RAISE THE STAKES

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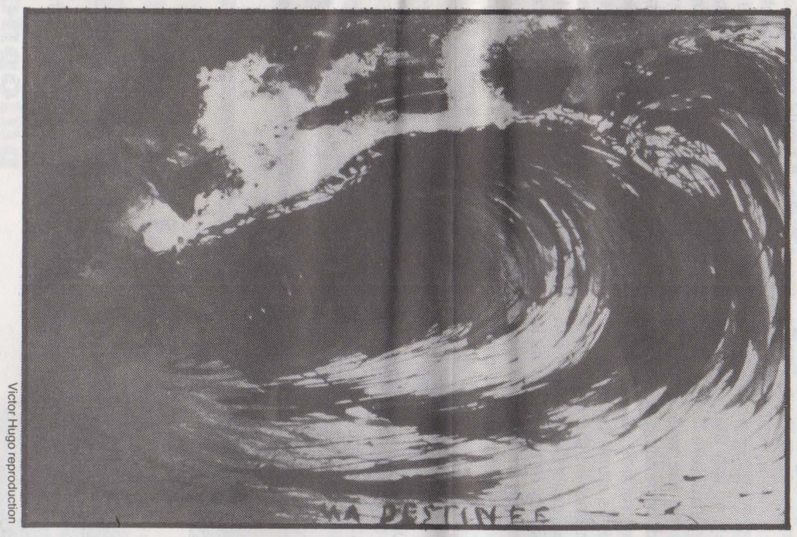
EDITORIAL

BETTER THAN "BRAVING" THE ELEMENTS

by Robert C. Watts



Victor Hugo reproduction

The next time there is a warm rain, go to the park and lie down on your back in some nice, grassy spot. Look directly up into the rain. Try not to blink when a raindrop is coming directly at your eye.

—Lew Welch

RENAULT: **And what in heaven's name brought you to Casablanca?**

RICK: **My health. I came to Casablanca for the waters.**

RENAULT: **Waters? What waters? We're in the desert.**

RICK: **I was misinformed.**

—Casablanca,
Howard Koch

We have become expatriated from our native sensitivity. The acute sense of change, wonder and surprise in natural process that once involved us in our local surroundings has been gradually supplanted with grouchy interpretations, as though we were all uprooted survivalists. If you've seen frustrated commuters taking out their impatience on overworked road crews because winter rains (or snows) have made the roads impassable ("Come on, it's your *job* to keep the roads open!"), this separation of people from place and natural processes is obvious. The anemic information that contemporary culture draws upon to decipher its relationship to the landscape and the forces that impact on it ("natural phenomena," in journalistic terms) needs to be expanded, diversified and reconnected to a livelier and more appreciative cultural adaptiveness.

Reactionary language and the manner in which it's applied to the "elements" of place is one of the primary indicators of the magnitude of this disassociation. Day-to-day weather forecasts are presented as gathered "intelligence" from a satellite network to help us circumvent disruption of tightly scheduled lives. The reports come with an apologetic tone of regret or a pseudo-comic Milton Berle delivery: winds "rake," waves "pound," rains "batter," snows "hit" and travelers are "warned." We "struggle through" and "dig in" against whatever comes next. Deviations in the seasonal norms, a tardy spring or an early winter, fuel depression and suggest betrayal if they don't turn on a calendric dime.

Grander expressions of the earth's local personality are dubbed as "unsuspected natural disasters." Volcanoes, earthquakes, floods and tornadoes, events that Hollywood and the Bible spectacularize so well, are given a vengeful "out of nowhere" character, even though their cyclical nature and established connection to the physiology of where we live should be honored with regional understanding.

As children we unconsciously assigned these events regional, totemistic qualities of adventure—that vacuum-like stillness before a funnel cloud touches down, the big waves/calm day paradox preceding a hurricane, the river jumping after a spring thaw. Aside from raising the hair on the backs of our necks, they also inadvertently raised our local consciousness and connected us with the vitality and scope of our particular environs.

To regain that original planetary playfulness when the elements "spoke" and to re-establish ourselves as native sensitive participants in a continued bioregional inhabitation, we are going to have to reinterpret cultural responses to our specific environmental fabric. Romanticized Walt Disney pastoralism and rigid organizational responses won't do.

What is there to be afraid of? Do we feel so profoundly dwarfed by certain turns of the weather or rumblings down below that we develop a "fear and loathing" denial system toward planetary wildness? We'll travel the world to see a total eclipse of the sun or to observe the migratory patterns of birds and mammals, but we can't look a storm in the eye at home. But like that ol' death and taxes dictum, it's just a matter of time until you come up against the entire regional repertoire of events, like it or not. So why not like it?

