours? It was by no means a traditional political rally, although there had been some minutes of silence in honor of the struggle to save Big Mountain. There were too many points of attention and not enough concentration on an issue or a candidate. Some people never got as far as the stage because something in the display area captured their attention for the entire evening. Some never left their seats because the broad variety of the stage

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Since 1974 Planet Drum Foundation has been developing and communicating the concept of bioregions — through regional bundles, books, and the triannual review, *Raise the Stakes*. We are now working to foster exchange among bioregional groups and projects — the growing number of people exploring cultural, environmental, and economic forms appropriate to the places where they live.

Raise the Stakes is published triannually by Planet Drum Foundation. We encourage readers to share vital information, both urban and rural, about what is going on in their native regions. Send us your bioregional reports, letters, interviews, poems, stories, and art. Inquiries, manuscripts, and tax-deductible contributions should be sent to Planet Drum, PO Box 31251, San Francisco, CA 94131, USA. Telephone 415-285-6556. All contents copyright © Planet Drum Foundation. Write or call for permission to reprint.



Shafi Hakim



Michael McClure

program itself seemed to express some human species testimony they didn't want to stop hearing. Nearly a thousand people celebrated the longest night as cultural activists, waving the flag of ecological populism as enthusiastically as hyphenated Americans honor the old country at a nationality day observance. They were declaring planethood, and they came to revel in it.

What did they want in Green City? A sample from the suggestion box:

Use/emphasize the other meaning of "green" - which is inexperienced. Though some very old stuff is represented in the green

concepts and proposals, there is a very serious way in which this is something we're all new at. Being "green" can be exciting.

Paint the Transamerica Building forest green!

Take down more fences between adjacent yards, redesign spaces for quiet retreat, children and adult play, veggie gardens, etc.... Get community boards input and help with this. Doing this would (could) foster a spirit of cooperation between the neighbors, break down artificial legal barriers, be safer (against crime,

for children), provide employment for gardeners and carpenters (some fences still make for better neighbors) as well as promote health and general well-being for those lucky enough to live on a block with such a shared commons.

Living spaces without a window for growing things would be illegal. Everyone has to give up their cars for a month every year. The city needs to be "green-ed" so it hires kids. They are given the opportunity to work outdoors, learn work skills, and be exposed to the "green-ing" concept. The city gets labor, the kids have something to do that keeps them out of mischief.

Establish aquaculture along the bay - it's a very productive industry for a high protein food source. Oyster farms, etc. need very little input and are sustainable for a long, long time. The city could provide incentives such as rent-free plots for people willing to establish aqua farms.

Line Market Street with a variety of fruit trees and give welfare folks the option of tending them. This would be aesthetically pleasing and provide food. If it works the city could fund similar projects on other main streets.

Curbside recycling - have trash collectors pick it up in separated bundles. Trash company could take the profit, but we all profit.

Put up signs with pictures of native plants and animals. Yes, create "nature trails" in the city!

How about mossy grottos in some of those dark, damp downtown areas? Keep 'em warm and underground - they'd be quiet and secretaries could relax from their dreary jobs at lunchtime by watching the moss grow. They

could double as warm places for street people to stay at night. Have some nice Ranger Rick guards to keep it from getting hairy down there.

Neighborhood competitions - growing and developing (alternative-wise). Like old-time county fairs, especially oriented toward youth and elders.

Promenade days - not quite fairs, not quite parades, but something in-between. Costumes and events - "alter our ego" days.

Green city would obviously be a more natural and self-reliant place if these citizen planners had their way, and more light-hearted compared to the mean spirit that created the bleak and punishing downtown areas that exist today. Winter solstice would be celebrated there, and summer solstice, and spring and fall equinoxes, too.

CELEBRATE THE LONGEST NIGHT was the largest public bioregional event that has been held to date - but that may not be the most significant mark of the event. It was also the kick-off for developing a Green City Program of advocacy positions for making urban areas sustainable within the reality of local supporting natural systems: joining cities to bioregions. By May, 1986, five meetings with representatives of groups working in related areas of urban reinhabitation (renewable energy, urban planting, urban wild habitat, transportation and traffic, recycling) had been held to develop Green City Program proposals. More will occur through summer and the full Program should be completed by the autumn equinox. When constituencies drawn from urban areas begin to assemble around Green City Programs to change the direction of local governments, the bioregional movement will start to gain the volume of popular support that's needed to secure the future inhabitability of whole life-places.



"I WANT PIAZZAS AND PLAZAS..."

A Green City Sermonette

by Ernest Callenbach

As one of the opening speakers at CELEBRATE THE LONGEST NIGHT, no one took to heart (and mind) more the idea of a possible green city than Ecotopia author Ernest Callenbach. He sermonizes up some striking impressionistic images of green cities as lively, spontaneous place-connected centers of commerce and culture to pit against the shadowy canyons of obtuse commercialism we're used to dealing with daily.

The following transcript is a pleasant reminder of the sustainable direction we're hopefully navigating toward - especially poignant when the gridlock of rush hour isn't exactly a "Freeway of Love."

—Robert C. Watts

"I understand that I'm going to be followed by jugglers, so I make no apology for giving a serious beginning to our evening of fun. I'd like to give a mini-sermon on some of my ideas about green cities, which will be added to by many others in the course of the evening. I have a lot of Calvinist ancestors, so in addition to the ancestors we see around us here, I call on them to help us have a little fun with the sermonette form.

"So here we are, sisters and brothers, sailing together around the sun, reaching one of the quarter points of the year - the two solstices and equinoxes that make a kind of giant celestial mandala for us to go around. A fit time to contemplate the marvels of our green planet and to assess our stewardship of our little part of the planet - the place, as Ursula LeGuin puts it with such beautiful simplicity in her new novel *Always Going Home*, "where we are living and dying." A fit time for a sermon, then. So a few amens and hosannahs would not be out of place if you feel like it. (Crowd: Amen!)

"I am not speaking, however, in consciousness of the kind of sky god who sits up above us somewhere. I would like to be conscious rather of the kind of gods that I discovered they have in Bali. Gods who are right around the corner, behind the rocks and bushes, just down the street.

Gods and goddesses of air and earth and water. The kind of gods you can easily ask, "How are we doing, anyway?" The kind of gods who like a party with lots of tasty offerings, like the sort we have here tonight.

"I want to begin by reading a text from a publication called *Breakthrough*, put out by a peace group in the Midwest that just did a bioregional issue:

If the earth were only a few feet in diameter, floating a few feet above a field somewhere, people would come from everywhere to marvel at it. People would walk around it, marveling at its big pools of water, its little pools, and the water flowing between the pools. People would marvel at deep rich soil on it and they would marvel at the very thin layer of gas surrounding it, and the water suspended in the gas. People would marvel at the tiny creatures walking around the surface of the ball and, at the creatures in the water. The people would declare it as sacred because it was the only one and they would protect it so that it would not be hurt. The ball would be the greatest wonder



Shafi Hakim

Peter Coyote

We need to remember Athens, where philosophers sat around outdoors, or Venice, or Soochow, or Amsterdam, with their canals bringing water to their very doorsteps. We need to remember the great city-state of Florence with its vivid street life, a habitat for people like Michaelangelo; or the compact, intense London of Shakespeare's day which, after all, was only a hundred thousand people.

known and people would come to pray to it, to be healed, to gain knowledge, to know beauty — to know how it could be. People would love it and defend it with their lives because they would somehow know that their lives, their own roundness, could be nothing without it. If the earth were only a few feet in diameter.

"Now we could have green cities, it seems to me: cities habitable for the human species. My particular fantasies along this line are towards cities filled with trees that comfort us by reminding us of our origins in the forest. Protecting us from wind and smog and the dullness of our rectangular architecture. I would like to see green cities with creeks running through them — not put into pipes — so that their water would remind us of our eternal dependence on the great cycle of evaporation and rain and all the rivers returning to the sea.

"I want green cities with piazzas, plazas, spacious and protected from cars — lively with the natural sociability of our species, giving centers to our neighborhoods. Places where we can meet each other at cafes and restaurants so we can eat together, break bread together. Places to have the spontaneous cultural and business conversations that lead to the kind of particular liveliness that cities contribute to our civilization.

"I want green cities with markets with fresh fruit. Foods grown in the neighborhood, or grown in the area near the city, fresh and uncontaminated. I would like to see cities with transportation systems that move goods in and out underground, out of sight, invisibly. And move people quickly around the surface in mini-buses, cable cars, streetcars and buses. Maybe even free bicycles on the "Amsterdam Plan" — bikes that you would pick up when you need them and lay them down when you no longer do so somebody else can use them.

"We need cities that encourage walking. Streets that are safe for loitering, as the great film director Jean Renoir said. Cities, in short, that offer the privileges that are taken for granted by village dwellers in any healthy peasant society.

"We need cities with residential structures that are integrated with commercial, amusement, and light industrial uses on the well-trying European model — not zoned into great ghettos far apart, with car travel required to get from home to job to shopping.

"We need cities with a decent density to make all these things possible, to be energy-efficient and people-efficient. And I like Scoop's idea of the frogs, too. Which means that we need many wild places in our cities. Shorelines and parks and ravines and creek-canyons where we can share parts of our cities with wild creatures so that we're constantly reminded that we are not the only species to live here seeking respite from concrete and glass.

"And we need cities with holy places for religious rituals. (Tonight we're engaged in a kind of religious ritual.) We need rituals to appease the planetary dieties that settle our species hash. Places for music and dance and theater; for meditation and communion with the natural order and with our deepest self.

"We could have such green cities. Human beings have known everything necessary to build and run them for 500 years, since the great Italian city-states. Now, if we as a people perched here on the edge of a continent with no other place to go, if we decide that we want such cities — we can have them. It's within our power acting just as individuals to begin to make our cities greener. Let me just run through a few things that we could all think about doing.

"If we have too much concrete, break it up and make a rock garden. Plant native plants wherever possible that don't need irrigation. As Gary Snyder says, learning the plants that naturally grow in our area is the first step toward getting to know where you really live. Plant edible plants: artichokes and asparagus for shrubbery; kiwis and grapes for vines; strawberries for ground cover; nut and fruit trees for shade. If your street lacks trees, get into your city tree-planting program. Turn out to help do gardening in the parks which are starved for city budget money almost everywhere. Help start a community vegetable garden.

"And acting as citizens there's lots more that we can do. We can put pressure on our planning department and planning commissions. Help get them off the steel-and-concrete kick. We can form neighborhood associations to increase our political leverage on city hall. We can get active in park and recreation departments. There's a whole lot of greening of our cities that we can accomplish through this kind of work. And we can say to the gods after we do some of that, "See, we're beginning to take care of things again."

"But in any sermon about a green paradise, we also have to deal with the devil, right? And one happens to be ready at hand — the private car. We find ourselves, it seems to me, at a critical point in the evolution of American cities, and the main enemy of green cities is, in fact, the private car. And the car is everywhere triumphant. Indeed cities everywhere on earth, not just in America, are being overrun by cars. The greatest cities that humans have contrived in the whole history of our species are in danger. And here, cars are multiplying faster than people. They're outbreathing us, too. They're using up our land area. They're using up our economic strength.

"I want to tell you an ironic story about an author named Donald Appleyard: a professor at Berkeley and a scholar of exactly how traffic destroys streetlife and neighborhood vitality. He studied in great, careful, objective, and even mathematical detail exactly how increasing traffic ruins a street. He did his work in San Francisco and he published these studies in a book called *Liveable Streets*, ending the book with some wonderful examples from Dutch cities of cul-de-sacs called *woonerfs* where traffic can only come in slowly, is on an even footing with pedestrians, including children, and generally doesn't wreck the neighborhood. Appleyard knew there was a crucial difference in citizenship between drivers and walkers. Driving, even the best of us are just passing through. We don't live there. We can't care for the place we are driving through as home. And incidentally, you may think the title of my book, *Ecotopia*, means ecological paradise. When I started working on it that's what I thought it meant, too. But when it was about to go to print I looked it up and it turns out that it means "home place." Appleyard knew all about this and how traffic kills cities. And woe unto us, brothers and sisters, consider what happened to this excellent man Donald Appleyard: He finished his book. It received great acclaim. People began to see how to apply his work. So he took a vacation in Greece — where he was struck by a car and killed instantly.

"In sober literal fact, it is them or us: cars or people. But of course it's also true, as Pogo likes to say, that "We are them." Probably most of us here tonight who have come to celebrate this great astronomical turning point came by car — a mighty collective self-contradiction. And when peoples go down the drain of history, that is how they go: in collective self-contradictions, like those of the Mesopotamian irrigators, or the Egyptian pyramid builders.

"Let us remind you what our cars are doing to us and to the prospects of green inhabitable cities. For one thing, if you do much driving, you know they're ruining our civility, our feeling of shared civilized territory. We all have a terrible tendency to become signal-jumpers and pedestrian-clippers. And our habitat tends to become the traffic tie-up.

"Cars wreck our balance of trade as a nation. We are selling our topsoil turned into corn and soybeans to pay for the forty billion dollars a year of imported oil that we need to support our car habit. Cars consume an eighth or more of all our national wealth, our national income. And for many individuals it is even more in the cost of insurance, repairs, courts, police, public parking using up valuable land. Like our military outlays, cars impoverish our national economy, by contrast with countries that move goods and people with more energy-efficiency.

"Cars are, at least in the vision of this Ecotopian preacher, mobile eyesores. They are shiny, ungainly, smelly, and dangerous — killing more than 50,000 of us each year and injuring almost two million more — a toll enormously greater than that of any military war in our history. This is, as Hobbes said about human beings at their nastiest, "a war of all



David Simpson

Shafii Hakim

against all." And there is blood in the streets, brothers and sisters, make no mistake about it.

"I hate to be so uncheerful, and I'll get back to a little better mood in a moment. There is no escaping the terrible indictment of the automobile — our joy and our destroyer. We love the thing that will destroy us, it has been said, and this is indeed the case here. Very likely our society will go down if we do not somehow confront the car and control it. The car is the dragon we have to slay if we are going to achieve green cities. Now Scoop Nisker uses on his programs a motto which I find very nice: "If you don't like the news, go out and make some of your own." And that's what's necessary for us to do about cars and green cities. Again there are public and private things we can all do. Some are serious and I'm going to suggest one that may be sort of comical.

"We need to make politicians and business people understand the real costs of the car system. Not only of congestion, death and injury, but of roads and highways — which are only about two-thirds paid for by the gas tax, and immense new bills are coming due for repairs to them. Something else has to be done. We need to distribute the costs of our transportation system more fairly. San Francisco has actually made some good steps in this direction by taxing highrise developers to support the better Muni service that they required by building their towers. And it has also begun enforcing a mix of residential and commercial space in new structures — something that a member of the Planning Commission told me only five years ago had not yet been demonstrated as necessary (probably because he had never tried to get in and out of the city in rush hour).

"We can seek ways to make life more difficult for cars and easier for people, plants and animals. I like particularly the "slow streets" idea that has been proposed by the Urban Ecology organization in Berkeley. This is not to barricade a street the way we have tried in Berkeley and some other cities. But simply to make a street difficult for cars to pass through quickly, so no driver in his or her right mind would try to go that way in order to get somewhere. They would only go in if they lived there. This means speed bumps — slow speed bumps — that make a car behave uncomfortably when you try to drive over it rapidly. It means chokers that make the area for a car narrower, planters and barriers that drivers have to go around. And potholes. You know there's sort of an irony right now that the city governments don't have enough money to fix potholes. To a person like me that's great. In fact, if the traffic seems too fast on your street you might want to go out and help some of those cracks turn into real potholes. That will persuade people to drive somewhere else, or even not to drive at all.

"We ought to be turning public parking lots into parks instead of vice versa. We need to make our streets into malls, keep cars off them entirely — make car-free

zones, the kind that Portland has had for several years. We need to widen our sidewalks, not widen our streets.

"And I think there are even some possibilities for anti-car theater. I think some people here tonight are interested in conceptual art and things like that. Can you imagine what would happen if at a time when the Bay Bridge is totally tied-up and thousands of cars are entirely stopped, about thirty drivers right near each other all got out and slammed their doors and walked away and walked home, leaving their cars there on the bridge? (Applause)

"But most of all, we have to try and kick the car habit in our own daily lives as far as we can. Nobody's going to be perfect in this. I'm not asking superhuman dedication and abnegation, but we can all find ways to be less dependent on cars. We can try to live near our work. We can relearn how to walk, as even New Yorkers do. We can explore and experiment with the nearby resources of our neighborhoods — the shopping, and recreation, and friendships, and community activities that are close at hand with people whom we might learn to rely on and have them rely on us, in preference to things that are happening across town. We can learn to know our neighbors — the people, the dogs, the raccoons, the deer, mice, birds, trees and grasses that are near to us.

"The proper metaphor for a city, after all, is not the "machine for living" that was dreamed of by techno-freak architects like LeCorbusier thirty years ago. The proper model is a living eco-system with appropriate niches for a great variety of beings. A city's diversity, one of its main delights, should be biological as well as social. It needs the magical and mysterious vitality of nature as well as society.

"Now history is long and our lives are short. It takes us many years to accomplish much of anything. We need to remember Athens, where philosophers sat around outdoors, or Venice, or Soochow, or Amsterdam, with their canals bringing water to their very doorsteps. We need to remember the great city-state of Florence with its vivid street life, a habitat for people like Michaelangelo; or the compact intense London of Shakespeare's day which, after all, was only a hundred thousand people. Much has been done by our predecessors. Much remains for us to do if we want to recapture the true civility of these past cities and add to them the green spirit of the coming ecological age.

"This may be the winter of our discontent with our present cities. But as we face tonight the darkest, longest night of the year, we also know that spring will be soon coming.

"We can have green cities. We must have green cities if we want them once more to feel livable, secure, familiar — cities that will feel like home.