In the closing weeks of 1983 alone, there was volcanic activity in Hawaii (Kilauea Volcano), Alaska (Pavlof Volcano), Guatemala (Santiaguito Volcano), Papua New Guinea (Ulawun and Manam Volcanoes) and Reunion Island (Piton de la Fournaise Volcano). There were earthquakes in the Soviet Union (Central Asia), Guatemala, the Central Indian Ocean, the South Pacific and Hawaii (9,000 tremors after a major quake at Mauna Loa). There was a series of tornadoes in Texas and Louisiana and a hurricane in the Eastern Pacific. Monsoons drenched Malaysia and mudslides oozed in Washington. Two feet of snow covered the Midwest and cold temperature records were being broken everywhere. These were just samplings of some of the exceptional performances; the simpler and more specific occurrences (icequakes, fog, high tides, windstorms) could fill up pages. So the assumption that the planet is a relatively dormant entity until it decides to "cut loose" and "blow off a little steam" is a faulty frame of reference.

How do we start to return to an attuned native sensitivity and to the development of a full range of reinhabitory responses?

1) Lighten up. Do some reading. Try out some new interpretations. Find out what the major influences on your bioregion are and what their frequencies are. Do they give signals, have any moods? Are they seasonal or cyclical? Talk to those who have been through a lot of seasons and find out how they read the information coming to them. What do they consider expertise? Talk to experts in colleges and government agencies. In general, familiarize yourself with full-scale, long-range views.
2) Research established institutional and organizational responses for their effectiveness and efficiency. Note their shortcomings. Are they reassessed and revised periodically? Ask questions. Note the gaps.
3) If you live in an area that has a bioregional congress or a place-located group or a camaraderie of individuals, make this a committee issue or a topic of discussion. If no group exists, try starting one. The Frisco Bay Mussel Group formed over a specific concern and turned out a far-reaching booklet on the subject. Do the same. Call it "Elements Watch," or something more cleverly place-specific. If you already have a bioregional publication, make it a regular feature. If you live in an area where it's hard to get a group together, try the idea out at volunteer fire department or water board meetings. Those people usually end up getting involved in element-related problems anyway.
4) Develop responses to your region's particular concerns and appropriate ways to implement them. Emphasize a community network approach. Make the information available to all, perhaps in a farmer's almanac-style, reinhabitory "be prepared" handbook that emphasizes positive and totemistic qualities of events interwoven with good, sound advice.
5) Get behind your new bioregional resiliency. Take pleasure in those who share it with you. At least now you'll get out in the thick of it. Not necessarily with a grin, but with an inward glint of comprehension; subsequently, you've got one thing less to complain about and one more thing to enjoy.

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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.

VOLCANOES MAKE GOOD NEIGHBORS (but shouldn't Portland move?)

ROBERT CURRY interviewed by Peter Berg

Volcanoes invite superlatives more easily than they do reasonable sense, but why shouldn't they? When one learns that Mt. St. Helens, for instance, exploded two-thirds of a cubic mile—that's long, wide and deep—of solid rock from its side in a single instant, grand terms of respect are entirely appropriate. If that scale of pyrotechnics alone isn't impressive, consider how St. Helens' activity for just the last few years has transformed the land for hundreds of miles around it: forests levelled, river courses shifted, and hundreds of thousands of acres blanketed with ash. One short period of vulcanism can bring as much new soil, redesign of watersheds, and shifts in plant and animal life to a bioregion as thousands of less dramatic years might accomplish. Volcanoes just are superlative.

Eruption-dowsing experts, traditionally cautious to the point of non-commitment, were jolted enough by St. Helens' explosion in 1980 to check the data on other volcanoes in the western U.S. Their findings have recently been framed in terms of historical cycles of eruptions for mountains in the Cascade and Sierra Nevada Ranges, and the lid, so to speak, has been blown off (see table). At least five of these gracefully sloping, snow-topped peaks erupt every 100 to 200 years. Mt. St. Helens hasn't really stopped yet. One geologist disqualified the Inyo-Mono Craters as a geothermal site because he believes they will erupt before the end of 1984.

Making reasonable sense out of living near volcanoes? That certainly hasn't been a prominent feature of the culture in Cascadia, the large bioregion stretching the length of the Cascade Range, since it was incorporated into state and national boundaries so short a time ago as barely fits within the eruptive cycles of some of its major mountains. The same is true of Shasta (northern California) and the Great Basin area beside the Inyo-Mono Craters.

Robert Curry, a geologist with a gift for putting eons-vaulting information in human terms and an advocate of reinhabitation, tells how cultural sensitivity to eruptions must increase quickly and in a way that fits with the superlative style of volcanoes.

—Peter Berg

Robert Curry: Before we start, I would like to say that volcanoes make good neighbors. People have been living with them for a long period of time. We can predict the kinds of hazards that will occur from volcanoes fairly well. They don't change their mode of operation dramatically. If a volcano has been explosive in the past, it's likely to be explosive in the future. If it hasn't been, it's not likely to be (with a few exceptions as they get older). Volcanoes replenish the landscape with new materials that let new soils and renewed vegetation develop.

Peter Berg: Landscapes recover quickly?

RC: Yes. The reason for that is largely because volcanic ash from the primary eruptive phase is easily broken down to an extremely rich and productive material.

PB: The farmland in eastern Oregon that was supposedly ruined by ash from Mt. St. Helens' last eruption was actually improved?

RC: Correct. All of that talk about never being able to grow anything there again was complete nonsense.

PB: The Cascade Range extends from Mt. Garibaldi in British Columbia to Sutter Buttes in California. Since this is actually a range of volcanoes, would you find cultural diversity of indigenous peoples and diversity of native plants and animals reflecting greater ranges?

RC: No. In the Northern Hemisphere, in the volcanic region of the Cascade Range, geologic change is so active that the soils are young and productive whether the volcanoes are there or not. They don't add that much. They're locally important but they're not a mainstay for the entire region.

PB: People there are becoming more conscious that they live in a volcanic region now. The Cascades are no longer seen as merely benign snow-covered mountains—they are also potentially eruptive. Geologists are warning that Mt. St. Helens is subject to another eruption soon and that the Inyo-Mono Craters near Mammoth Lakes might erupt late in 1984. Several other volcanoes in the Cascades are now felt to be capable of erupting within the next hundred years: Mt. Shasta and Mt. Lassen in California: Mt. Baker and Mt. Rainier in Washington; and Mt. Hood in Oregon. What should be taken into account by the people who live around them?

RC: The biggest real hazard is to the urban city-dweller who lives in a site that is on a debris flow path from a volcano in the Cascades. The explosive effect of an eruption isn't the greatest danger.

PB: What are some examples?

RC: The two most critical are the cities of Seattle, Washington and Portland, Oregon. The Seattle-Tacoma airport is built on four layers of trees and mud that have cascaded down off Mt. Rainier at repeated times of vulcanism. We know the frequency of these occurrences because the layers have logs in them that we can date. We found that the frequency of eruptions is about once per hundred years and we've known that for roughly twenty-five years. Any given side of Mt. Rainier will erupt approximately once every four hundred years.

PB: Why is a city located on debris more hazardous than the explosive effects of a volcano?

RC: The debris flows are a complete burial system. When one comes down there's nothing you can do to stop it. Massive walls of trees and mud forty to fifty feet thick can slide down and bury a whole city almost instantly.

PB: So Mt. Rainier controls the fate of Seattle-Tacoma.

RC: And Mt. Hood similarly controls the fate of the city I worry about the most—Portland.

PB: Why is Portland more endangered?

RC: Portland's domestic water supply comes from the Bull Run watershed which flows directly down from the west side of Mt. Hood and into the city. It's a protected forested watershed sitting on the side of a volcano right at the back door of Portland. Plenty of timber and elevation for sending a wave of logs and mud right through the city and dumping it into the Willamette River and thence into the Columbia River.

PB: You're suggesting that this is a clear and present danger?

RC: The eruption of Mt. Hood is virtually a geological sure thing given enough time. Like the next San Francisco or Los Angeles earthquake. It could affect that watershed.

PB: Are there other effects of eruptions that should be taken into account?

RC: The northern Cascade volcanoes appear to be more damaging than those further south simply because they have permanent glaciers or snowfields upon them. When they erupt, the whole glacier or snowfield, the whole snowcap, may melt instantaneously or within a few hours. That would have a profound effect on the watershed and far downstream—effects that would extend, for most of the Cascade volcanoes, all the way to the Pacific—very large flood flows that would take all the trees off the side of a mountain and possibly incorporate a great deal of volcanic ash if the eruption had begun. The snowcap can melt before an eruption actually begins, though.