RESTRUCTURING THE ECOLOGY OF CITIES

by Roy Rappaport

Roy Rappaport is Chairman of the Anthropology Department at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and an influential essayist who remains unknown to many. Although many of his essays have been hard to locate in various academic and alternative cultural journals, his impact on bioregional writing and thought has been extensive.

The following piece originally appeared in the "Earth Geography" Booklet #3 of 10. It has stood the test of time and remains as one of the freshest revisionary focuses on the complex aggregates we call cities.

For a more complete representation of Roy Rappaport's work, check out *Ecology, Meaning and Religion* from North Atlantic Books, 2320 Blake Street, Berkeley, CA 94704.

—Robert C. Watts

The goal of any attempt to restructure the ecology of cities, which is to say to restructure cities, must not be a particular vision but must rather be some sort of organization of population, physical facilities, and activities that can restructure itself continually to changing circumstances



An American city is a concentration of concrete, glass, steel, and asphalt, a locus of intensive administrative, mercantile and industrial activity, the habitation of a large aggregate of people and an ecological disaster.

It is easy enough to envision cities which introduce a little bit of heaven or at least a good deal of nature into their precincts, cities in which children play unmolested on the broad lawns surrounding terraced glass towers, and in which the factories and roadways are concealed underground, their emissions somehow captured by sophisticated ventilating systems before they poison the crystal air. But such visions are dangerous, for they may incorporate as much inflexibility as the contemporary reality to which they are counterposed. They may be unable to reorganize themselves in response to changed environmental conditions, and that which is nonadaptive becomes, in the long or short run, maladaptive. The goal of any attempt to restructure the ecology of cities, which is to say to restructure cities, must not be a particular vision but must rather be some sort of organization of population, physical facilities and activities that can restructure itself continually in response to changing circumstances.

Needless to say, the problems involved in any restructuring, let alone attempts which have as their goals adaptiveness, rather than particular plans, are enormous. They may, in fact, be insurmountable. Every building that now stands is a concrete and steel commitment to what now is, and many of the buildings by which we are now surrounded are likely to remain standing for a hundred years or more. But this is, perhaps, the least of the problems. The life spans of cities are not to be measured by generations, and when we speak of restructuring the ecology of cities, our concern is with centuries, although some pressing and lethal problems must, of course, be met in the meantime by ad hoc crisis measures.

The more difficult problem lies in the nature of the contemporary city itself. The term *adaptive* implies a more or less coherent entity of some sort. The referent is usually a living system, or system which includes living things. Organisms adapt by modifying behavior in response to new experience; genetic populations adapt by modifying their hereditary

endowments in response to selective pressures. Human societies may also be adaptive systems, modifying and expanding their cultural endowments in the face of environmental challenges and opportunities. There are, of course, pathologies of adaptiveness, and narrow adaption; an overly specific and overly committed organizational response to a particular set of environmental conditions is the most common and lethal of these. It may well account for the extinction of most of the species that are no longer with us and for the demise of many of the societies that no longer exist.

But it may even be questioned whether American cities are the sorts of entities to which the term *adaptiveness* applies. We should not conclude from the fact of city limits, the existence of city governments and services and the presence of large numbers of inhabitants that cities are coherent systems. They are not. They are only slightly organized heaps.

The physical features, primarily buildings and their locations, of a city can largely be accounted for by activities that take place within them. But much of the activity that takes place in a modern city such as New York has little or nothing to do with the city as a social entity. The banks, insurance companies and oil companies that have their headquarters in New York are not subsystems of nationally or internationally dispersed systems. Local manufacturing and transportation facilities are centers of far-flung distributive networks. They are merely *in* the city. They are *of* the city only by geographical accident. The city, then, is hardly a system, let alone an adaptive system. It is, rather, the focus of innumerable systems all of which have purposes of their own. These purposes, which have considerable effect upon the shape of the city, may have little or nothing to do with the well-being, however defined, of the city as a whole.

Even that locally-oriented activity which has most effect upon the character of cities, construction, is largely uninformed by considerations of the city as a functioning or organic whole. Much construction is speculative, and it may be exaggerated to suggest that buildings are hardly more than by-product — or waste product — of the construction, the primary aim of which is to secure a profit. To the builder the city is not a social unit or habitation or even a place. It is a market in which he can sell buildings as others sell automobiles or overcoats. It may be suggested that American cities are concrete and steel paradigms of laissez-faire economics only slightly tempered by zoning restrictions and the like, just as other operations of private enterprise are only slightly tempered by antitrust laws, pure food laws and their like. Be this as it may, the physical characteristics of contemp-

porary cities are largely the outcome of decisions made by innumerable private individuals for reasons, usually narrowly defined, of their own. Needless to say, it is only fortuitous when these private, short-run reasons coincide with long-term ecological requirements and the interests of society as a whole.

But where, in the city, do we find society? Cities have populations, but the population of a city is an aggregate, rather than a community. To be sure, some aspects of community remain in attenuated form even in New York. There is, for instance, a certain widespread affection for the Mets and a certain feeling of superiority from living in one of the world's great centers. But as important as sentiments may be to a community, a community is more than sentiment. It is a locally bounded social process. For community to exist, or to happen, participation in it must be meaningful. The term *meaningful* here implies two things. First, the social process must be "about" something or some things — beautification of the area, the operation of the schools, local zoning regulations or whatever. Second, participation in the process must be rewarded by responsiveness. Any input by an individual into the process must receive a specific response within a reasonable length of time if participation is to continue. A community, in other words, is a territorially defined population organized with reference to concerns of general interest which includes feedback mechanisms adequate to maintain the participation of a large proportion of the individuals whose interests are at stake.

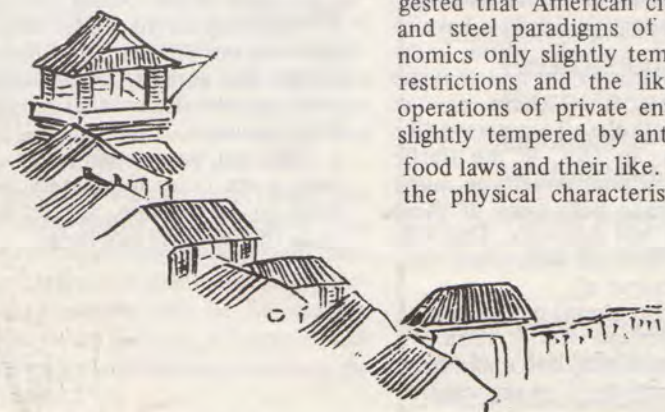
But what has been captured by special interests could be recaptured by the inhabitants, if they were organized, and another problem of the governance of cities is also of importance here. We have been arguing generally that the city, as presently constituted, is not only not adaptive, but hardly even the sort of entity to which the term "adaptive" can be applied. It is an aggregate of individual interests translated into concrete and inhabited by a large and unorganized population. City governments are organizations, of course, and they are charged with maintaining some degree of orderliness in the heaps over which they preside. But since cities are encompassed by larger entities — states and nation — they are only partial governments and, as such, are frequently

unable to fulfill their charge. It is well known that, under the direction of legislatures dominated by rural constituencies, more tax revenues flow out of cities than into them; as long as the federal Congress is dominated by committee chairmen from small towns in the South and West, it is unlikely that federal funds will be available to ameliorate even the immediate crises of cities, let alone to finance their restructuring. Perhaps the most important reforms in the governance of cities are not those which should take place in city halls, but those which should be made in state houses and in the seniority rules of Congress. The problem of restructuring the ecology of cities is, to a considerable extent, a problem which is not confined to the cities themselves. It is, perhaps, a problem of restructuring the society, its organization, its general governance, and its values. This must be recognized. However, we must proceed as best we can, assuming the existing structure of society to be part of the process of restructuring the society.

In terms of our discussion so far, we may say that if the ecologies of cities are to be restructured, the operations of individuals within cities must be made conformable to a conception of the city as a whole, but that the reality of the city as a whole is dependent upon the development of community within the cities, and upon the emergence of city governments that are capable of coping with the problems that lie within their jurisdiction. In more abstract terms, the problem is that of fashioning a general-purpose system out of what is presently a conglomeration of special-purpose systems. By a general-purpose system, I mean one which is uncommitted to any specific goal, having instead simply the goal of survival. Such underspecified purpose implies adaptiveness, for the term *survival* assumes an ability to persist through changing circumstances.

I take the term *adaptation* to refer to the processes by which living systems, or systems including organisms, maintain homeostasis in and among themselves in the face of both short-term fluctuations in their environments and, through modifications of their own structures, in the face of long-term changes in the conditions under which they exist.

Homeostasis may be given more or less specific, if not always precise, meaning if it is conceived as a set of goal ranges,



ranges which do not endanger the survival of the system.

The simple cybernetic model suggested here has the advantage of empirical specificity, but this may be misleading. For one thing we are not aware of all of the survival needs of systems such as cities. We assume that they include, among other things, the biological needs of the organisms residing therein. These would demand, for instance, that CO and SO₂ emissions be held below tolerable levels. There are other variables that are not as directly associated with biological needs. Traffic flow, for instance, must be held just within a range that is adequate to supply the city and to transport people wherever they must go, but which does not exceed the capacity of the streets. Other needs are neither obvious nor possible to quantify: the possible need of individuals for variation in their visual surroundings, their possible need for grassy places upon which to lie or run. Grass and variety should be maintained in adequate amounts, and so should other things — the list is probably endless, and we must build regulatory mechanisms that can cope with variables of which we may not even be aware.

But when we refer to the adaptation of a system in a general sense, we imply much more than the sum of its special adaptations, much more than a collection of variables and the mechanisms holding them within their goal ranges. For one thing, some of the special adaptations may be contradictory, and relations among them must therefore be regulated by mechanisms of a higher order. An adaptive structure includes not only mechanisms regulating material variables — traffic flow, noxious emissions, quality of water and food, amounts of green space, quality, rate and location of construction and so on, but mechanisms regulating the regulators, and others regulating them. The structure of adaptation is hierarchical, with decreasing specificity at each ascending level. Whereas lower order mechanisms are concerned with the maintenance of orderliness among the operations of the regulators subject to them, those of the next echelon, are concerned with orderliness ultimately among a yet wider range

of them subject, in a very direct and immediate way, to those who are affected by the variables which they regulate, which is to say to the inhabitants of the city.

A related pathology, which requires little comment, may be called "bureaucratic sclerosis," the tendency for control hierarchies to become rigid, to lose their ability to correct themselves because those who occupy them are likely to have an interest in maintaining things as they are. This is particularly deadly when, as is likely, it is found in association with "institutional deafness," the inability of officials to hear signals expressing discontent with the values of variables which they are charged to regulate. This may be a function of stupidity, insensitivity, stubbornness or selfishness on their part, or simply of inadequate feedback. The more elaborate the control hierarchy, the slower information feedback is likely to be, and the greater is the likelihood of information being reduced, filtered or distorted.

We have noted four pathologies — and there are surely others — to which city governments, like all governments, are subject. These pathologies tend to devour flexibility, to reduce adaptiveness, and thus in the long or short run to result in decline or lead to disaster.

The transformation of the heaps which are contemporary cities into adaptive systems requires that there be developed control hierarchies only minimally affected by such pathologies. Such control hierarchies must be simpler and more responsive than those that presently exist. The development of simple and responsive control hierarchies is contingent upon the development of communities, but the development of community requires decentralization.

I do not argue that cities should be dissolved into congeries of autonomous municipalities, but that they should be organized into numbers of communities. I do not suggest that a large whole be replaced by smaller ones, but that the conglomerations which presently exist be transformed into coherent wholes composed of indefinite numbers — in the case of New York, perhaps several hundred — semi-autonomous communities in each of which there reside as many civic functions as possible.



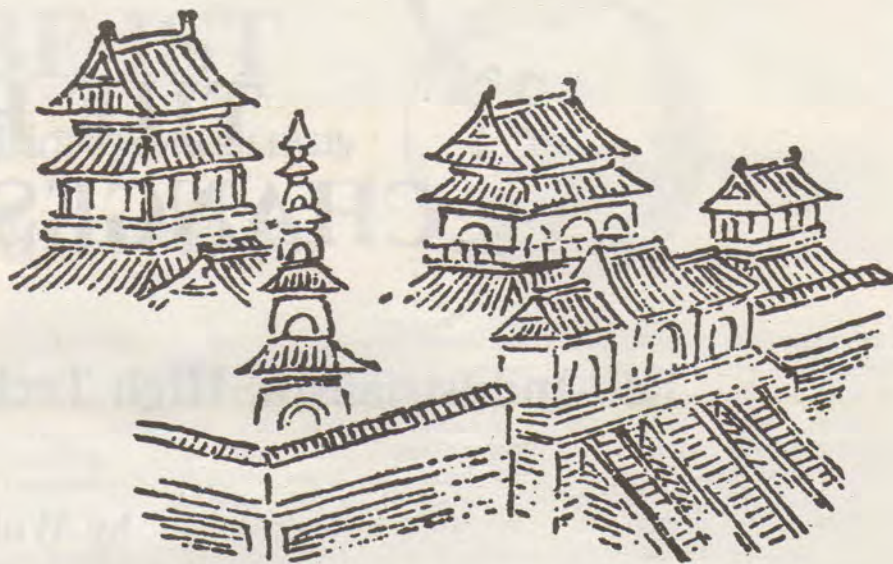
of variables. As the control hierarchy is ascended, the activity shifts from the maintenance of simple orderliness to meta-orderliness, which is to say to the maintenance of flexibility. In other terms, there is a shift from simple management to policy formation.

City governments are control hierarchies, of course. As such, they are central to adaptation, but as such they also illustrate some of the pathologies of control hierarchies. The most typically American pathology is one to which I have already alluded in passing, but may mention again. Special purpose systems, businesses and the like attempt to capture the regulatory agencies to which they are subject, and to elevate their own purposes to positions of preeminence in the more inclusive system. This process, and the attitude justifying it, is nicely summed up in the phrase "What is good for General Motors is good for the United States." Usurpation of the place of the general purposes of a lower order system cannot help but be disastrous in the long or even short run, because special purposes are, by definition, highly specified, and no matter how benign they may seem, their elevation must decrease the adaptiveness of the general purpose system. An adaptive control hierarchy must incorporate means for preventing such usurpation. It is probable, given the persuasiveness of lobbyists and the corruptibility of men, that no defense against usurpation can be built into regulatory agencies themselves. Their virtue, I think, can best be preserved by making

The basis for community in this scheme is residence, but there are large sections of New York and other cities that are devoted entirely, or almost so, to industrial and commercial activities, and the city should retain direct jurisdiction over them. A council of representatives from secondary communities should be central to city government. Since industrial and commercial areas would not be organized as communities, they would be unrepresented in government. Such an arrangement would bring under the control of the inhabitants of the city those special-purpose systems that contribute disproportionately to environmental difficulties.

Finally, there should exist in the city a general planning function. Once communities become established, they could guide their own development, but the establishment of communities might have to be initiated from outside, and the location of communities in the total geography of the city would be a matter of concern to the city as a whole. Moreover, the physical structure of communities themselves require some initial planning if they are to be more than conglomerations of buildings and people.

I don't believe that the general proposals that I have made here are unattainable. Indeed, I have advanced them because it seems to me that they can be gradually realized. There are at least two



ways in which such communities can come into being. The first and most obvious is through the reconstruction of blighted areas. Such reconstruction is nothing new; cities already spend great sums of their own or federal money on urban renewal and low-rent housing. I suggest that, instead of merely building bedrooms, community plans be developed for areas in which construction is to take place. The plans should include locations and capacities of facilities of various sorts — not only dwellings and schools and police stations, but also areas allotted to commercial and industrial activities that could be accommodated pleasantly and safely in a residential area. Government itself need not finance the entire cost; private builders could be given the opportunity to construct various facilities in accordance with plans.

I cannot go into the details of such plans. There is no way to know what they should be. Surely they should differ one from another, and there will surely be continuing changes in the principles of planning in response to experience and developments in technology. There is no reason, however, that they could not incorporate a great deal of green space, and perhaps be surrounded by green strips; they could exclude automobiles or keep them underground, and it could be that factories, providing some of the community with employment, could also be located underground, with the surface reserved for residences, retail establishments, schools and entertainment. But there are more fundamental things to say. Initial building density should be sufficiently sparse to allow some later internal growth, and building materials which are easy to demolish should be favored, for the use of such materials could encourage continual change in response to changed circumstances. Moreover, buildings should be designed for multiple and changing use. The "basic building" should enclose a large, uncommitted general-purpose space which permits subdivision into a variety of temporary special-use spaces in a quick and sensitive response to changing needs. The over-all plan of the community should also be such as to foreclose as few future alternatives as possible. In short, the design of both individual buildings and the community as a whole should be concerned with preserving as much flexibility — adaptiveness — as possible.

Good places to begin to develop primary communities from scratch would be in dilapidated industrial districts. Land is relatively inexpensive in such areas, the population displaced is minimal, and the industries displaced, or more desirable ones, could be incorporated into the new community in unobnoxious fashion. Although it might never be possible to incorporate heavy industrial plants into them, it might be possible to find places in primary communities for lighter industries and offices. If people worked in the communities in which they lived, an additional benefit of decreased demand upon transportation facilities would be secured.

It would also be possible to create communities in areas which were not to be razed and reconstructed. Essential first would be plans, informed by the goal of creating communities, restricting the uses to which various sites could be put once the buildings standing on them were removed. In addition, a few key seed facilities — a school, a community center — might need to be built at the outset. Gradually, as buildings were replaced, the

physical community would take form in accordance with a plan which itself would have to be continuously modified through a developing community process. Implied here is that, as communities come into being as physical entities, either created new and whole, or emerging gradually in accordance with a continually modified plan, they must be granted not only the community functions to which we earlier alluded, but also the right to plan their own further development.