PB: I don't think most people realize the magnitude of this. Could you describe what it would be like.

RC: Interestingly enough, geologists have been reporting and describing the magnitude of these things to the people of Seattle through the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* newspaper for the last twenty to twenty-five years, but the information is always buried or downplayed.

PB: What is being downplayed?

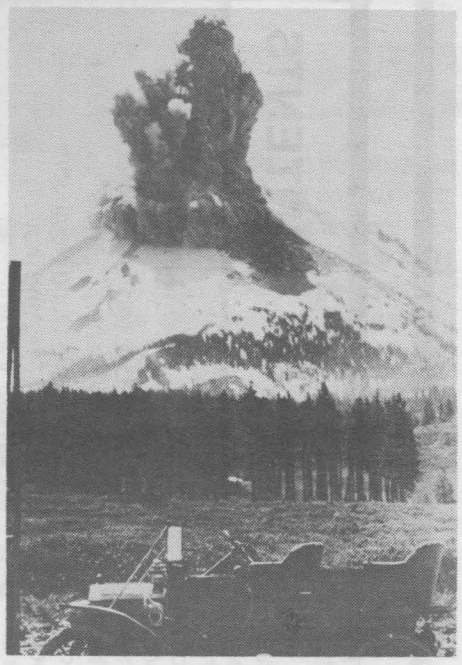
RC: A wall of trees. About three hundred square miles of mature Pacific Northwest forest, all broken down and moving forward. Nothing would stand before it. There's no way that you could build a diverting structure like a retaining wall. Following the wall of trees is hot or cold mud, depending on whether the volcano is in eruption yet. When the volcano finally does erupt, it may or may not deposit material on the city, but in the surrounding areas the volcanic ash could be ten, twenty or thirty feet thick. The wind is generally westerly, so more ash would be deposited on the channeled scablands of central Washington rather than on the western cities.

PB: What are the most serious consequences in a non-urban area?

RC: Being buried under the actual ejecta of an explosive eruption. Mt. Hood represents some risk in that regard in the Dalles area. Mt. Hood has gotten to the level of maturity in its evolutionary history that we could expect that. Almost all Cascade volcanoes have a major explosive eruption at a certain point in their evolution.

PB: What would be the effects of an explosive eruption of Mt. Shasta in California?

RC: Mt. Shasta has been quite interesting. It has had both explosive eruptions and relatively quiet ones. Like Mt. Lassen, it's had some recent explosive activity.



Glass plate photograph of California's Mount Lassen in eruption, 1914

PB: Would an explosion of Mt. Shasta affect the water diversion system that has been built since the last eruption?

RC: If the side of Mt. Shasta facing Shasta Lake and Shasta Dam blew, or if it erupted in winter and therefore caused an enormous wall of water to move down, it would probably overtop the dam and cover Sacramento with twelve feet of water. A mudslide from the mountainside facing Shasta Lake could displace the lake water in a few hours. It could knock out state and federal water projects that fast. The riparian vegetation along the Sacramento River would be pulled out, the Delta country would be flooded out and the dikes would be lost. Mt. Lassen has the same basic relationship to the state and federal water project as Mt. Shasta, although the effects of an eruption would be slightly reduced because it's located a little farther south.

PB: Could the California Water Plan have taken an eruption of Mt. Shasta or Mt. Lassen into account?

RC: Sure. Large reservoirs wouldn't have been built in the upper portions of the watershed. Different methods could have been used for storing water. It wouldn't have been stored above ground where dams can get overtopped. Major water storage facilities should be underground as groundwater systems of porous rock that can be charged and pumped out again. A volcanic event could seal an underground system off so that you would have to dig to get at it again, but at least lives wouldn't be lost downstream. California

Nancy von Stoutenburg

is still a long way from being that enlightened.

PB: What about the Inyo-Mono Craters?

RC: That's potentially an extremely hazardous situation. The Long Valley Caldera just to the south erupted 700,000 years ago and was possibly the largest explosive event ever to occur on the surface of the earth. It exceeded the magnitude of Krakatoa's eruption in 1883, an event that had effects that could be seen all around the world, by an order of at least 100 and posssibly 10,000 times. Debris from it combined with that from a similar eruption of the Yellowstone Caldera provides much of today's fertility in Iowa cornfields. Ash was certainly thrown into orbit. It even threw ash into southern California against the direction of established wind patterns, which suggests that it actually changed world weather enough that it could create winds carrying several inches of ash southwest into the Pacific.

PB: What's the difference between the Long Valley Caldera today and the time previous to that explosion?