At first, the existence of such quasi-autonomous units would be anomalies in the city's administrative structure, but as more such communities came into being, they would begin to transform the administrative structure into something resembling our earlier suggestions, or into something yet more adaptive. It is impossible to say how long such a restructuring of the city might take, for if it were successful, it would never be completed. But it might not take very long to create a number of communities. While the plans would be the city's, much of the cost of construction could be born by private individuals willing to comply with the city's plans. I do not propose that private "developers" be drawn into this process because I am concerned to perpetuate them or to assure them profits. I am not so concerned. But I do not regard the abolition of private ownership of real estate as likely in the near future. I am suggesting that the course of action proposed here could avoid possible confrontations with private interests that may well be powerful enough to impede or subvert the process of adaptive restructuring. I am further suggesting that the course of action proposed would impose limits based upon considerations of the city as a long-enduring, adaptive whole upon the narrowly-defined, short-run interests of private developers. If we are going to have private developers, it is crucial that we subordinate their goals to the interests of society at large.

It is hoped that the process of reconstruction more hinted at than described here would be both self-organizing and accelerating. If early community projects were successful, it is plausible to assume that both people and capital would be attracted to the social and physical construction of them.

The life of buildings in New York has generally been under 100 years; for better or worse, the city of 2070 will be very different from what we see around us. What is needed are plans, but plans that are very underspecified, for what is to be planned is not an ideal city, but a city that can preserve its adaptiveness rather than its buildings.



THE FUTURE CHANGES ITS COLOR

Eco-Industrialism, High Tech, and the Search for Alternatives

by Wolfgang Sachs

By now it comes as no surprise that the use and acceptance of the computer through all segments of society is a commonplace reality. As it becomes a tool of various alternative movements and the overwhelming backbone of all forms of soft and hard industrialism, its efficient centralization of information and reduction in labor is tapped as a new form of "intelligent subsistence."

Wolfgang Sachs has been with the Society for International Development in Rome since 1984 and is the Associate Editor of the Journal Development. He envisions the new high-tech influence on the urban industrial situation and the subsequent effect on alternatives to it as setting up an "apartheid economy" of technological expertise and "self-help reservations." This is the food-for-thought article for future green city considerations.

This article originally appeared in an intriguing publication called ifda dossier. For similar articles addressing topics of Local Space, National Space, Regional Space, and News from the Third System, write: ifda dossier, 4 Place du Marché, 1260 Nyon, Switzerland.

— Robert C. Watts



drawing by Stuart Davis entitled
Davits, 1932

Three tendencies seem to be of paramount importance in the transition towards a post-(heavy) industrial society: the rise of eco-industries, the race towards a high-tech society and the introduction of self-help welfare. The alternative movements with their cultural creativity have contributed to get renovation of industrialism under way.

There is no reason to deceive ourselves: the heydays of alternative movements in Europe as well as in the United States have passed. In some countries they have turned into a now and then surfacing undercurrent of political life (like in the USA); in others they continue to make waves with heavy spillovers into parliamentary politics (Germany), whereas in again other countries they are about to grow without finding a hold in society (Italy). In any event, however, since the mid-seventies, new experiences and perceptions that have been unheard of in the times of naive growth have sprung up and issues have been squarely put on an agenda which cannot be discarded anymore. The movements may be tapering off, but the people have changed.

The Anti-Industrial Posture

Despite all the diversity, two motives seem to run through alternative movements during the last ten years: protest against superstructures and affection for small-scale alternatives. The windmill was thought to challenge the nuclear power plant, the health food store had only contempt for the supermarket, the workers collectives created their own employment and the ecological farm defied agribusiness. People demanded more autonomy

on a small scale, championed regenerative technologies and dreamed of bringing producers and consumers closer together. The protest against superstructures and the search for alternatives belonged together; they were both rooted in disenchantment with progress.

Notwithstanding a host of difference, all these initiatives have a fundamental claim in common: that the Western type of industrial growth does not lead to a sustainable, just and autonomous society. Sustainability diminishes because relentless production degrades the environment by abusing nature as a mine for all kinds of raw materials and as a dumping ground for all kinds of waste. Technological progress narrows down the opportunities to find satisfying work and renders people more and more superfluous, and the sense of autonomy is being undermined because people find themselves dependent on innumerable goods and services that leave too little space to create life in solidarity with others. A new chapter in the history of industrialism seems to have opened up:

the viability and the desirability of progress itself is put into question. Throughout the last hundred years, people had based their hopes for happiness and emancipation on the belief in progress: science and technology were expected to finally bring about a society without sweat and tears, and affluence for all was thought to be around the corner, if only the unequal distribution of power and money would be equalized. Both the capitalist and the socialist vision were agitated by the idea that people had to be turned into employed workers to run more and more powerful technologies that would transform nature into more and more products and services for happy consumers.

Ecological and other alternative movements have broken with this productivist world view. These dissidents of industrialism have pointed out that the compromise between capital and labor (as well as the contact between bureaucratic elite and workers) was achieved at the expense of nature and the social fabric of society alike. Under the imperative of

growth — which glues capital and labour together — nature and people (like the countries of the South) have been increasingly turned into resources for expanding production, a process which has led to enormous wealth with a deterioration of nature and human relations.

The crisis of growth signifies nothing else than a threshold beyond which deterioration runs faster than accumulation. Consequently, the future changes its color, under such circumstances, from an open horizon of hope to a dark perspective of threat.

Stimulated by this shift in values and perception, initiatives and programmes have revolved around two axes: to struggle for limits ("no-thanks") on the one side and to enlarge the space for alternatives on the other side. Limits have been called for to curb the squandering of resources, pollution and waste and to protect such "commons" as water, air, soil, flora and fauna from being gradually eaten up by production. Not only physical commons but also social commons have been considered to be in danger: the opposition to the car reflects a concern for an environment suitable for pedestrians and cyclists, while the opposition to large-scale computerization of society is motivated by the fear of eroding democracy. Nuclear power was, and still is, serving as a symbol for this struggle: it is hazardous to your health — wasteful — spurring economic concentration and foreclosing options for future generations.

Space for alternatives, however, has been called for to carry on projects which have attempted to realize ecologically sound products or services with a human face, and sought to implement non-hierarchical work relations and a close orientation to the local consumer. Numerous "self-help" projects have sprung up — from energy consulting to food cooperatives, from free schools to women's health centers. Setting limits and securing space for alternatives have been the principal answers of alternative movements to what they perceive as the deadlock of industrialism.

Lost Innocence

The crisis, however, has not put the dominant classes to sleep. Indeed, it has released forces of flexibility on the part of the "system" which amount to overhauling and restructuring the productive apparatus and the social organization of society. Some years ago, the environmental crisis was thought to announce the end of industrialism. Today, however, the crisis seems to fuel the rise of a new generation of technologies and to give birth to a new social project: to rationalize industrialization through more industrialization. Three tendencies seem to be of paramount importance in the transition towards a post-(heavy) industrial society: the rise of industries, the race towards a high-tech society and the introduction of

self-help welfare. The alternative movements have contributed to the renovation of industrialism with cultural creativity.

Under given patterns of producing and consuming, removing pollution and waste creates demands for cleaning-up technologies. As environmental awareness grows, more and more repair techniques are being added to existing technical set-ups to reduce the output of dirt. *Eco-industries* are on the rise which cater end-of-the-planet technologies to a growing market: desulfurization equipment for power plants, catalytic converters for cars, recycling techniques to recover waste products, and bacteria for water treatment. Pollution nourishes the growth of a repair sector in the economy, which sets out to clean up the mess caused by yesterday's industrialization through technological rearmament. Whereas once it seemed the last hour of industrialism was at hand, there are now industrialists moving in opening up new market, bureaucrats staking out new claims of control, and engineers watching out for new careers — all in the name of a clean environment. Nothing else but a capital bureaucracy and resource-intensive solution to the crisis is looming. And it begins a new round in an old game: environmental destruction as a source of profit and prestige, just as illness and delinquency had been earlier in the history of industrialization. Eco-industrialism puts a price tag on what once upon a time was free of charge. Clean air, silence, and fertile soil are being commercialized, as they have to be especially produced by particular planning and technology.

Those who aspire to realize a *high-tech society* hope to pull the old industrialism out of the mud by comprehensive sophistication of all relevant production processes. What had once given rise to the "smoke stack economy," namely the transformation of fossil energy into labor and materials, is today leading to its decay, namely through the loss of capital caused by high energy costs and ecological destruction.

However, microelectronics and biotechnology claim to rescue industrialism through a new age of efficiency by reducing the scale, the costs and the energy-intensity of a product, while industry-bred microorganisms replace the petrochemical base of many products — from pesticides to pharmaceuticals. To put computers in cars, to replace secretaries with word processors, to electronically monitor the resource flow in a factory is like setting society on an expensive diet to get rid of the overweight acquired by the old industrial expansion. The implicit ideal of the microelectronics revolution is the well-tuned society in which all technical and social processes are electronically monitored for maximum efficiency.

"Small is beautiful," the alternative slogan of the seventies, has unexpectedly become a hallmark of today's technological progress which — from mini-chips to microwaves — boasts itself of smallness and sophistication. Moreover, it seems not exaggerated to claim that the rise of the high-tech society has been prepared and facilitated by the attention to the environment and the dislike for "bigness," a cultural change brought about by alternative movements.

A high-tech economy, however, is very likely to have more people than jobs. As the economic machinery gets along with less people, the unemployed surplus grows if there is not a radical redistribution of work. Some sort of apartheid-economy appears on the horizon where society is divided into two sectors running in different gears. In the one sector, people hold secure long-term employment in the capital-intensive sector and benefit from high-level consumption and pension funds, while in the other sector, people find themselves jobless or partially employed, living on welfare and populating the black economy.* Under such circumstances, the old-style welfare state becomes overburdened and ways have to be found to reduce redundant labor and the labor market without an explosion of welfare

expenses. It is precisely at this point that the alternative enthusiasm for self-help projects lends itself to be diverted to a strategy of benign apartheid: *self-help reservations* where superfluous people are kept busy in community projects, cooperatives, self-help groups or voluntary work. "Self-help," "informal work," "socially useful work" — ideas which the alternative movements held up against deadening wage labor — are turning into a camouflaged excuse to keep the surplus population occupied.

Beyond Environmentalism

Looking back on ten years of alternative movements, you cannot avoid one conclusion: the alternatives have confused the end of the "smoke stack economy" with the end of industrialism itself. Moreover, the anti-industrial stance helped to open the way for a deep-going change — that is true — but for a change to a somewhat cleaned-up version of industrialism. From this perspective alternative movements can be considered the cultural prelude to a performance commonly referred to as the "post-industrial society." In particular, in the narrow sense, the environmentalist current within alternative movements appears to lose its antagonistic power, since environmental concern is a foremost source of legitimation for rising new industries and elites.

However, eco-industries seem in the long run not to be sufficient to do the cleaning-up job. Apart from the chemical substances which are already around and which may have some synergetic surprises in store, one doesn't need much imagination to recognize that the repair measures will in the long term be neutralized by growth processes. After all, what are more efficient car engines worth if the gain of energy is eaten up by a higher number of (faster) cars? Consequently, eco-efficient growth will not do; a true conservator society therefore cannot be obtained without economic shrinkage, namely, scaling down consumption (e.g., low-speed cars) and production (e.g., dismantling parts of the chemical industry). Beyond that, it can be pointed out that the rising eco-industrial complex is adding a new level to the expenses incurred by industrial growth: we all have to be more productive and to consume more in order to at least maintain a given standard of living. As it happens, the environmental conflicts as such will mitigate, yet emerge again on a different level. They reappear as *conflicts about the economy*: are we moving towards an environmentally sound society through industrial expansion or through economic dismantlement?

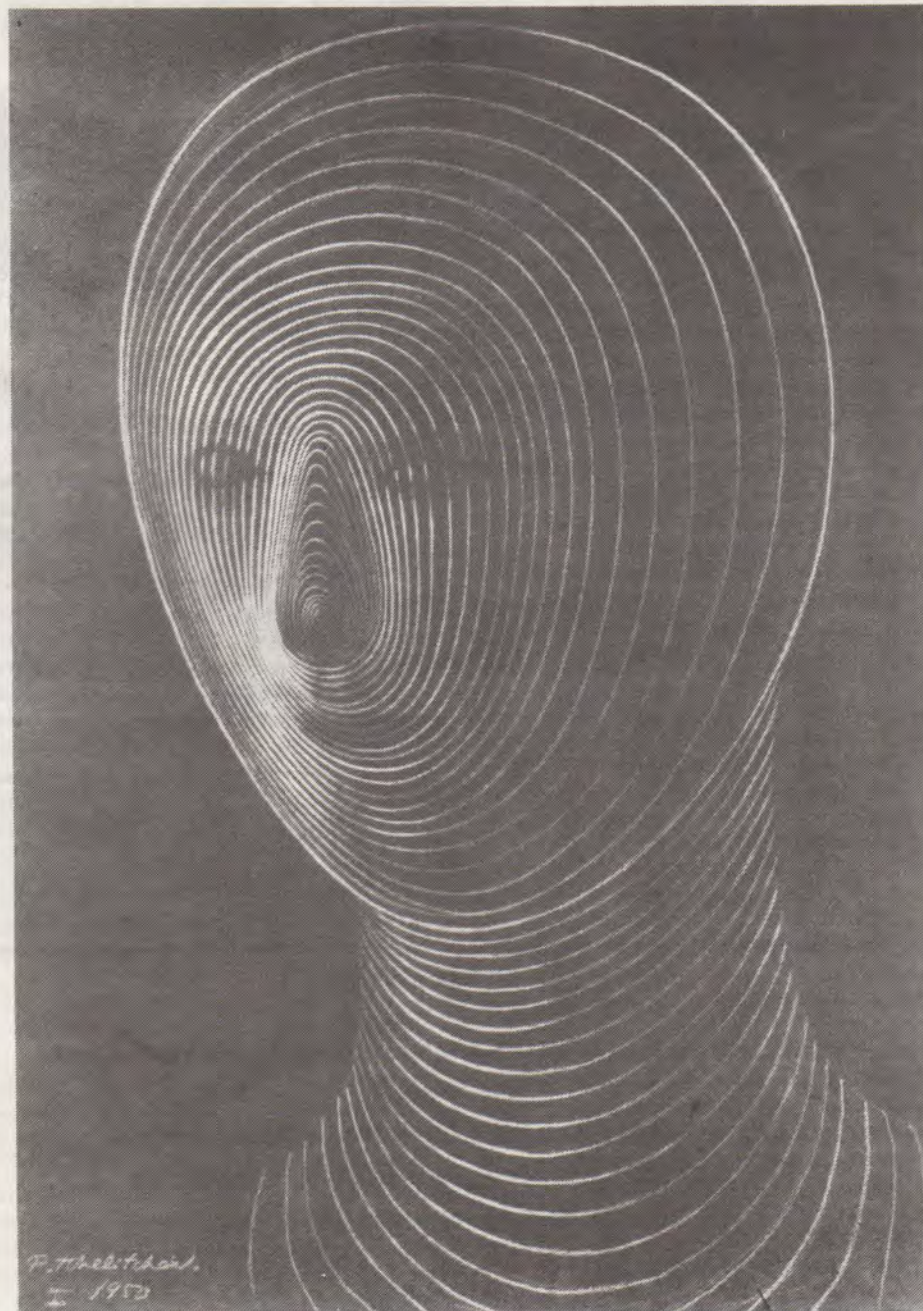
Furthermore, the race for a high-tech society, in which ever more countries are engaging, is about to bring new types of conflict onto the agenda. Microchips and gene splicing, satellites and cable systems are giving the elite of yesterday the chance to raise the flag of growth and progress again. Big business, big government and big science are pushing hard for the super-industrialist breakthrough, a breakthrough that will more firmly put society in the hands of industrialists, planners and scientists. They strive to mobilize resources for "The Information Age" using the very same arguments they already used for luring people into "The Nuclear Age": "Let's get our act together for the last effort — affluence for everybody is just around the corner." However, while promising the solution of all kinds of crises through the most recent versions of technical progress, they are about to turn not only human labor but also human communication, and not only nature but also genetic material, into resources for production. Thus information technology precipitates what may be called an environmental crisis of the second order: not nature but culture is being polluted. Turning energy into an infinitely exploitable resource has brought about dying

forests and degraded soils. Will turning information into an infinitely exploitable resource lead to an erosion of cultural capabilities, namely of the capacity to autonomously create meaning? In relation to biotechnology, a similar shift in the potential of the ecological conflict seems to be occurring. To make a complicated matter short and crude: who knows if the industrial production of life will not, instead of polluting nature, pollute evolution? The anti-industrial posture of the alternative movements of the seventies which suggested that we should not do everything that we can may acquire burning actuality in the nineties. Only the struggle for limits to relentless production will focus on the conservation of water, air, and soil as much as on the conservation of "commons" like culture and evolution.

Finally, the contradictions of self-help welfare show also that the ecological conflicts of tomorrow aim at a post-economic society rather than just a post-pollution society. Whereas in the last ten years alternative movements have been promoting the idea of self-help and the right to free activity beyond wage-labor, today's challenge is to be found in restructuring the division between paid and non-paid work. To avoid an apartheid economy, all (not only the weak) will have to get ready for an orderly retreat from the working society for the sake of a radical redistribution of labor. In doing that, a long-honored principle of industrialism will have to fall, namely, he who does not work shall not eat. After all, this principle makes sense only as long as there is enough work for all. This not being the case, ways of guaranteeing minimal income will have to be found to relieve people from the dependency of employment just for survival. Then the option of a lifestyle which aims at living gracefully with less money may become socially viable. But at this point, the movement for a healthy environment will have long since turned into a movement for economic harmony.



woodcut by Feininger
entitled *Lehnstadt*, 1919



beige pencil drawing by
Paul Tchelitchew entitled *Head*, 1950

* (Editor's note: This scenario was foreseen and described more than thirty years ago by Kurt Vonnegut in his *Player Piano* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1952).

BIOREGIONS AS ECONOREGIONS

by Peter B. Meyer

As the all-time winner in the confusion of approach category, nothing can loom more mysterious than economic theory. In regard to a bioregional approach, lack of serious thought and a minimal amount of print have pretty much left it in a state of infancy.

Peter Meyer is an Associate Professor of Economics at the University of Pennsylvania. In the following article he takes the risk of examining how economic decentralization, as one of the tenets of bioregionalism, can benefit from the measuring stick of free enterprise — profitability. This article will hopefully start the ball rolling toward a lively dialogue over a complex subject.

—Robert C. Watts

Many ecologists, bioregionalists, economists and most of the minions of U.S. corporations assume that there is an inherent conflict between the pursuit of economic efficiency and the preservation of ecological systems. The real question which advocates of autonomous socioeconomic subsystems must address is whether or not such a conflict *must* exist. The possibility that forms may become more profitable if they recognize and operate within their "econoregion" is of major importance in defining the potential for a smooth bioregional transformation of industrial economies.

This essay is not intended to provide a cookbook or schema for how to build successfully on the specific ecology of any one or any number of particular bioregions. My sole intent is to demonstrate that economic decentralization efforts may benefit from use of profitability criteria. The issue I am concerned with is the simple survival of those economic enterprises which are the pioneers in a movement to decentralize. Such efforts have to survive in the existing economy, even though the intent of the founders is to transform the over-all economic system. The survival, and indeed, the flourishing of such efforts within the existing economic system does not necessarily have to compromise bioregional principles.

There is a common premise that an ecologically sustaining lifestyle must involve rejection of a great deal of the "benefits" of modern industrialized society. (Many of what we have been told to consider as "benefits" are, in fact, costs — to us and to the biosphere — or, simply, expenditures to correct the damages previously wrought, as in spending on pollution abatement and cleanup of toxic dumps). To the extent that this premise is accepted, the possibilities of merging pursuit of profit and pursuit of ecologically sound living have been ignored or underplayed. In fact, one of the major impediments to the environmental movement and to the faster growth of interest

in bioregionalism itself has been the failure to address how such efforts can be consistent with even a rather narrow economic self-interest.

Efforts to increase regional self-sufficiency and to upgrade an area's economic condition through "bootstrapping" (local self-help) invariably bump into the brick wall of a massive concentration of productive capital in an ever-shrinking number of major corporations and banks. These large organizations have no commitment to, or interest in, "place," the physical/biological locales in which they operate, or in people, the tools with which (and on whom) they work. At the same time, the capital investment per worker in all branches of production has risen significantly in the past decade. Lack of capital makes creation of a business exceedingly difficult or forces adoption of technologies which are not even "intermediate," but so labor-intensive as to be counterproductive (producing more dangerous and more boring jobs than we should be willing to accept as "humane" given our technological capacities).

Without commitment to place, the distribution system for capital resources sends funds where the greatest (short-term) profits can be realized and then moves the funds as soon as better opportunities arise elsewhere. Centralized capital and economic power thus create *instability* in the economic environment. Uncertainty about incomes and livelihoods, loss of meaning in life when lives have centered around jobs and other malaises caused by plant shutdowns, capital flight and instability are the economic toxic wastes of concentration.

The problem with the prescriptions offered, from those which recommend getting a new auto plant into Tennessee (or California), to the Regeneration Project now being pushed by Rodale Press, is that they incorporate no understanding of the nature of local "econoregions" within what has become a world-wide economic system. The multinational firms *can* and *do*

operate anywhere and have the power to compete directly with small localized firms throughout the world. Yet some small firms survive, competing directly with companies whose resources exceed those of the vast majority of state treasuries in the U.S. These small-scale survivors have learned some lessons about regionalism. In the economists' jargon, they have carved out a "market niche" which is geographically defined, culturally based, or otherwise linked to some specific characteristics of a physical place or region with a particular mix of people living in it.

Full self-sufficiency may be an inappropriate rallying cry, but nurturance and development of local capacity are a tenable argument. The key issues are what factors determine the limits of self-sufficiency which can be supported today and the localization efforts which work. Farmer-consumer cooperatives and markets represent one obvious step towards self-sufficiency for which there is widespread support. Worker buy-outs of local plants also enjoy support but do not contribute to self-sufficiency or local social and economic stability. The buy-outs actually *export* badly needed capital out of the region. Does the change in ownership change anything relative to the ability of the region to act for itself? Obviously not. By contrast, a system of markets and cooperatives which eliminate non-local processing and transportation middlemen for agricultural products does alter the dynamics of the region's relationship to the rest of the economy. So, an impact on the dynamics of interaction may be one criterion to use in judging "localization" or autonomy-generating efforts.

Such an impact is of concern if small localized efforts are ever to bring about larger changes in the economy and society as a whole. First, isolated local efforts can be crushed by the power of centralized capital, *unless* the local-to-national relationship is shifted towards the region; long-term strategies *must* provide for this objective. Second, successful localization in one region may spawn initiators and broaden the movement, while a single failure could undermine others' efforts. Thus, local successes are essential to weakening the over-all power of centralized capital by confronting it in different and discrete arenas.

Another criterion for "successful localization" although it is often ignored on largely ideological grounds is whether this economic strategy increases the profitability of the business or activity involved. If localization is to succeed as a strategy, it has to enhance the capacity of the region to produce for itself over the long run. The transitional localized activities, therefore, should be those which promise greater "efficiency" in production or consumption locally, which (a) leaves them less vulnerable to a non-local firm's efforts to avoid losing the local market for

its goods (by cutting prices and driving the other firm out of business), and (b) means that profits and savings — which become productive capital — will be generated in the local economy for reinvestment and expansion of the localization processes. The interesting part of this criterion is that it invariably leads to those economic activities which take advantage of the unique capacities or features of the local econoregion.

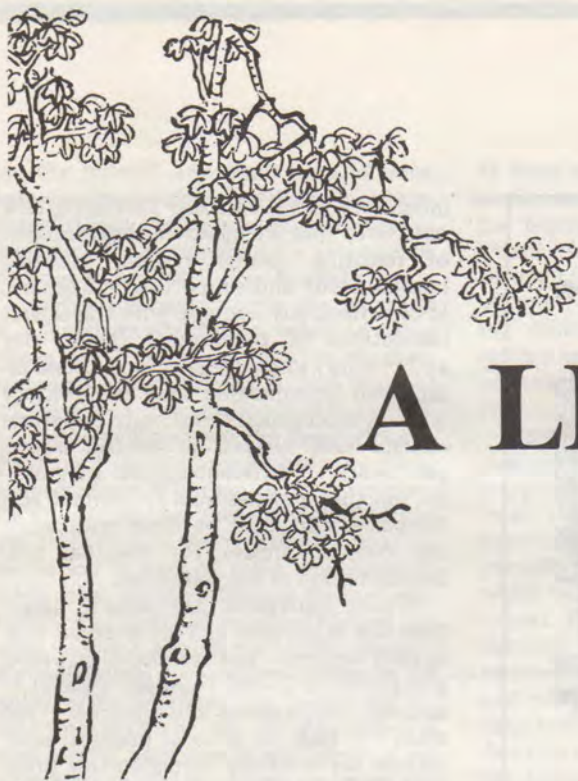
Organic farming *will* reduce dependence on non-local sources of chemicals but *may* or *may not* be economically viable. The viability question may be less a matter of the production technology than the products produced — or grown, in this case. A local farmer may want to reduce dependence on expensive resources from agribusiness supply firms, but failing to change what he or she produces and grows for market, may find that profits fall. A conversion which recognizes what the land and climate (and diseases and insects) can produce efficiently without chemicals is probably a necessary condition for a profitable, successful shift towards self-sufficiency. A failure to adapt in this manner will either necessitate a return to chemical farming or, potentially, will bankrupt the farmer.

The potential for success relates to how *narrow* a market area a business can successfully serve. The broader the geographic area it needs to sell in to have a sufficient number of potential customers, the more vulnerable it will be to nonlocal firms' competition. Another measure of the appropriateness of a localizing activity, then, may be the extent to which its profitability grows or shrinks as it attempts to serve a larger geographic market. The more generalized or standardized the product, the more vulnerable it may become to mass manufactured goods' competition and less efficient it may become for use by product initially served. Standardization thus comes at the cost of efficiency in the local econoregion at the same time that it opens the door to repenetration by non-local producers who may have been pushed out by a tailored, unique product.

Efforts to address the very unique and particular characteristics of the ecology of individual bioregions must be pursued by people who know those regions. No general formula for success can be derived, simply because of the wonderful and overwhelming variety of bioregions in which we live. Initiators of decentralized economic efforts obviously must act within the constraints of, and take advantage of the opportunities presented by, the bioregions in which they live. Their pursuit of an alternative economic system, however, should not ignore the validity of the profitability criterion as a measure of the viability and potential for survival of their new enterprises.

Economics can inform the effort to decentralize; it, in fact, simply augments the ecological data which activists employ in new enterprise development efforts. In fact, all that the economic analysis and profitability criterion really offers is an insight into the ecology within which the enterprise must function if it is to survive as a business. This body of ecological data, like any other information on bioregions, is perilous to ignore. We can use this data and hope to thrive, or ignore it and worry about our ability to survive economically.

The possibility that firms may become more profitable if they recognize and operate within their "econoregion" is of major importance in defining the potential for a smooth bioregional transformation of industrial economies.



GROWING A LIFE-PLACE POLITICS

by Peter Berg

The most obvious conclusions sometimes disguise the most mysterious situations. Ask city dwellers where their water comes from, for instance. Most will answer with something like "The faucet, of course. Want water? Turn the tap handle. Got another timeless puzzler you need help with?" So it seems, especially if your life has been spent mastering survival in apartment buildings. But the faucet is only the last place water was, not where it came from. Before that it was in the plumbing, and before that in the mains. It got there from a reservoir, and from an aqueduct connected to a storage lake. "So tell me the name of the lake and I'll know where the water really comes from." Finding out the name and, even better, walking on the shore of that lake is definitely a start toward acquiring a sense of care and gratitude. But even that lake is just another place where water was. It got there as runoff from rain or snow that fell from clouds. Where do clouds come from? Evaporated ocean water? Two weather systems meeting? Whatever forces are involved in making any particular cloud, the source of every particle of water in it remains a deep mystery. If anything can be said about the ultimate state of water, it is probably that it doesn't begin or end anywhere but is constantly cycled through one form and location to another.

Here's another easy observation: We all live in some geographic place. And here's the accompanying mysterious and very critical situation: the places where we live are alive. They are *bioregions*, unique life-places with their own soils and land forms, watersheds and climates, native plants and animals, and many other distinct natural characteristics. Each characteristic affects the others and is affected

by them as in any other living system or body. And bioregions are all different from each other. Not just "mountains," but Appalachian Mountains or Rockies. Not just "river valley," but Hudson or Sacramento.

People are also an integral part of life-places. What we do affects them and we are in turn affected by them. The lives of bioregions ultimately support our own lives, and the way we live is becoming crucial to their ability to continue to do so.

Knowing that water is always cycling has a lot of practical value (regardless of how frail our sense of every station in the cycle may be). It means, for example, that simply dumping water that is dirty with sewage or chemicals won't really get rid of those pollutants. They'll just be carried along to the next station wherever it happens to be, to the water intake of a town downstream, perhaps, or through the ground to later seep into a well. Since water that we've used has a good chance

of quickly becoming someone else's, limiting what goes into it and treating it before sending it along becomes a realm of social responsibility and reciprocity. That's the basis of what could be termed "water cycle politics," and it's serious business. Most town, city and county governments have official departments to oversee water supplies and sewage, and questions of water quality and use can arouse some of the most serious public debates.

What's the practical response to knowing that we share in the lives of bioregions? If what we do degrades them, how does that fit with our concepts of social responsibility and reciprocity? What is a life-place politics?

Rootstock

It's probably best to begin by looking at the actual conditions that exist where

some people live. Doing this may run the risk of over-particularizing, but at least it won't deliver the kind of over-generalization and abstraction that can turn political thinking sour with ideology.

Right now I'm in a clearly defined sixty-mile-long watershed that empties into the Pacific Ocean on a fairly remote stretch of the northern California coast. I've been teaching Shakespeare's Sonnets ("When I consider everything that grows . . .") at the small high school my daughter attends here, work-learning about fruit trees from a local mater pruner, and helping with some community projects. A borrowed cabin provides heat by woodstove and light by kerosene lamps. Water comes from the same creek that later flows through salmon-rearing tanks tended by self-taught homesteaders who are trying to bring native fish back up to their historical levels of population in the river.

Living here has never been especially prosperous. Fifth-generation families still

Restore natural systems, satisfy basic human needs, and develop support for individuals: those are the most fundamental requirements for sustainability and should be the goals of watershed-scaled bioregional politics.

woodcut by Raoul Dufy entitled Fishing, 1912



cut and haul firewood, maintain excellent gardens and home can everything from cherries to salmon. So do many of the new settlers. Much of the work that requires more than one person's labor is carried out on an informal exchange or volunteer basis that is held together with goodwill neighborliness. (People's skills and the services they can make available are wide-ranging and sometimes astonishing.) A volunteer fire department garage is the most visible municipal institution in the nearest town, a small post office is the only sign of a distant national government. If police are ever called, they will come from the county sheriff's office two mountain ridges and an hour and a half away. "Folk anarchism" wouldn't be a bad term for the social ethos that guides generally respectful relations between this valley's residents. Most of them are here because they like it that way.

"You make it sound too idyllic," remarks my pruner friend. "I live here but I'd more *there*, the way you're describing this place. You've left out the mentality about doing anything you want to on your own land even if it means destroying it. How about bickering over water rights or the other personal grudges that can go on for years?"

There's all that, but a visitor who has any interest in reversing the degradation of life-places couldn't help but be struck by seeing the rootstock for sustainable habitation in the future that exists here. Plentiful local renewable wood for heating



wood engraving by John Lawrence entitled *Aramon*

fuel, good water from springs and creeks, natural building materials, varying but workable soil, and some natural provision of food from fish are native resources. Human resources include broad skills, a spirit of informal mutualism, serious work on natural preservation and fishery enhancement projects, and a growing ecologically-centered culture.

Actually achieving a workable harmony with natural systems in this valley is another matter, however, and much more difficult than it would appear to be to a casual visitor. For one thing, it would require acceptance of a political perspective that is different from anything that most people here (or elsewhere) have known.

Let's start with the place itself, which hasn't been treated very well over the last century since settlers arrived and native inhabitants suffered extermination or removal. Cattle and sheep overgrazing (with forest-burning to create larger pastures) and brutal logging have scarred most of the hills. Subsequent erosion carried away vast amounts of soil, caused huge landslides and filled the formerly pristine river with gravel bars. A sustainable future would first of all have to be based on a local commitment to restore and maintain the river, soil, forests, and wildlife that ultimately support inhabitation here.

Next would come developing the means for meeting human needs in ways that are both sustainable and self-reliant. Current food production, although more evident than in some other places, is really only minimal. Even hay for animals often comes from outside the valley. Energy needs, now partially met with local wood, could be completely filled by using alternative techniques and other renewable sources such as solar and micro-hydro power. Gasoline is presently one-fifth more expensive here than it is just outside the valley. Nearly all manufactured goods are carried or shipped in from outside. There are a few health practitioners, but complicated cases (or even ones requiring eyeglasses or dentistry) have to travel outside the watershed limits for care. And public transportation is nonexistent.

Finally, there is the problem of earning a living in a place where there is little regular employment. Income from the present boom in marijuana cultivation (which also exists in many other deeply rural areas) is in perpetual jeopardy from law enforcement zealots. Even if marijuana became legalized, the most effective long-term economic solution would be to build on other existing activities that are more boom-and-bust proof and compatible with restoring rather than further depleting natural systems — natural enhancement projects, education (especially in sustainable fishing, forestry, grazing, and farming practices), visitor services, and local crafts and culture. The internal need for cash can simultaneously be reduced through community undertakings that "make money by not using money" — some large commonly-held farms, tool and machinery sharing co-ops, labor exchanges for new improvements like refitting homes

for energy efficiency, a local currency or system of credits for trading goods and services, a transportation sharing system, and other formal ways to heighten social interdependence.

Restore natural systems, satisfy basic human needs, and develop support for individuals: those are the most fundamental requirements for sustainability and should be the goals of watershed-scaled bioregional politics in the valley. Achieving these is already a concern among some of the people, and their numbers could easily grow in the future. Even so,

Evolving Watershed-Scaled Governments

Growing the politics for a life-place has to be based on the reality of living there, and it's necessary to remind ourselves that no facts are established without evidence. Someone has to do something that is consistent with the vision of fitting into ongoing natural processes before any reasonable person will support that vision.

No outside agency proclaimed that salmon enhancement should begin in the

**Unsustainability simply isn't a lifesome alternative.
Struggling for sustainability is necessary if we want to achieve it,
like freedom.**

those who have been involved the longest feel that they won't see full fruition in their lifetimes. How many generations might it take to restore the valley? (For that matter, has it really ever happened anywhere else before?) How self-reliant in regard to food, energy, manufacturing, education, and health can this place ever become? How much continuing outside support is needed, and under what terms should extra-watershed support be secured? As for increasing social interdependence, what political means can enable all the individualistic and differing personal beliefs that exist here to coalesce in formal cooperation without losing the free-souled spirit that the valley nurtures now?