RC: It's capable of doing the same thing again, but the probability is less. It blew its top then. It's a hole now, a long crater, but it could blow out the valley floor, and there's still a lot of solid rock there.

PB: What's happening there now?

RC: From work that I'm in the process of doing now, my opinion is that the Long Valley Caldera is a model for other pull-apart valleys further north on the eastern side of the Sierra. The next "Long Valley Caldera" is going to be the Mono Basin, and the next after that will be the Bridgeport Basin.

There is stress building up because the North American Plate is holding back while the Sierra Nevada and western California are caught in the rotation of the Pacific Plate. As this happens, the Sierra Nevada is pulled and stretched northwesterly and creates a north-south tear along with an east-west extension. This effectively creates holes along the eastern Sierra. Long Valley Caldera appears to be a place where molten rock came into one of those holes from below. The same pull-apart effect with young volcanoes, like the kind that probably preceded Long Valley Caldera, is happening in the Mono and Bridgeport Basins. Some of the Inyo-Mono Craters are not on a hundred-year cycle; they're only a few hundred years old now.

PB: In the meantime, what about deciding on that area as a place to live?

RC: Personally, I wouldn't be afraid to live on the Long Valley Caldera. I think it's fabulous to live with these volcanoes. The chances are that an eruption would occur in my lifetime, but the chances are 80 to 1 that it would be simply a phenomenal tourist attraction. They're beautiful to watch. Most of them slowly exude molten material like glowing toothpaste and occasional bits of ash come blowing out. The greatest inconvenience may be roads clogged with Angelenos driving up there in RV's to watch it.

PB: Considering that all these volcanoes could blow at some time or other, what should we do?

RC: The actual strategy that is in place right now is that of the civil defense systems that were established during the Kennedy administration. The Office of Emergency Preparedness was established and evacuation plans and early warning plans were prepared. For example, a micro-earthquake and heat telemetry device was installed on top of Mt. Rainier that transmitted directly to satellite communications and down-linked to the east coast of the United States. If all communications went out on the west coast we could still figure out what was happening on top of Mt. Rainier, as long as this transmitter stayed and was continually operational. The idea was that by seismic activity and changes in temperature you could know if something was imminent and you could try to evacuate people. An evacuation plan was made for the entire Seattle-Tacoma area to move everyone over Snowqualmie Pass, which in the middle of winter would be totally bizarre. The evacuation plan was initiated without the people of Seattle-Tacoma finding out about it. A few did, though, and they pointed out that it absolutely wouldn't work. It was unrealistic to get people out of there in the winter, because it would create an incredible traffic jam and everyone would be heading east toward the volcano. So the whole thing was dropped and ultimately the Office of Emergency Preparedness was disbanded.

The next phase of work was when the United States Geological Survey funded research on remote sensing to create "black boxes" that sensed infrared waves coming off volcanoes. Someone could drive by the side of a volcano, keeping several miles away, and take its temperature remotely. It's a theoretically possible technique but I do not believe anything has been done about it since the original research.

Then came the eruption of Mt. St. Helens. Here was a major eruption that killed people even though it occurred in a relatively uninhabited area.

So the whole Department of Interior research budget was reorganized and thrown into studying volcanic hazards, even though there had been good people doing exactly what was required for a long period of time. There were already competent studies of Mt. Shasta, Mt. Lassen and Mt. Rainier before Mt. St. Helens erupted; thorough analysis of the hazards, maps of areas of ash fall and mud flows so that we could see where they had occurred in the past and what their frequency was, and detailed probabilistic analysis for Seattle had been done. Nobody paid any attention to them because there was no way society could honestly cope with today's "civil defense" methodology.

PB: Did Mt. St. Helens cause a major shift in cultural attitudes?

RC: It may, but it hasn't yet. People in the Cascade region are going to have to make a realistic adjustment to living beside potentially explosive volcanoes someday.

PB: It's easy to understand why eruption prediction has gotten so much interest among geologists.