Closer to hand, there are plenty of issues that need immediate attention. There should be a moratorium on logging the few stands of first-growth trees that still remain. A full recycling program should replace hauling away unsorted garbage from the local dump. A valley-wide alternative energy plan should be mapped out and put into action. Watershed education, although featured at the small high school, should be a concern of the larger elementary and junior high schools and should be offered to adults as well. There's a lot to keep everyone busy before politics can be largely framed by the principles of restoring natural systems, filling human needs and developing support for individuals.

valley, for instance. A desire to see past numbers of salmon running in the river again led a few people to investigate how this might be accomplished and inspired them to commit time-consuming labor (with frustratingly numerous false starts and mistakes) that eventually led to some small success. They communicated their vision to other people, involved them in the project, and consequently increased their chances for success. Now that more neighbors are involved, the threats to restoring salmon such as loss of fish habitat through further logging, overgrazing, overfishing, and stream destruction are becoming more widely exposed and understood issues. If it becomes a generally shared ethic, "Don't do anything that could hurt the spawning cycle" could lead to profound changes here.

A bioregional politics originates with individuals who identify with real places and find ways to interact positively with the life-web around them. Involving close-by watershed neighbors creates a "socialshed." This seed group is and will remain the most important unit of bioregional political interaction.

Several socialsheds of neighbors working on a wide variety of different projects (co-ops, community gardens, renewable energy, bioregional education, recycling, and many others) can easily join together to form an organization for the broader local community. In effect, it would be a watershed council, rightfully claiming representation for the closely shared place itself. A watershed council is the appropriate forum for directly addressing present

inhabitory issues and also for stating new objectives that are based on the principles of restoring natural systems, meeting human needs and supporting individuals. It can effectively contend with the closest institutions of government (town, city and county) to secure positions. These established governments may be arbitrary units in bioregional terms, with unnatural straight-lined borders or control over a patchwork of different natural geographies, but their policies hold for parts of real life-places and must be dealt with while the council presses for eventual self-determination in the watershed.

Whole bioregions are usually larger than one watershed and are overlaid with equally arbitrary and even more powerful governments: several counties, state(s), national departments and agencies — too many, in fact, to serve as practical institutions for resolving bioregionwide problems. Rather than seeking to influence anything higher than local governments, watershed councils must band together to form an independent body in order to represent their entire bioregion. A council from the valley, for instance, while holding positions on town and county issues, would also join with similar northern California (Shasta Bioregion) groups in a federation or congress.

Watershed councils and bioregional congresses have, in fact, sprung up in parts of North America reaching from Cascadia in the Pacific Northwest to the Lower Hudson estuary in New York. One might ask (as even the environmentalist establishment does) whether these new groups are really necessary. Couldn't the goals of sustainability be reached through existing forms, and wouldn't it be better if those forms were made to work rather than cranking up something that is probably going to be seen as unacceptably radical

anyway? And how about places other than remote valleys, areas that are more populated or nearer to metropolitan centers?

It goes without saying that creating a new political framework is difficult and that it will inevitably be seen at first as too radical (with some justification, considering the snaggy frustrates and boilingly ambitious types it may attract). The only reason to bother is to gain something that is absolutely necessary but can't be achieved through existing means. The question becomes: Is there any other way to preserve life-places? Aside from immediately local ones, governments and dominant political parties aren't open to accepting sustainability as a serious goal. They seem barely able to hear outcries against obvious large-scale destruction of the planetary biosphere from merely reform-minded environmentalists now, and aren't likely to take bioregionalists seriously until the District of Columbia itself becomes totally uninhabitable. Government has forfeited defense of life-places to the people who live in them. Watershed councils and bioregional groups are necessary to secure inhabitory rights.

Is sustainability really necessary? Rather than reviewing all of the colonialist, resource-depleting and environmental horror stories of the twentieth century that continue in the present and which without opposition will definitely extend in a compounded form into the next century, let's simply look at who we want to be. Do we want to degrade ourselves by participating in the degradation of humanity

and the planet? And don't both of these processes begin where we live? *Unsustainability* simply isn't a lifesome alternative. Struggling for sustainability is necessary if we want to achieve it, like freedom.

As for abstracting from the situation in a northern California valley to other places, won't that be committing the same error that earlier was said to turn political thinking sour with ideology? Frankly, yes. No two life-places are the same, for one thing, and the differences between back-country, rural, suburban, and city environs are enormous. Are there any similarities? Yes to that, too. Every site of human inhabitation is part of some watershed or other and exists within a distinct bioregion. The goals of restoring natural systems, meeting human needs and supporting individuals that are appropriate in the valley apply wherever else people are living. The problem lies in searching out how human activities in any lifeplace are ultimately rooted in natural processes and discovering how to fit into them.

A more populated rural area, for instance, may share the same watershed as a nearby urban center. This is the case for most of the agricultural country near cities on the Atlantic seaboard stretching from Boston to Atlanta, although the population-dense coastal edge is commonly seen as one long megalopolis and the connection between each city (usually sited on a river or at the mouth) and its watershed of support is virtually ignored. This natural continuity must be restored to consciousness, and recognizing the differences between whole bioregions that lie within the territory separating the Atlantic Coast and Appalachian Mountains is an important initial step toward developing sustainability in that part of the continent.

In the Great Plains, however, cities are much smaller and often already identify with the country surrounding them. The problem there is that agricultural use of the land has supplanted native features nearly completely. Mammoth farming operations exhaustively mine soil and water and export it in the form of grain and meat to places as far away as the Soviet Union. The Great Plains (like the great valleys of California) is a resources colony for global monoculture and is rapidly being stripped of the basic components of sustainability. Watershed councils and bioregional groups in this increasingly endangered part of the continent advocate restoring the native prairies, non-abusive farming methods and greater diversification to relieve dependency on mono-crop agriculture.

of them can become more responsible for sustainability by lessening their strain on the bioregions where they are situated. Urban life-place politics can be expressed through Green City programs for whatever aspects of restoring natural places, meeting human needs and supporting individuals are realistically possible. And there are more ways to do this than a typical city-dweller might think.

Processing urban sewage into fertilizer that can be returned to farm land would reciprocate directly with provision of food, for example. Establishing neighborhood common gardens and orchards would partially relieve the outlying countryside while helping to make a city more self-reliant. Energy demands could be sharply reduced by public projects to retrofit buildings and homes for alternative sources and heat efficiency. City governments can help facilitate starting new neighborhood food co-operatives, and establish centers for lending tools and equipment (public libraries for books are an impressive precedent). Neighborhood-scaled recycling programs could be established. Cities can sponsor urban-rural exchanges to trade labor for agricultural produce. They can create wild-corridor parks so that native creeks, vegetation, birds and other animals can pass through and provide a natural presence. Bioregional arts programs and city-wide celebrations of totem life-forms are projects easily begun.

Some of the points in a Green City program may seem similar to current environmentalist proposals but there is a fundamental difference between them. From a bioregionalist perspective, people are *part* of a life-place, as dependent on natural systems as native plants and animals. Green City proposals aren't based on simply cleaning up the environment but rather on securing reciprocity between the urban way of life and the natural life-web that supports it.

On the surface there seem to be few ways to demonstrate bioregional connectedness to city people. They don't see the actual sources for their food, for example, and often don't know where they are. But that doesn't make the life-place link any less real; it just confirms the need to expose it. Since cities are educational, cultural and media centers, the means for exposure are already there. Green City programs can emphasize natural underpinnings by proposing curricula and art that communicate with everyone from school children to theater audiences. They can promote appearances by speakers and cultural groups from outside the



from *Block Printing with Linoleum* by Henry Frankfield

at larger naturally-scaled assemblies seems to follow, and just as there are currently dozens of watershed-bioregion groups, there was in May, 1984, the first North American Bioregional Congress. But the air becomes thinner at this level, and it's good to take a deep breath before climbing up.

The intent of such an assembly should be to extend whatever links that have been previously made between groups, make new ones, prepare mutually-felt statements on continent-wide concerns, and decide on an effective course of action that all of the different groups can take in common. Some of this was accomplished at the first Congress. Representatives met each other, information was exchanged, there were statements on some positions, and a few working committees were established.

The continental air is thin because it's difficult enough to understand one's own watershed and then fit it into a larger bioregion, but much more so to "think like a continent." For one reason or other, many attendees at NABC 1 were basically unfamiliar with bioregional ideas and activities. Some had come to learn what these are. Some others came to represent their own different movements. North America as a living entity in the planetary biosphere was eventually understood and celebrated, but how bioregions interact with each other, what neighboring relationships might be, how groups can assist with real projects in different places, and other matters that presumably should be covered were hardly touched on.

To overcome the thin air, future continent congresses will have to be more definite about their identity and intent. Crucial discussions and decisions should be framed in terms of their usefulness to active representatives of life-places, and there should be more addresses by those who can assist in "thinking like a continent," an array extending from geographers and water basin specialists to storytellers and poets. A North American Bioregional Congress is an important new political forum, and there is much needed work that it can do. National and state governments persistently maintain destructive policies toward the continent's life-places. A Congress that authentically represents North America can claim authority to initiate beneficial ones. It can confront the problem of arbitrary (and multiple) government power over bioregions. It can select priority issues to bring attention to situations in particular life-places (such as ruinous diversion of rivers in desert Sunbelt areas) and organize exchanges of expertise, work parties and cultural events to support member groups. It can eventually stand as the main voice for a large continent-wide movement.

We've come a long distance from a remote northern California valley to the North American Bioregional Congress, and have picked up new long-term struggles at every level along the way. Restoring the valley will take several generations — the Shasta Bioregion several more. How many for the continent? Meeting basic human needs of all its people? Creating means of support for them? They're hugely challenging goals, but undoubtedly worthwhile since they are ways to retrieve the future and offer a definite vision for what is vaguely termed "post-industrial society." Achieving them is the work, the *do*, of bioregionalism.

A Basis for Alliances

There are opportunities for life-place political alliances at all the levels from a local watershed to North America (and eventually with other continents' assemblies). Only a fanatical mind-set would dictate that the basis for these should be to convert everyone else into a bioregionalist, and that would make a travesty of the terms for coalitions. Let's go back to the work of fitting into real natural processes to find more legitimate terms.

Active bioregionalists don't merely raise their hands to vote on issues but also find ways to interact positively with the life-web around them. They work with neighbors to carry out projects and build a bioregional culture together. Put another way, they are the working practitioners of what academics and others term "a paradigm shift." There is a very wide range of ways to express life-place consciousness and no need to exclude anyone's creativity in doing so, but bioregionalists do share a common interest in actually applying their convictions to local situations (in addition to having opinions about more distant ones). Their political activity is an extension of the work they do. They have a hands-on identity that is compatible with the goals of restoring natural systems, meeting basic human needs and creating support for individuals.

Some other groups have a natural affinity for these same goals. Native Americans are an obvious example. Renewable energy, alternative technology and permaculture (sustainable agriculture) proponents can easily share support on many issues. Earth-spirit women's groups, radical conservationists, natural living advocates, and deep ecology adherents envision a similar bio-centric future. It wouldn't even be too difficult for many current environmentalists to fit their causes into a longer-range bioregional perspective.

Less apparent, perhaps, is the basis for alliances with progressive movements that are aimed at affecting policies of existing

The continental air is thin because it's difficult enough to understand one's own watershed and then fit it into a larger bioregion, but much more so to "think like a continent."

There's tremendous diversity among bioregions, from Sonoran Desert to the Gulf of Maine, from the Great Lakes to the Ozarks, but the schema for growing native life-place politics starting with socialsheds of neighbors, joining these in watershed councils, and proceeding to the creation of bioregional federations or congresses can fit them all.

city to bring a sense of bioregional partnership. Green City "bioregion reports" could readily become an aspect of daily news. When these and all the other urban informational possibilities are considered, developing life-place consciousness in cities may not be so difficult after all.

North American Bioregional Congresses

Green Cities
Cities don't hover on space platforms. They are all within bioregions and can be surprisingly dependent on fairly close sources for food and water, at least. All

What makes sense after the watershed council and bioregional group (now including a Green City program) levels of life-place politics? Representation of these

large government structures and political parties. Disarmament, non-intervention, anti-nuclear, and other movements with a more distant focus than on the immediately local level leave little room for sharing direct support. Bioregionalists don't want nuclear arms or power facilities where they live, of course, and would certainly join with specifically anti-nuclear groups to make those places nuclear-free. Whether or not a watershed council or North American Bioregional Congress should endorse positions of every group or movement that each representative at those assemblies finds deserving is another matter. Some positions will be found in common, but the bioregional movement has its own character and own concerns. Without these it wouldn't be worth much as an ally anyway.

There has been some confusion about the relationship between life-place concerns and "green politics" ever since the first North American Bioregional Congress. A few participants at that event have even stated since that there is no difference between the two. The distinctions are very clear, however, and should be understood so that genuine bioregional goals can be realized.

First of all, "green politics" attempts to cover a more extensive range of areas, but where there are similarities, bioregional directions are much more definite and specific. This is obvious in a statement of definition from the initial Green Organizing Planning Meeting:

"Green" politics interweaves ecological wisdom, decentralization of economic and political power whenever practical, personal and social responsibility, global security, and community self-determination within the context of respect for diversity of heritage and religion. It advocates non-violent action, cooperative world order, and self-reliance.

Some of the words are the same, but the sense of them is very different. Bioregionalists have a specific direction for "ecological wisdom": they want to restore and maintain watersheds and bioregions. Those are the places to which they want to decentralize and where they wish to practice self-determination. Their "personal and social responsibility" is to meet basic human needs and create ways to support individuals in life-places. As for extending their goals to "global security . . . cooperative world order," bioregionalists may well choose to ally with groups and movements which develop effective ways to apply that sentiment, but their own primary effort is to solve problems where they live. (And that may be the best locale for rooting a planetary perspective, after all.)

The first North American Bioregional Congress recognized this distinction by declaring, "If the emerging Green political organization does indeed reflect these bioregional concerns, we urge support from bioregional groups and individuals from around the continent." If it does, and at this point no unified acceptance of bioregional goals by "greens" has been stated.

Another distinction is evident in the way "green politics" is developing structurally. At the Green Organizing Planning Meeting in August, 1984, committees were formed to represent mega-regions based on the compass points in the United States: Northeast, South, Midwest, West, and Northwest. Isn't this the old centralized way of describing territory? All of these areas have several bioregions within them. People have been identifying and seeking to fit into these unique life-places for some time. Do they really need another arbitrarily-defined political district? The "green" structure seems to be oriented from the top down. Bioregional movement groups originate on the watershed level and move up to join in naturally-scaled continental assemblies.

The most critical difference between the movements may lie with their actual ecological orientation. How much "ecological wisdom" are they really prepared to accept? Bioregionalists answer, "All we can get!" They see their lives as intertwined with ongoing natural processes,

part of the life of a place. From their biocentric viewpoint, human society is ultimately based on interdependence with other forms of life. They follow that conviction to make choices about which kinds of work to undertake and to oppose Late Industrial degradations.

It is not established that "green politics" followers are similarly committed, and questionable as to whether they will become so. There is a multiplicity of concerns (Ecological Wisdom is only one of ten key values listed), and among many "greens," ecological awareness is limited to an older environmentalist perspective, attempting to reform industrialism instead of aiming to replace it. Some bioregionalists who are also active in "green politics" feel that they can reach members of that movement and change its direction. No doubt some will be persuaded, but wishful evangelism isn't a good foundation for building coalitions. Truly relevant life-place politics will originate from watershed councils, bioregional groups and the North American Bioregional Congress. When support for the positions of these naturally-scaled groups is sought, "greens" may yet prove to be very strong allies regardless of their different emphasis and direction.

Leaving No One Out

Is it realistic to assume that anyone, the next person you meet, for instance, will be able to understand and sympathize with bioregional goals? Would most people be able to suspend conventional political ideas long enough, or be able to see past labels like "environment," "natural resources," and so on?

Admittedly, many people are likely to have only slight awareness of day-to-day contact with non-human forms of life and to view natural systems as something to be insulated from. The best ground for introducing life-place consciousness may lie further forward in their minds and involve feelings about the course of present society. Try asking if society hasn't lost its ethical basis by subjecting human and natural life to continuous threats and damage. Most people feel that a disaster can occur before they are actually told that one was even possible, that it happens more and more frequently, and that the next one will be more horrendous than the last. Usually they'll agree that industrial society has been and continues to be irresponsible about endangering both Nature and people.

Active bioregionalists don't merely raise their hands to vote on issues but also find ways to interact positively with the life-web around them.

How about the promise of the future? Can present society ever right the balance of its demands on Nature? It may come as a surprise, but many people are reluctant to discuss the future. They may even fear it, and when they don't, unguarded optimism is rarely offered.

On the positive side, encourage remembering that we really are part of all life, that we are born as mammalian creatures and continue to survive, sense the seasons and experience weather as mammals — that life is always looping through us: food, water, energy, and materials sustain us before moving on as wastes and refuse. Point out that although our skillful mobility permits changing locations more quickly than we can become familiar with a new place, we always end up in some bioregion or other and are part of it no matter how briefly. Suggest that Nature isn't a remotely distant entity but actually exists everywhere and can be experienced by simply recognizing the unique characteristics of the places where we live. Invite imagining how deeply we could feel and in how many ways we could celebrate, restore, defend, and identify with those places.

The Mystery Remains and We No Longer Deny It

There were no unsolvable physical mysteries during the industrial era, and Nature was thought to be merely physical. Physics, chemistry and engineering could unravel any puzzle for what was thought to

be the inevitable betterment of humankind: produce anything imaginable, restructure any environment, remove any amount of a wanted resource, and exterminate or discard anything unwanted. If it came to the point that doing these things created new problems (considered a doubtful outcome for the greatest part of the period), there were still ways that were believed capable of restoring an upper human hand: (a) just be thankful for what progress has been made and accept living with whatever negative consequences come with it; (b) stop doing something that is known to be disastrous and start doing some new thing whose effects are completely unknown; and (c) apply more industrial techniques to solve problems brought through industrialism in the first place. The result of all this self-deception? We live with poisons up to the waist in a junkyard of breaking machines.