RC: We do know that there are much more serious situations than Mt. St. Helens. Mt. Hood is critical. The whole idea that there are 100, 1,000 and 10,000 year cycles is really very crude. It's an attempt to classify volcanoes the way we do sites on floodplains where we project 30 years of data to find a 100 year probability level. With volcanoes there is a very different history. With volcanic flows, we date them and find four for every thousand years and come up with a 250 year frequency of occurrence. They aren't regular spans of time, and to smooth them out into simple cycles removes allowances that are really important. There's an evolution of volcanoes that can start with a steam and ash eruption that builds a cinder cone, or one that starts with flows of lava and builds a cone of that. After a while, you have a big composite volcano from a mass of periodic eruptions over hundreds of years. Ultimately, the whole thing becomes constipated. Its plumbing accumulates lava plugs, and it will erupt out one side one time and another side the next. Pretty soon, the whole mass is filled with big pipes of interconnecting solidified lava, and it can't release material the next time. The pressure builds up more and more, and the periods of time between eruptions become greater and greater. Finally the mountain may blow away completely from the force that has built up. That's how Mt. Mazama blew away and left Crater Lake in Oregon. Before it exploded, it had been among the largest of the Cascade volcanoes.'

PB: What survives that? How many of the people can survive?

RC: In the catastrophic hot ash fall that buried Pompeii or buried the island of Martinique in the Caribbean, nothing survives. In the case of slow, hot lava flows like those of Mauna Loa in Hawaii and the recent Vesuvius eruptions, towns get overrun but people are able to move away. In the case of Vesuvius, they tried to blast barriers with dynamite that would divert the lava flow, but it didn't work.

PB: What's a reinhabitory strategy for living in the regions of Cascadia and Shasta?

RC: My approach is to become terrate, to know the land. Know how it has behaved in the past and what it's likely to do in the future and then live with it.

PB: Perhaps the greatest change might be in the area of creative anticipation. Eruptions are double-edged events that may very easily occur during our lifetime. What should someone know who lives in Portland with Mt. Hood on a 100 year eruption cycle?

RC: In that case, you have to be honest about your ability to make personal decisions about information that is transmitted from the mountain. In all probability, volcanoes don't erupt without letting you know that they are about to. You should have weeks of notice. The problem is that the U.S. government, which does the work on volcano prediction, cannot go yelling wolf all the time. They didn't yell wolf when Mt. Hood started shaking the last time even though some were worried about it.

PB: You're not an alarmist. You were serious because you knew the potential effect of an eruption and knew that anticipation of one wasn't adequate. What could have made it more adequate?

RC: We need some different sociopolitical and legal avenues for dealing with hazard predictions. It's true of floods and earthquakes as well.

PB: Thinking from a bioregional rather than a state or federal perspective, it seems that some watershed or bioregional group should set out to heighten volcano awareness in Cascadia or Shasta. Each watershed has specific things that will occur.

RC: Sure. There could be readily available folk art and science publications. I think it would be wonderful if Planet Drum Foundation or some local bioregional group published a hazard map before the United States Geological Survey publishes one.

PB: Is there something besides a better early warning system and a better evacuation plan that should be done?

RC: Portland should begin considering moving the city center west and out of the bottom of the Willamette River Valley and onto the bluffs that will be protected from the worst of a major volcanic event.

PB: How about new transportation routes for moving people out? In the Skagit Valley below Mt. Baker, it's a rural situation and some replanned roads could be very effective.

RC: Sure. People could be directed towards British Columbia or they could even get into boats for the San Juan Islands. Mobilizing all the ferries in Puget Sound to head into an effected region would be a very good idea.

PB: What's the cultural shift that has to occur to make living close to volcanoes a realistic rather than a hidden situation?

RC: Bioregional awareness would be a big help. We Shastans and Cascadians must learn our terracy, must learn our sense of place, and make our decisions about what we do. For instance, we should decide which trigger-events will cause us to move or evacuate temporarily.

PB: Start building an anticipatory culture for relating to an inevitable situation in these places.

RC: Right. It doesn't have to be negative anticipation.

PB: Play it like a piece of music on a community level. Set up a town meeting or start talking to neighbors about what people can do together and what to look for next.

RC: Find out who's got a van to borrow, who's got a place on the coast or in the country, how many people can it hold and what they might need there. Who evacuates first—say children or older people—and at what point do they leave. Community watershed groups could organize phone trees, information networking and local monitoring responsibilities. Other responses could be checking the availability of snowplows to clear ash cinder off roads and recruitment of cooperative roof-shoveling parties.

PB: That makes sense. It doesn't have to be a disaster film with sirens wailing and people trampling each other.

RC: People can be very reasonable, because part of the good neighborliness of volcanoes is that they almost always tell you that they're going to do something. Our only problem is that we don't always know what it's going to be.