More environmental agencies won't ultimately relieve our situation. They would only be further appendages of a political core that is welded to industrialism itself. We need a core based on the design of Nature instead, from watershed to bioregion and continent to planetary biosphere. Is it self-defeating to avoid established governments other than immediately local ones? Not if we want to anticipate a society whose direction already lies outside those institutions. We need to uncover and follow a natural design that lies beneath industrial asphalt.

What about world spheres of influence, global economics and other international considerations? The whole planet is undergoing the severe strains of the Late Industrial period now: chemical plagues, wholesale mechanical removal of landscapes, disruption of the most major river courses, accelerated destruction of ecosystems, and overnight disappearance of habitats. Humanity is suffering the consequences of these suicidally devouring attacks on the biosphere as Late Industrial society begins to eat itself. Couldn't we tame that suicidal appetite by adopting sustainability as a goal? If we become bioregionally self-reliant won't that be a large step toward taking the strain off the rest of the planet's life-places?

On a farm in the country or in a city apartment, we're all completely enmeshed in the web of life. We can't know all of the details of all the connections. Bioregional politics doesn't try to overcome the mystery, it is aimed toward making a social transition so that we can live with that mystery. Can we stop tearing the web apart and consciously build a role as partners in all life? We better, and we can by beginning where we live.



anonymous block print entitled *On the Mattawa*

CASCADIA

Clarifying a Great Notion



Dear Planet Drum,

Thanks for the photo from the banks of the Missouri. That was a good time.

Work continues on bioregional projects here, such as:

- 1) The Ish River Sound Bioregional Project — We formed a group to prepare a description (holistic) of our bioregion; we're currently writing and exchanging drafts, and hope to have a 50-page brochure out summer or fall. Also we're working on a map.
- 2) We're going to be teaching several week-long segments this summer on "Knowing Home" (Ish River and Cascadia) at the Chinook Learning Center on Whidbey Island, part of their "New Story" program. I'm getting a slide show together, too.
- 3) I'm finishing up the editing and Introduction from a bioregional perspective for my song-cycle "Cascadia Poetry: Seasonsongs of the Pacific Northwest," and hope to get it ready to submit for publishers and grants by June.
- 4) Good news! There's going to be the 1st Cascadia Bioregional Congress down at Evergreen July 25 - 27. This is what the region needs.

I enclose a copy of a letter to *RAIN* magazine which they published in part on key characteristics of Ish River Sound and Cascadia.

Fare Forward,

Dave McCloskey

RAIN magazine
Portland, Oregon

Dear Friends,

You asked for suggestions regarding the name of our bioregion. I. There are many bioregions in the Pacific Northwest — perhaps seventy different ones. So, you might consider making the title of your report plural (i.e., "Pacific Northwest Bioregions Report") and inviting comment from each area.

II. We need to clarify the notion of the Pacific Northwest. Traditionally, it has meant not only Oregon and Washington, but Idaho and Montana as well (or at least, Montana west of the continental divide). This fact is recognized by the Northwest Power Planning Council, for instance.

Also, by many criteria, northern California as well as B. C. and southeast Alaska should also be included in our region.

III. If bioregionalism is to serve as a fundamental perspective (and we believe it should), then we need to think more clearly, concretely, and comprehensively

about what constitutes a bioregion, and where bioregions fit in the scheme of things.

We need a heuristic for "finding home" — a nested series of relationships which integrally link person to planet. We've found it useful to think in terms of seven basic levels:

- (1) person — neighborhood
- (2) neighborhood — community (town, city)
- (3) community — watershed
- (4) watershed — bioregion
- (5) bioregion — region
- (6) region — continental slope (plate) / ocean rim
- (7) slope/rim — planet.

For instance, one of us lives on top of Queen Anne Hill (1) in Seattle (2), on the Duwamish-Snohomish floodplain (3), in Ish River Province (4), in Cascadia (5), on the North Pacific slope of the North American continent (or on the Northeastern Pacific Rim) (6), on Planet Earth (Turtle Island) (7).

These are the successive contexts in which we live. From such a nested series of natural relationships, perhaps we can locate "where we're at" and rediscover how to dwell at home in the world.

Bioregions and regions take on crucial significance here, for they are the natural links mediating between part and whole. A bioregion is a common life-place, and often centers on rivers and their systems of watersheds. In formal terms, it is a "biogeographical province." In practice, bioregions are typically larger than counties and smaller than states. A region is a large natural unit, and joins common bioregions together in a self-regulating territory. Regions are equivalent to countries, and may cut across pre-existing international political lines. This is not idle theory, but part of a crucial reorientation in the emerging reidentifications of people with place.

IV. The practical question of whether the Willamette Valley and Puget Sound are part of the same bioregion is a fascinating one.

Surely we live in the same region, which we have taken to calling "Cascadia." And Sound and Valley stand as close to one another as any of the strips of bioregions running north and south along the West Coast.

Indeed, Sound and Valley are analogues in many ways. Both are troughs on the old Continental Slope, former beaches of the Pacific Ocean. Both are well inland, and protected by Coastal ranges on the west and the magnificent Cascade volcanoes on the east. Both contain much of the same plant life — especially fir, hemlock, cedar, maple, vine maple, alder, madrone, swordfern, salal, huckleberry, and associated plant communities. And both contain the majority of their respective state's populations. Interstate 5 connects both, and so on.

But consider that there are other troughs along the western edge (i.e., the Gulf of California and the great interior valley of California to the south, and the Hecate depression between the Queen Charlotte Islands and the B.C. mainland to the north, as well as much of the "Inside Passage" in southeast Alaska). Are they also part of the same

bioregion? Obviously, general structural similarities fade in the face of specific differences.

Since a bioregion is a distinctive life-place with a character all its own, we propose that the Willamette Valley and Puget Sound represent different bioregions. The broad brush strokes of geographers (the "Puget-Willamette trough") and climatologists (the "Maritime Northwest") are useful on a grand scale, but obscure characteristic bioregional differences.

Even in terms of climate, there are noticeable differences — for instance, there's more rain in Portland and more snowfall. Portland tends to be warmer in summer and colder in winter than Seattle. Seattle doesn't have those icy Gorge winds in winter, for we are protected both from Pacific storms by the Olympics and from arctic high pressure systems by the Cascades. In Sunset's *Western Garden Book* (which is sensitive to microclimates), the Puget Sound area is mapped in terms of #4 — "Interior, Cold Winter" and #5 — "Marine Influence," while the Willamette Valley is mapped as zone #6 — "Partly Marine Influence, Partly Interior."

The Willamette Valley feels different from the Puget Sound area: it is flatter, drier, a wide floodplain uncut by glaciers, a lush valley. Puget Sound has higher humidity levels, a soft gauze of grey clouds, while in the Valley there are blue skybreaks all year around, and when the clouds break up, there's a bigger sky, more horizon.

The quintessential Willamette Valley landscape is an old house and barn with weathered cedar-shaked roofs, brown furrowed fields or pastures of sheep grazing, with clumps of fir and oak trees in the background and high cumulus clouds breaking into blue sky overhead.

The quintessential Puget Sound landscape is an old dock jutting out into the water, over a mud or rocky beach filled with clams and oyster shells, with gulls, fish hawks, and herons above, salmon and seal below.

The texture of each landscape is different, and the spirits which inform these places are unique. You can feel these characteristic differences in a powerful way at two special places — Champoe and Nisqually, the oldest settled areas in Valley and Sound respectively.

A careful scrutiny, then, may reveal many distinctions in the character of these two places. Perhaps the crucial difference is that the Willamette Valley was never glaciated, deepened and opened to the sea like Puget Sound. The Valley is a broad, flat, alluvial plain, while the Sound is a deep-cut fjord.

This means that the soils, for instance, are very different. The soils on the rich floor of the Valley — the "Eden" for which so many pioneers trekked west — are predominantly dark-colored and range from sandy loam to silty clay loam. Derived from river flood and the deposits of glacial lakes, these soils were formed under the influence of grassland vegetation.

Because they were plowed so many times, Puget Sound soils are formed of glacial till with unsorted rocks, sand, and gravel interbedded with clays from glacial lakes. These new soils are weakly differentiated, and formed in a cool summer climate.

From the differences in topography, climate, and soils flow differences in vegetational patterns. The bottomland and slopes of the Valley are a mosaic of forest, oak savannas and prairie land laced by riparian woodlands and thickets. The Valley was a giant beaver pond before the white man came.

Perhaps the Garry oaks give the Willamette Valley its distinctive character, something which fades out as you move north. (Also, there's no poison oak to the north).

While the Valley is a garden in the earth, Puget Sound is a garden in the sea. It's the heart and lungs of this place. While there are salmon in both places, Puget Sound also has clams, crabs, oysters, seals, orca whales, and seabirds beyond number. It's the place where fresh and salt seawater meet, and its daily wash of tides makes it the invertebrate capital of the world.

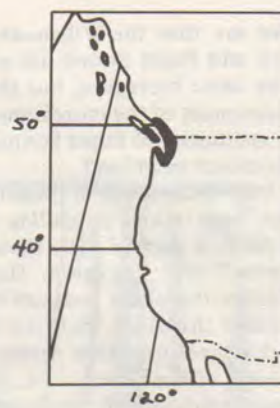
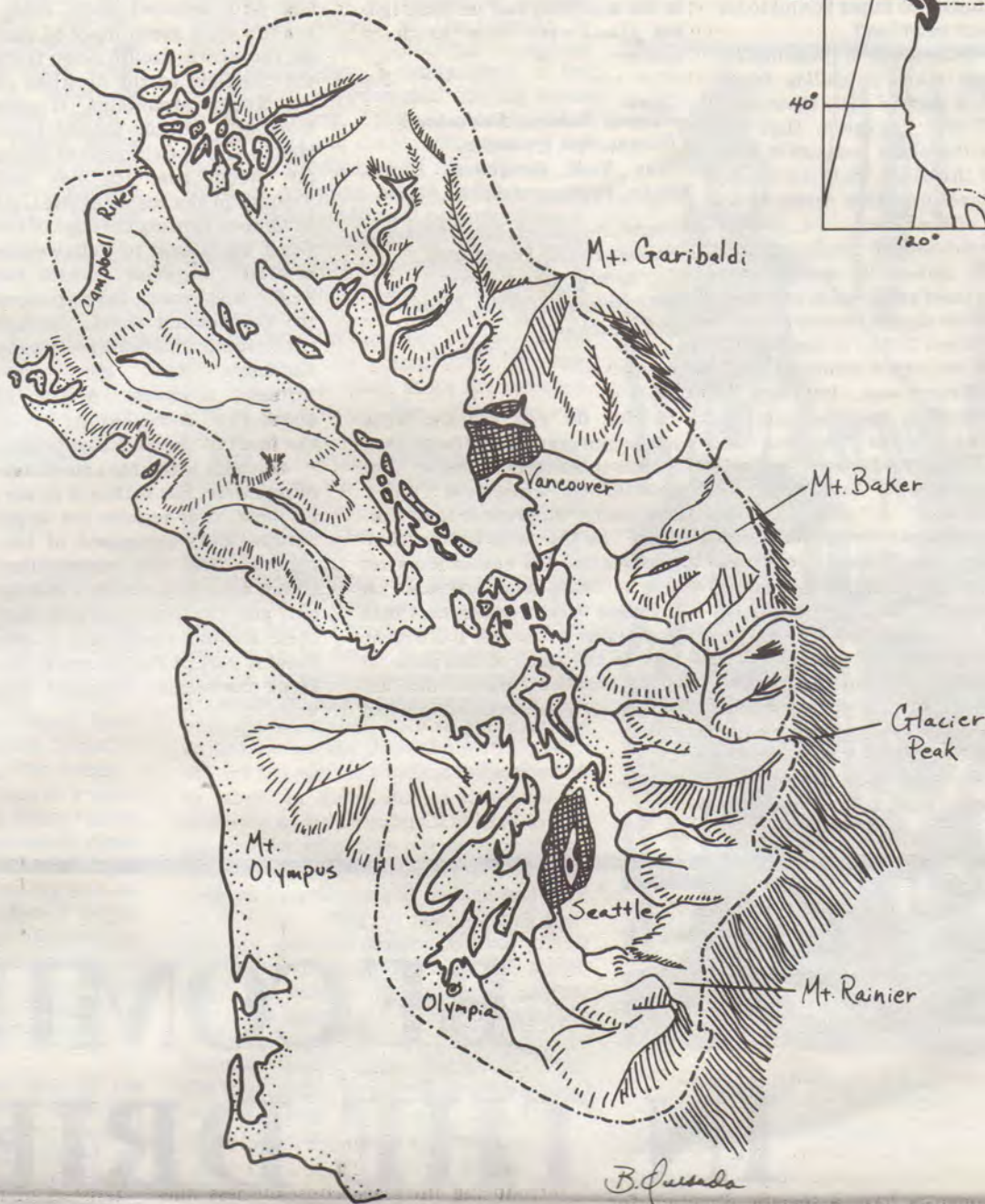
The "Western Hemlock Zone" which characterizes Puget Sound and its foothills continues into Oregon in the Coast Range and the Western Cascades, but it is interrupted by the different ecozone of the floor of the Willamette Valley.

Because of glaciers plowing beyond Olympia, Puget Sound is more naturally linked to the north rather than to the south. Puget Sound is actually the beginning of that rugged, serrated coastline which leads up through B.C. to the panhandle of south-east Alaska.

Although technically *Puget Sound* designates only the central body of water up to Admiralty Inlet around Port Townsend, it is widely used as the generic term for all the inland waters south of the Straits of Juan de Fuca. When one thinks about it, the similarities between Puget Sound and the other inland waters to the north don't end at the Straits or at the 48th parallel. After all, what was scraped away from B.C. by the glacial plow was deposited to the south in Puget Sound!

The inland waters are continuous, whereas the Willamette Valley lies hundreds of miles to the south over the Cowlitz plain and the Columbia River. Why should

ISH RIVER BIOREGION



Circles of Correspondence

we say that the Willamette Valley and Puget Sound are part of the same bioregion, but then ignore most of the more immediate continuities of Puget Sound to its northern neighbor?

To make sense of these things, we have taken to calling Puget Sound a part of "Ish River Province," our bioregion. Here we follow the poets and native peoples of this place, the Coast Salish, who gave their own names to so many of the rivers — i.e., *Duwamish*, *Snohomish*, *Stillaguamish*, *Samish*, *Squamish*, and so on. Robert Sund's fine book of poetry *Ish River* should be read by all.

Ish River Sound is shaped like a great waterbird arcing in flight to the northwest. Its body is Puget Sound, its wings are the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the great Fraser River, and its long, curving neck is the Strait of Georgia.

The boundaries of Ish River bioregion are simple: from the crest of the Olympics and Insular Ranges on the West to the crest of the Cascades and B.C. Coast Ranges on the east; from below Olympia in the south to around Campbell River — Desolation

Sound halfway up Vancouver Island to the north.

Ish River is a great bowl of green waters. The chant of rivers in the southern half includes (going clockwise from south to north):

Hamma Hamma, Duckabush, Dosewallips, Quilcene, Gray Wolf, Dungeness, Elwha, Hoko, Pysht, and Sekiu.

Fraser, Nooksack, Samish, Skagit, Stillaguamish, Snohomish, Skykomish, Snoqualmie, Duwamish, Puyallup, Nisqually, and Deschutes,

Skokomish

What do you call the Willamette bioregion? Peter Berg (Shasta) was tentatively calling it "Willametta." Or "Calapooya"?

V. Finally, we propose that "Cascadia" be the name for our common region. It's named less after the mountain chain and more for the great flow of waters that links mountains to the sea. It is a name true to the spirit of this place. It is the northwest part of the Cordillera, or the northeast part of

the mountainous Pacific Rim.

Cascadia is shaped like the top half of a crescent moon rising. It's the great green body of land on the north Pacific slope from the coastline to the crestline of the Rocky Mountains. It goes from 40° latitude around Cape Mendocino in California to about 60° north near Icy Bay and Yakutat in the corner of the Gulf of Oregon skirting the edge of the Great Basin over to Yellowstone at 110° longitude (where the Snake River rises), then up along the Continental Divide through the Columbia Icefields (where the Columbia River rises) over through southeast Alaska to about 140° above Glacier Bay in the heart of the St. Elias Range.

Cascadia is too big a subject to pursue here, but suffice it to say, for now, that regions are larger natural units composed of bioregions. And this conversation about what constitutes a bioregion, and the potential role that these notions could play in our lives, is part of the perennial dialogue concerning diversity and unity.



Hope these reflections are helpful! We would love to hear from other bioregions.

Faternally, Your Neighbors,

Dave McCloskey
Queen Anne Hill,
Seattle,
Ish River,
Cascadia

Jim Riley
Langley, Whidbey Island
on the Inner Sound
of Ish River,
Cascadia

BECOMING IN THE DRIFTLESS

The Driftless Area is the only section of the Upper Mississippi River Basin which was not scraped flat by glaciers. Thus we live among rocky bluffs and steep valleys owing to millions of years of erosion. The diversity of terrain tends to support small-scale human culture and a wide range of ecological systems, from boggy wetlands to hardwood forests. Because many steep hillsides are not usable for cropland, or even grazing, forests and many small patches of prairie have been preserved.

Dairy is the most common type of farm around here, though most farmers diversify by raising a few pigs or sheep, some corn, sorghum (for sweetener, not feed), or maple syrup from native hard maple stands. Apples are also an important crop with two major orchard districts. Native ginseng and edible morel mushrooms can provide extra income on a seasonal basis. Abundant pure water (there are two springs within a quarter mile of my house) provides an essential resource for one of the largest em-

ployers in the area, Heileman Brewery. Paper processing is also a sizable industry here, though most of it lies east of us on the Wisconsin River, the original mode of transport for logs from the Great North Woods near Lake Superior. Logging seems to be on the increase in the Driftless Area, presumably as a source of cash for spring planting, though the dairy industry has been less hard hit by the "farm crisis" than our neighboring crop-growers to the west and south. Tobacco for rolling cigars and chew-

ing tobacco is grown here on an allotment system with a typical allotment of 2-3 acres. Though the crop itself is of questionable social value, its cultivation provides cultural continuity for the rural community: it is one of the few agricultural products which has remained labor-intensive, as it is not easily "technologized." The high price it brings makes it worthwhile for the grower, even with the added labor cost.