TABLE OF PERIODIC VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS

Immediate threat still comes from Mt. St. Helens

50 Years:
The Inyo-Mono Craters are likely to erupt.

100 to 200 Years:
Mount Hood
Mount Rainier
Mount Baker
Mount Shasta
Mount Lassen

1000 Years:
Medicine Lake

10,000 Years:
Long Valley Caldera
Clear Lake Volcanoes
Glassy Lava Domes of the Coso Range in Inyo County

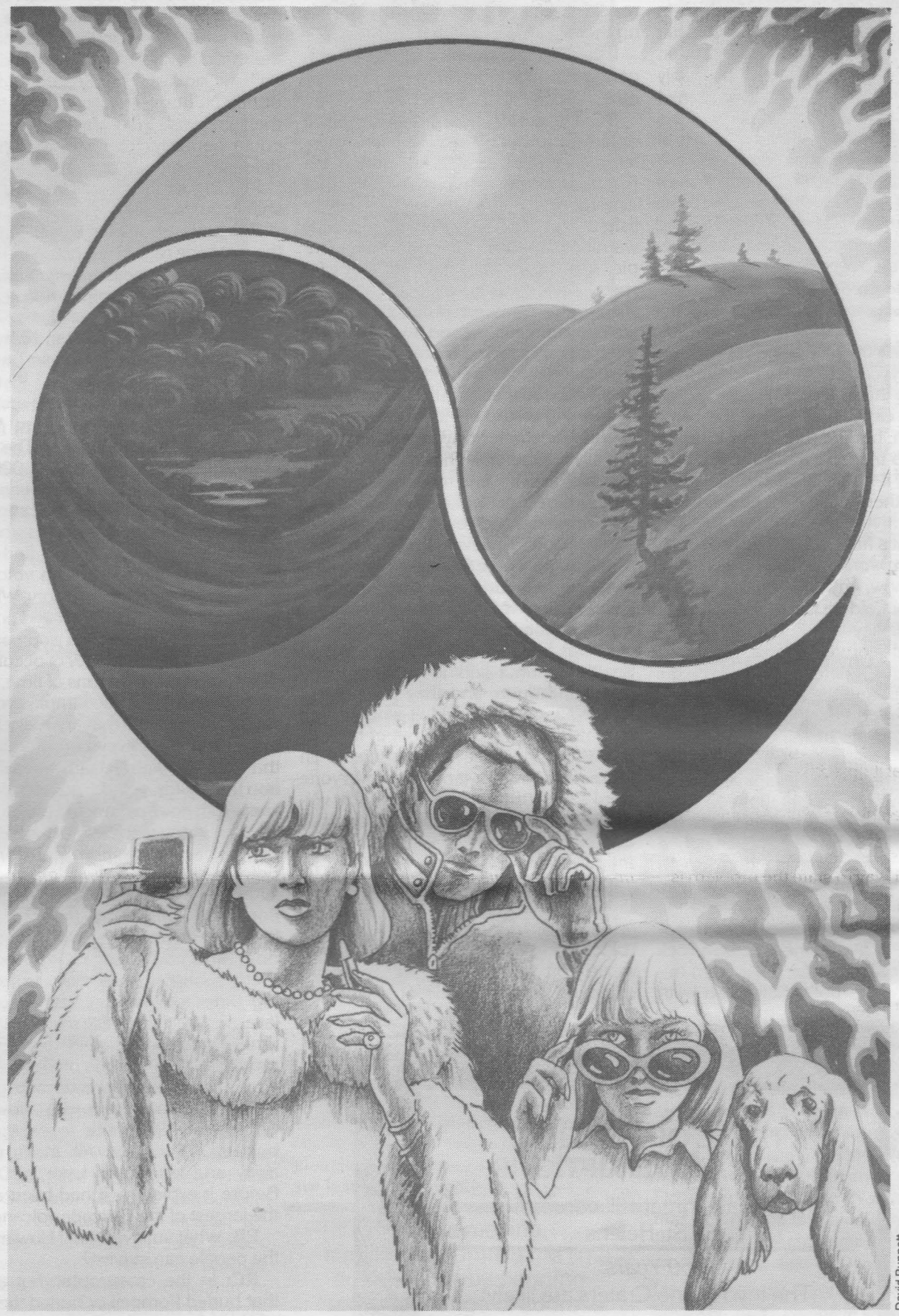
Planet Drum invites the formation of a VOLCANO WATCH to build the kind of anticipatory bioregional cultural support suggested in this article. Anyone interested in creating watershed-scaled networks to develop VOLCANO WATCH projects should get in touch with Planet Drum to receive names and addresses of "livelier sense" neighbors.