Some reinhabitants have taken up dairy and tobacco, but many prefer vegetable crops and/or smaller livestock. Whatever we ask of our Mother Earth here, the fertile, wind-blown loess soils provide abundant crops of the highest quality, year after year.

The Driftless Bioregional Network has held three annual Fall Gatherings, at which we have had meetings and workshops, shared harvest and made tangible contact with others of shared heart. Our 1985 Gathering also included an All-Species Ceremony presented by the children. This past winter we expanded our annual cycle to include some lectures and discussions in the quiet season of snow. Our March programs "Community Building" and "Land Use/Sustainable Agriculture" broke all previous attendance records and left the participants with a deep sense of connection to our bioregion and each other. Also planned are programs on a regional plan for the Driftless Area and its environs, and secession politics.

Our biggest task up to now has been finding each other hidden in the coulees, trying to eke out separate existences. Our quarterly newsletter *the Drift* has proven a useful catalyst for this.

The emphasis at Driftless meetings and Gatherings has always been on the practical application of our ideals to daily life. We have never passed so much as one resolution. The job is at hand — what we seek are the tools to do it.

Now the Driftless community is experiencing a critical transition. Our small personal circles are finally ready to widen and include others in the dreams we envision. After years of home-steady, raising babies and starting businesses, our homes are stable enough to begin building a community around them. As our circles widen, they touch, and we work together toward our common goals. We are witnessing the evolution of a movement due to the maturation of a generation. Our expectations are based on a keen sense of reality.

We are on the cutting edge of cultural change. Building the world of our dreams begins with ourselves. We know this is occurring in other areas throughout the world, and look forward to the days when we widen our circles still further, and touch.

—Judy Marmel



WEIL LAND LIEBE IST

Am Beispiel des Schwarzenburgerlandes: Bioregionalismus

THE GUGGISBERG REGION OF SWITZERLAND



The old Roman name of the region was Interaquas ("between the waters," later on translated as "beneath the waters"); the official name today is Schwarzenburg (which means a market place surrounded by dark forests) and the local people call it Guggisberg (untranslatable, probably Celtic origin). Although situated close to Bern, the Swiss capital, Guggisberg is way off the tourist trails through classical High-Culture Europe. It was, and still is, a poor region and has often been called "Bern, Ireland."

It is useless and uninteresting to try extensively to present a region – land and culture – inside the limited space of a magazine text. Therefore, I only want to describe our first steps as “biographers” towards a bioregional consciousness.

My first encounter with the region was a sweat lodge ceremony down in Schwarzwasser Gorge a few weeks after I'd moved to Bern. Two years before that a delegation of Native Americans visited Switzerland and spoke in front of a UNO Commission. After that, they gave speeches in some Swiss cities and one of them was Bern. B, who was the leader of the sweat lodge on Schwarzwasser, met some of the members of that delegation, particularly C, who at the time was a messenger between the Six Nations and the Independent Hopi Nation.

B later visited him in California, where C's wife taught him to do sweat lodges in Prairie tribe style. B returned to Guggisberg and started to do public sweat lodges on weekends. More and more people came from all of Switzerland and south of Germany and the practice of the sweat lodge spread widely.

Years later, after a poetry reading in Bern, Lewis MacAdams and I drove up to the Guggisberg region and participated in a sweating with B. Then we all drove up to Plyffe Peak, the reigning mountain and spiritual center of the region, and visited Chreesere Cave, where, as the legend goes, the last of the little people withdrew around the turn of the century.

Lewis MacAdams returned to the United States and sometime later wrote, "don't worry too much, the earth survives anyway, if necessary, without humans." Along with the letter he sent a copy of the first issue of *Raise the Stakes*. Writing this text closes a nice circle for me.

Some History of the Land

The most direct approach to the history of the region is in the field names. The oldest ones are probably only understood on a mantric/intuitive level – names of mountains and pastures like *Gantrisch*, *Buntschena*, *Udrischa*, *Muschera* – lying beyond anything known or remembered. Newer names are language mirrors of the land, based on plant names like *Eichacher* 'Oak Field', *Chruthböden* 'Herb Flat', *Miescheren* 'Moss Earth', *Widengraben* 'Willow Ditch'; or the names of wildlife like *Bärried* 'Bear Swamp', *Rappenflueh* (Raven's Rock', *Hirschmatt* 'Deer Meadow', *Wolfsegg* 'Wolf's Corner'; or they're evidence of human settlement and culture like *Brandwald* 'Burned Forest'.

Schwandwald 'Cleared Forest',
Jegerenboden 'Hunter's Flat.'

Guggisberg History

As an unimportant, poor back country and subject territory without the full democratic rights of a free "Place," Guggisberg stayed relatively untouched by the great disturbances of Swiss history, with the exception of two wars between Bern and Fribourg during which the villages and houses of the region were burned down twice. The cities eventually made peace again and changed rule over the region regularly every 5 years for 350 years. The land recovered from its war-inflicted famine and stayed more or less forgotten.

Thanks to its borders, Guggisberg was hardly accessible and it became the refuge for poor people, outcasts, traveling people, members of religious minorities, and homecoming mercenaries uninterested in contacts with Bern and Fribourg authorities. Since they didn't have the means to buy land of their own, they settled along the brinks of *Allmenden* — the portions of land which were common property of the inhabitants of one village or sometimes common property of several villagers. These Allmenden, where all the peasants possessed equal rights for the use of forest and pasture, were most useful to those who now settled along their edges. Nothing changed about their poverty, because the Allmends consisted of poor soils on shady northern slopes.

Probably the misery of the last century is directly connected with the unusual significance of the region today. The remoteness and poorness of the land prevented urban-bourgeois monoculture. The people were left alone with their own creative and agile minds. There are tales about an old peasant who at times outlined mathematical formulas and evaluated the courses of stars on the wooden walls and floors of his little house. Two brothers developed the theory of free sexuality based on the concept that the mind was divine and the body satanic and that it was God's problem alone not to let his mind be stained by the devilish deeds of the body. The brothers had a considerable amount of female followers. They seduced married women, drank around in taverns and ran through the riches of their followers. One of them was finally taken prisoner, strangled and burned in Bern while the other brother went underground and was never heard of again.

The Little People

The strangest people in all of Guggisberg – living there since Celtic times, as some say – are the little people. They helped the humans with their daily work, they showed them good pasture grounds, and they cleared the mountain slopes of a bad plague of snakes. They were kind, helpful and generous – until a couple was surprised fucking in the grass of Riffenmatt village and held captive. They soon managed to escape through an open window, but then all of the little people retired into their cave on Pfyffe Mountain and were never seen again.

One of the last people alive who saw the little people as a

child is old Robi, a former herdsman:

When it happened, which year I can't say, I was . . . well, I didn't go to school. Down there in Laubbach valley there's a little yellow house; it was torn down and built up again. I was there with my foster mother . . . she was doing her laundry . . . it was rainy weather — well, it didn't really rain; it was more of a drizzle . . . and all of a sudden the little people came in . . . all of a sudden they were in the kitchen standing along the wall, but they didn't say a word. My mother told them not to come too near because she didn't want to spoil their little clothes by mistake. And they only shook their little heads . . . and these beards they had . . . and red caps. I had to watch them because they had these tiny little eyes, even smaller than cat's eyes. And then suddenly they were gone.

I often think about them. Sometimes I dream about them. Will I ever see them again? Once I dreamed that the world turned upside down and much was destroyed. The people on top were upside down and I was suddenly on top. And I thought to myself, now I'm all alone. And suddenly there were the little people again. They took me to their cave and fed me cake and meat and mashed potatoes.

And when I asked them if they thought they would come back again, they answered, "We can't tell that. The world's got to change: it has to be a little bit like earlier times. There must be herdsmen again caring a little bit about the little people."

I often think about it. Before that they probably won't come again. And maybe Riffenmatt has got to vanish a little bit: these houses and stuff.

Ravens

This is a time in the need of the raw speech of ravens. They're the teachers because they're the masters of life and death. Although in Middle Europe they were said to be extinct since the beginning of this century, this old Trickster bird lately sticks his big beak in the air of present time as Chū Chih did his finger. Whenever he turns up, the mythical past of the world gives a wink.

The ancient Celts, as did the Teutons, associated ravens with mind and memory, with war, death, poetry, inspiration and immortality. Their highest gods – Lug Samildanach and Wotan/Odin – sometimes appeared to humans as ravens; consequently, in Christian times, these birds were connected with the devil, but with oracular and healing powers as well. (Still to this day, the British taxpayers pay for the food for London Tower's six ravens, on which – as legend says – continuation of fortress and empire depends. In World War II all but one raven had left the Tower.)

Maybe it's because Raven survives as long as survival can be. The Tlingits said because he's a chip off a very hard stone he's very hard to kill. Tsimshians said that he could be killed but wouldn't stay dead. Irish people said he's difficult to kill because he's got three drops of devil's blood in his veins. Swiss hunters said he simply can't be shot. Anyway, he survives and lives on the trash of the 20th century, especially in the surroundings of a dump on the borderland of Guggisberg. Swarms of up to 200 ravens plundered the potato fields and cherry trees of the peasants there in the past few springtimes.

On account of his way into books, art, street graffiti and advertising. During the last two years, newspaper articles have appeared from time to time about ravens turning up out of nothing to attack people, steal food out of kitchens and talk dirty to the unsuspecting.

Schwarzwasser

Most of Guggisberg country is drained by Schwarzwasser Creek. Since the end of the last glacial period, the creek dug deep into the sandstone sediments of the former Tethys Sea – which then covered much of Middle Europe – and formed an impracticable canyon. While the land on the somewhat even heights was being cleared and cultivated, the gorge remained relatively wild – a refuge for an unusual diversity of natural life.

Last summer I did a two-day walk along the creek from where the Schwarzwasser flows into the Sense River up to its source. In the lower part of the gorge, there were traces of humans playing out their neolithic past. Somewhere someone had arranged colored pebbles in the form of a large butterfly on the sand. On many places stones were set up like little menhirs or there were poles sticking up out of the sand. There were sometimes drawings with soot or ashes on flat stones or rock walls.

The headwaters of Schwarzwasser Creek are steep marsh full of flies and mosquitoes. Walking there sometimes became difficult: no firm foothold, shoes full of water. The source itself is a tiny wet, dripping spot in the

sand between plants, guarded by a swarm of flies which didn't leave me any peace of mind. Seeing the source wasn't that much of a spiritual experience. I sang a bit and climbed up to the crest. As I went around a bend, there was suddenly a heavy flapping of wings. A few meters below the path, an eagle fluttered up out of the perennials beside a little noisy brook, glided through the brush, and vanished between the trees — first wild eagle I ever saw.

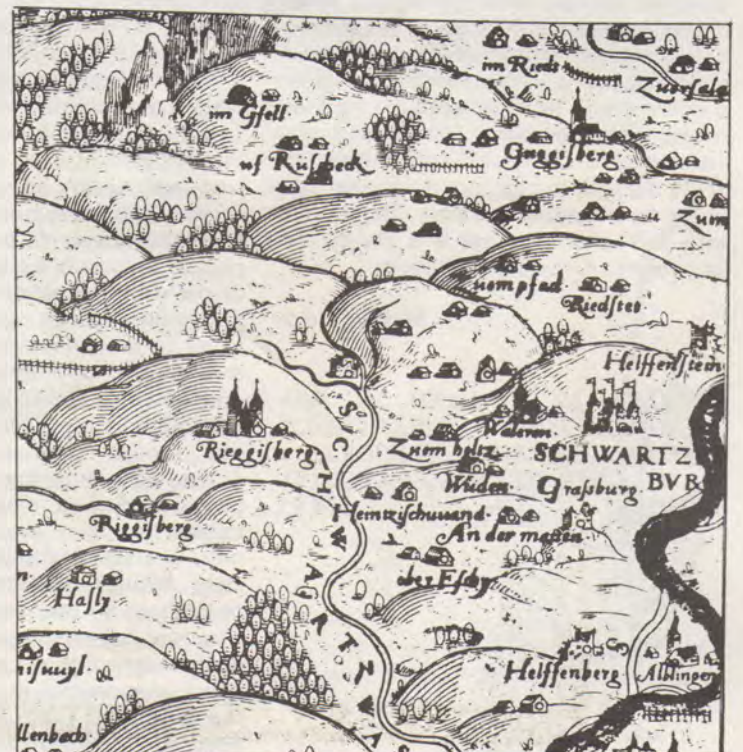
The Discovering of Europe

Europeans discovered the whole world – so their history books claim – and with the swag of their business they covered their own territory with dogmatic religion, wealth, concrete and acid rain. The use of bioregionalism for Europeans who can't trace themselves back to some tribe or tribal land (like Welsh, Sardis and others) lies in discovering Europe, finally: decortication of the crusts, the unhindered view of history and the shifts below. Raven is the teacher, Guggisberg is the teacher, because they're as close to the wilderness as they are to civilization – here and there they have the transparency of wild land/life (no asphalt or artificially manured fields between individual and the wisdom of the land).

This perception of spiritual dimension in Guggisberg never was completely lost, and at present it is experiencing an unspectacular bloom. People go into Schwarzwasser Gorge and for the first time in their grown-up life, SHOUT out loud. Or they go there and fast, or sweat, or do zazen, or eat magic mushrooms which can be found in the pastures of the region.

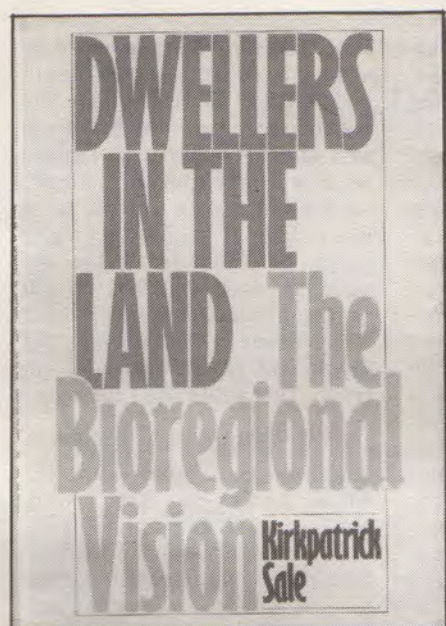
As young natives move out of the Guggisberg region, more and more city people move in trying to make a living. They bake excellent bread and sell it in the markets on weekends in Bern and Fribourg. Some of them tend cattle during the summer. Some are kindergarten teachers, taxi drivers, musicians or peasants. And although none of them calls it "bio-regionalism," that's what they do: they've decided (singles, families and a few communes) to live on that beautiful land, responsibly, and — as far as I know — they're willing to stay.

—Thomas Kaiser



RIFFS, READS & REELS

READS

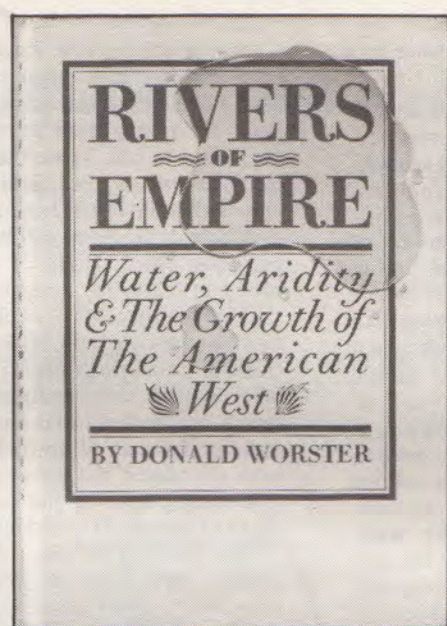


DWELLERS IN THE LAND The Bioregional Vision

Whoa! What Kirk Sale has done here is take the idea of bioregionalism, mat down its cowlicks, put it in its Sunday best Greek clothes and make it intellectually respectable. We're talking Culture here, folks, with a capital C — as in the best of Western Civilization since Mycenaean times. Seems they had a young goddess named Gaia (jee-ah/guy-ah?) we owe the whole dolma to. In short, *Dwellers in the Land* is a book that is pitched at the Academy by one of its dissident members. While at times a bit solemn and stuffy (Lord Zeus, can't I go out and play now? My knees hurt from all this intellectual homage.) Sale's book will no doubt legitimize the bioregional idea to those non-helots who have been lamenting the loss of the Greek city-state democracy these past two thousand years. He argues, fairly convincingly, that bioregionalism is the only manageable contemporary idea that combines ecological awareness with the possibility of restoring the civic virtues of classical Greek life or its latter-day Jeffersonian equivalent. Sale also gets in some good digs at the industrial-scientific world view with its incessant desire to dominate Nature rather than live within it. But for us unwashed bioregionalists, knee deep in compost or sweating at the recycling yard, I don't think that *Dwellers in the Land* is the book we have been looking for. While it merits a place in the local public library, it is somehow devoid of the kinesthetic spirit that animates the evolving bioregional community. What we need are working stories that challenge and extend our multi-species notions of identity, that tell of the struggle we all face daily, that add to the dream and the mystery. The trouble with Sale's book is that it is finally too humanist to be exciting anymore.

— Michael Helm

DWELLERS IN THE LAND: THE BIO-REGIONAL VISION • KIRKPATRICK SALE • SIERRA CLUB BOOKS • 730 POLK STREET • SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94109 • \$14.95



RIVERS OF EMPIRE Water, Aridity & the Growth of the American West

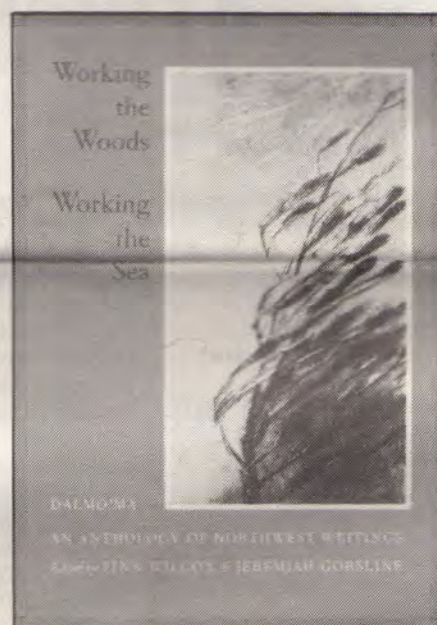
Though the mythical American West of sagebrush and jackrabbits, of cowboys, sod-busters, and gold miners has long since given way to a more industrial and managerial reality, it lives on in the dream machine of Madison Avenue and Sunset Boulevard. Today it expresses itself not only through these older images but also through the glimmer of swimming pools in the desert sun, the smell of a suburban mesquite barbecue, and the latest real estate deal. Taken together, these images of the good life continue to obscure our vision of what the new West has become. Donald Worster's *Rivers of Empire* is a look at the dream, the myth, and the reality as the political economy of the modern American West has developed. What Worster finds is that the modern American West has not been the product so much of rugged individualism and free enterprise as of an elaborate hydraulic State Capitalism in partnership with local agribusiness and urban elites. The thing that has wedded state power and private interest has been a mutual desire to dominate nature and create a powerful, irrigation-based, hydraulic society. The vital catalyst in this process has been the Bureau of Reclamation with its technical expertise and access to Federal financing. Today, in the 17 western states, more than 45 million acres of reclaimed desert land are under irrigation, making this country the most colossal hydraulic civilization ever created in the history of the planet. Not counting any of the activities of the Army Corps of Engineers or other private and public agencies, the Bureau of Reclamation alone has built 322 storage reservoirs, 345 diversion dams, 14,490 miles of canals, 34,990 miles of laterals, 930 miles of pipelines, 216 miles of tunnels through mountains, 15,530 miles of drains, 174 pumping plants, 49 power plants marketing more than 50 billion kilowatt hours a year, and over 16,240 miles of transmission lines during its some eight decades of existence. Though without question this vast hydraulic infrastructure has made possible an unprecedented agricultural cornucopia and triggered phenomenal population growth in the West, the price, Worster shows, has been far heavier than the public realizes.

If the fates of past hydraulic civilizations are any indication, the full social and ecological costs of attempting to totally dominate nature will be dire in the future.

What makes *Rivers of Empire* so fascinating to read is not only that Worster is a lyrical writer with a poignant love of the Western landscape, but that he has begun to articulate the dimensions of a post-Marxist, post-industrial scholarship. *Rivers of Empire* not only is first-rate political analysis, but goes beyond other books written about the American West in its multi-cultural social history, its attention to important women, and its inclusion of nature itself as part of the dispossessed. It seems fair to say that in *Rivers of Empire* we have our first genuine bioregional history of the American West. Hopefully, it will soon be out in paperback so that more people can share its knowledge and wisdom.

—Michael Helm

RIVERS OF EMPIRE: WATER, ARIDITY & THE GROWTH OF THE AMERICAN WEST • DONALD WORSTER • PANTHEON • HARDCOVER • \$24.95



WORKING THE WOODS WORKING THE SEA

An Anthology of Northwest Writings

The world seems so crazy these days that when you run across something that's right-minded and well done, you want to leap and praise.

Working the Woods, Working the Sea from Empty Bowl in Port Townsend is a wonderful book in several ways. First, from its Morris Graves cover to the stylish layout and good graphics, this is an example of fine bookmaking: it's a good, clean execution of a fully realized idea.

Second, there are some fine work poems and related stories here. Third, this collection represents an authentic voice of tree-planters and fishermen from "Cascadia."

These poems and essays come from those who still work the land and sea — know it, respect it, care for it. Ranging in tone from occasional exhilaration to exhaustion, one can feel here the back-breaking, bone-chilling labor of reforestation and what it means to heal the earth. As with all good work songs, you can feel the collective rhythms of the people and the land here; especially nice is the touch of humor in adversity. The humor is matched, however, by anger at the destruction of the forests and rural communities and at the exploitation of treeplanters by unscrupulous contractors and heedless government agencies. This book expresses the life of an indigenous subculture in the Pacific Northwest, and will surely take its part in the folklore of an emerging culture of Cascadia.

Noteworthy are several poems by Mike O'Connor such as "The River That is a Deer and the Last Bird Flying" and "We Come to Ask for Your Bones . . ." (on cutting an old cedar), Howard Horowitz's "Cougar Dam," Jim Dodge's "Treeplanting in the Rain," Tim McNulty's poems, and a reprint of Gary Snyder's "Smokey the Bear Sutra" (with a preface).

Tim McNulty's fable "Coyote At the Movies" is great, as is Jerry Gorsline's piece on the impact of the Navy and Trident on fishing in Hood Canal, especially his renaming of it as "Twana Fjord" after the original inhabitants.

But the gem of the whole book is Tom Jay's magnificent concluding essay, "Salmon of the Heart." Jay's essay takes its place alongside "Totem Salmon" by Linn House (whom he quotes) as one of the finest pieces of bioregional writing. Himself a fine poet (*River Dogs*), Jay captures the spirit of this place. He argues for the restoration of native salmon (as opposed to the corporate-controlled clones, or "rags," as the fisherfolk call them), and then links the native salmon to the "salmon of our hearts":

The decline of the wild Pacific salmon . . . is tragic because it means the whole ecosystem is in decline. The salmon is the crown of the northwest forest biome, the soul of our ecosystem. It is, with cedar, the paradigmatic expression of this place. If the forests and their waters are healthy, if the sea is clear and uncrowded, then wild salmon thrive.

The salmon is a kind of current between forest and sea. . . . The salmon is the archetypal resource — meaningful energy directed by unseen powers. It is the incarnation of the forest-sea connection, silver needles sewing the ties that bind, religious fish. . . . The salmon swims in our hearts as well, swims in our blood, feeds and eats the dreaming tree of truth. The deep resonance between the salmon of the heart and the salmon of the world is the note of our dwelling here.

This anthology deserves special attention from bioregionalists.

— David McCloskey

WORKING THE WOODS WORKING THE SEA • EDITORS, FINN WILCOX AND JEREMIAH GORSLINE • EMPTY BOWL • P.O. BOX 646 • PORT TOWNSEND, WA 98368 • \$8.00

WEAVING ALLIANCES

CALL FOR LISTINGS IN A NEW DIRECTORY OF BIOREGIONAL GROUPS

Since the first directory of bioregional groups was published (RTS #10, 1984), the number of new organizations has grown nearly as fast as the demand for copies of the directory. Result: we're sending out more copies of an outdated listing all the time.

PLEASE SEND US A COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF YOUR GROUP FOR A NEW DIRECTORY BY SEPTEMBER 1st, 1986.

Here's what we'll need:

- (a) a short write-up of your group's activities;
- (b) a verbal account of the geographic area;
- (c) a map of the area;
- (d) a symbol or logo for your group.

(If you're sending a representative to NABCII please contact Planet Drum staff members to deliver the description there.)

It would also be useful if you could send the names of other groups that you think should be included.
Thanks. —Judy Goldhaft

P.S. If you can't get all the information we requested, just send what you can.

CRYPTIC BUT HANDSOME

Designed by Bob Watts for the Celebration of the Longest Night benefit, "PLANET DRUM/green city" T-shirts and sweatshirts are still available.
Mystify your friends with our Lapp shaman logo.

Sweatshirts have the shaman in white on a black shirt. T-shirts have the shaman in black on a white shirt. Both shamans are holding a green drum.



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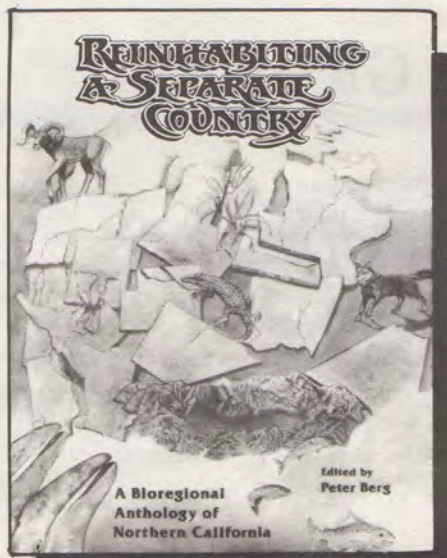
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Postage & handling \$1 per shirt.

All of the prices include 6½% California sales tax.

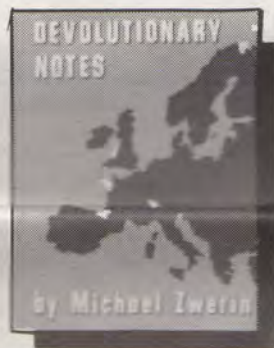
Planet Drum PUBLICATIONS

Books



• **Reinhabiting a Separate Country: A Bioregional Anthology of Northern California**, edited by Peter Berg. 220 pages. Essays, natural history, biographies, poems and stories revealing Northern California as a distinct area of the planetary biosphere. \$8 postpaid.
"The book serves as both a pioneer and genre model...representing a vital and widespread new ethos."

—New Age Magazine



• **Devolutionary Notes** by Michael Zwirin. 64 pages. A first hand account of European separatist movements today. \$3.50 postpaid.
"...a strange and fascinating little guidebook that is 'redesigning the map of Europe.'"

—Rain Magazine

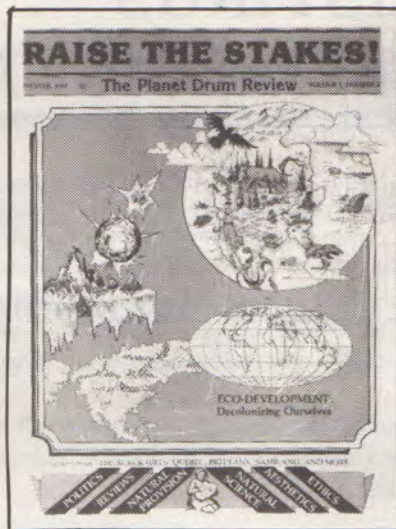


• **Eco-Decentralist Design: A 3-volume set** including *Figures of Regulation: Guides for Re-Balancing Society with the Biosphere* by Peter Berg; *Toward a Bioregional Model: Clearing Ground for Watershed Planning* by George Tukul; and *Reinhabiting Cities and Towns: Designing for Sustainability* by John Todd with George Tukul. 98 pages complete. Critical preliminary readings for intentional bioregional planning. \$10 postpaid.
"...Planet Drum is not just attempting to define a type of environmental management; bioregional planning may start from a firm sense of the environment but also takes into account the present state of, and possible futures for, cities and towns.... If we continue to conceptually isolate our forms of inhabitation all the singular wise goals of environmental management, sustainable agriculture and community economic development may be for naught. The Planet Drum package presents us with some beginning working tools to repair the broken fabric."

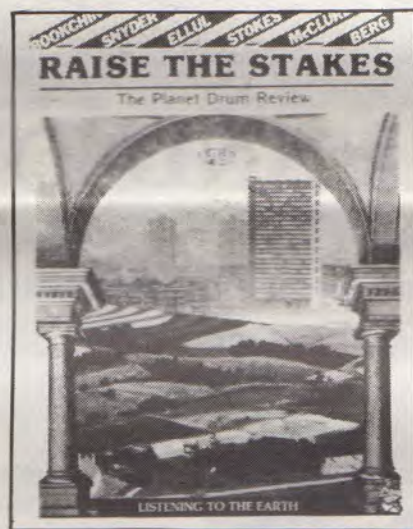
—Rain Magazine

RAISE THE STAKES BACK ISSUES

\$2 each postpaid



• **Eco-Development: Raise the Stakes, The Planet Drum Review No. 2.** Contains regional reports from Quebec, Northwest Nation, The Black Hills, Brittany, Northumbria, Scotland, Samiland, and northern California. Feature articles include: Re-constituting California by Jack Forbes, Eco-Development by Raymond Dasman, The Suicide & Rebirth of Agriculture by Richard Merrill and the Limits of Population Control by Stephanie Mills.

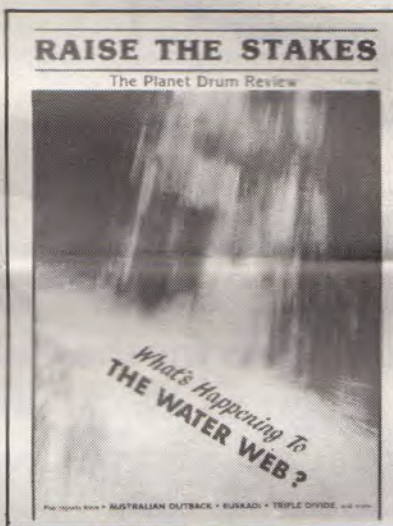


• **Cities—Salvaging the Parts: Raise the Stakes, The Planet Drum Review No. 3.** Contains regional updates from the Black Hills and Samiland as well as in-depth reports from Aboriginal Australia, the Rockies, the North Atlantic Rim, and the Klamath/Trinity, Passaic, and Sonoran Watersheds. Other features include Bioregional Comics by Leonard Rifas, Aesthet-

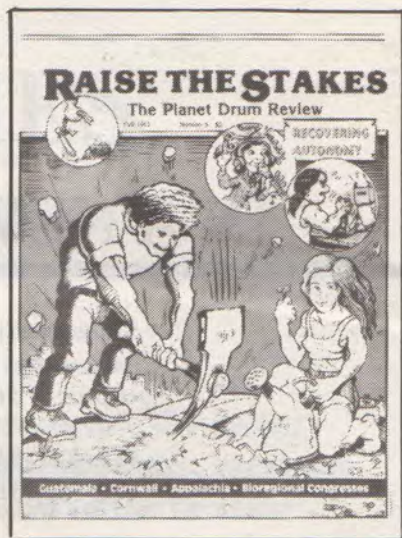
ics by Michael McClure, Renewable Energy to Renew Society by Peter Berg, Cities: Salvaging the Parts by Gary Snyder, Ernest Callenbach, Murray Bookchin and Morris Berman, Decentralism by Jacques Ellul, No Guarantees by Tom Birch, and poetry by Peter Blue Cloud.



• **Harvesting the Trash: Raise the Stakes No. 6.** (Winter 1983). Features a special section, "Harvesting the Trash," plus resolutions from the KAW Council and a discussion of the links between bioregionalists and antinuke activists. This issue is in limited supply.



• **What's Happening to the Water Web? Raise the Stakes No. 7.** (Spring 1983). Highlights "The Water Web," special section with Donald Worster's historical look, "The Flow of Power," and articles about the Columbia River Watch and terminal lakes. Plus reports from Euskadi and the Australian Big Scrub, and in North America from the Connecticut River area, the Slocan Valley, the Gulf of Maine, and the Triple Divide. Centerfold photo essay, "Songs of the Outback."



• **Recovering Autonomy: Raise the Stakes No. 8.** (Fall 1983). Important interviews with Bo Yexa on community self-determination, Shann Turnbull on bioregionalism in relation to economics, and Bill Wahpepah on the new directions of the American Indian Movement and the International Indian Treaty Council. Also Declarations of Shasta (Northern California) Emergence into bioregional politics, Reinhabiting Appalachia, and coyote woodcut centerfold by Daniel Stolpe.



• **Open Fire: A Council of Bioregional Self-Criticism. Raise the Stakes No. 10.** (Summer 1984). From about seventy persons, guest editor Jim Dodge selects representative gripes from Marni Muller, Bill Devall, Gary Snyder, Kelly Kindscher, and others. The Centerfold is Peter Berg's "Amble Towards Continent Congress." The Insert: A Bioregional Directory. Also: Slocan Valley, New South Wales, & Alaska reports. Networking news and reviews.

Issues 1, 4, 5 and 9 are sold out. We will, however, make complete sets of *Raise the Stakes* available to libraries and archives.

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BUNDLES



• **Reinhabit the Hudson Estuary: The Hudson Estuary Bundle.** Essays, poetry, graphics, and poster compiled and produced by New York area reinhabitants. \$10 pp.

• **Backbone—The Rockies.** A six-part Bundle of essays, poems, journals, calendars and proposals about the fragile Rocky Mountains. \$4 postpaid.

• **Watershed Guide & Living Here.** A four-color poster with pamphlet evoking the natural amenities of the San Francisco Bay Area watershed. \$3 postpaid.



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HOPE—

I used to say I could get by on faith & charity but I was lying. Thinking I'd go round the dragon of desiring. Of the need to desire. Without whining or blame, to want it to be. And then to actually expect it. A virtue like the people & things we live with never to be possessed of. Lived with some days without a reason for any of it. This year again I couldn't summon the heart to bake a cherry pie. Not like the one I cooked in the days I was lying about hope. With the lattice crust, in the wood cookstove. I don't start so many poems now. Say so many things I haven't tasted for belief. Know all the faithful think they know, & listen when love is letting me know I don't. Get to know the difference. Live with it. I can find the place on the dragon the soft place between shoulder & breast. See how the legendary recurs. Where fact unfailingly pierces miracle. That there are still such trees as cherry trees and such a fine, hot thing as fire.

...

JERRY MARTIN—

RAISE THE STAKES

The Planet Drum Review

Summer 1986

Number 11 \$2

URB AN' BIOREGION

GREEN CITY



- A GREEN CITY SERMONETTE •
- RESTRUCTURING THE ECOLOGY OF CITIES •
- GROWING A LIFE-PLACE POLITICS •

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