WHETHER THERE'S WEATHER OR NOT!

—*Gorf,* Michael McClure

by Elizabeth Whitney

Elizabeth Whitney is co-editor with Susan Peaslee of The New Weather Observer, *a publication which was born out of the awareness of changing weather prompted by the flood of January 4, 1982, in Inverness, California. Subscriptions to the* NWO *are $10/year from Box 485, Inverness, CA 94937. A sample copy is $1.*



David Bunnett

The weather is the backdrop of everything we do and the single most pervasive influence over all aspects of our conscious life. People have plotted the rise and fall of empires according to climate changes, analyzed the pattern of weather and its influence on individual behavior, and assigned attributes of an entire culture to its climate. And maybe just because it is so pervasive, it tends to be taken for granted or not taken into consideration when individuals plan their lives or communities plan their lifestyles.

We usually learn about this when weather disrupts us and forces us to take its vagaries into account. This is happening more and more. "Bad" weather is making news—bad being weather that breaks in on our daily round and makes us late for work or ruins the roads or brings down the power lines. Then we begin to learn some old truths about weather and habitation. One truth is the fact that what we have always called normal weather—the patterns that existed for the first half of this century in America—was actually a time of abnormally temperate weather. The current thinking is that we are returning to a time of true "normal" weather: a time when extremes of heat and cold and wet and dry are stirring up some pretty powerful tempests on land and sea.

The consequences for our food economies and our patterns of habitation are considerable. Coastal communities are subject to storms, erosion and a combination of rising sea levels and sinking continental plates. Repairing roads becomes a major and dire concern for impoverished local governments. Assurances of insurance have led people to make high risk decisions to live in vulnerable areas, contradicting the body of common sense knowledge. People are foolishly living too close to the zones marked by interaction of the forces of land and water—floodplains, sandspits, deltas and steep hillsides.

What does this all mean, at home, in a context we can absorb? The message of bioregionalism is to begin with home, a sense of place, a unity of geography and intelligent habitation, our containment in a natural setting. Awareness of weather is implied in all the concerns of the bioregional view; the notion of a watershed, after all, relates to rain. Within the watershed are microclimates created by topographical textures which modulate the weather and encourage or discourage various forms of plant and animal life.

Adaptation largely means adaptation to weather, since we experience land as much through its weather as anything else. It is our sensual experience of where we live: hot, cold, wet, dry—the colors of the sky, the touch of the wind, the taste of the air, the sound of the storms. Animals go where they feel good; plants grow where they satisfy their photosynthetic needs for sun and water. Undistracted by other considerations, people live where they feel good, too.

If you look at North America, the pattern of settlement from all the migrating pockets of European culture can be seen as a process of finding familiar climate zones. Scandinavians tended to settle where winters were long and deep; Spaniards in warmer Mexico, the Southwest and California; New Englanders where the landscape and the weather were like Olde England. In this current age, there exists the illusion that we have insulated ourselves against weather so that we can live anywhere. We move here and there for economic, not ergonomic, reasons. And then maybe we wonder why we don't feel at home—and make life for ourselves and the people connected with us miserable.

We are learning now that it was extremely arrogant to imagine that weather could be ignored as a factor in planning communities or in our own personal life patterns. We had better learn soon that living *with* weather is the only sane choice we have. Love it or leave it. Loving weather means loving the good with the bad. It's like anything else: it's a metaphor for a state of consciousness that tolerates the paradox of opposites.

What, I'd like to know, is *bad* weather? Whose problem is it if you are not warm enough or if your house is not secure? Is it because the weather is bad or because you have not been paying attention? Well, that question was fairly hard-hearted . . . losing a home and all belongings, losing the lives of friends and family is a true and real loss deserving of sympathy and comfort, not judgement. I live in a community that recently suffered flood losses which destroyed over 20 houses, caused intense hardship for many people, but happily did not cost a human life. The catastrophe put people through changes at a rate they would not choose to experience again, although you will find many of us who relate in a positive way to the Flood of 1982, seeing it as a monumentally transforming event.

From the perspective of experiencing new weather in a small community—a community which, incidentally, sits on the San Andreas earthquake fault—I can say that what happens during a time of extreme change is that people remain themselves, only more so. The together people get more together and help the less together people who get less together. You confront your personal strengths and weaknesses in rapid succession. You bounce from being independent to dependent and back again; your highs and lows interact with everyone else's so intensely that a realization grows that time is a factor in the process—the seesaw will shift again and finally, slowly, the swings will moderate.

And weather is like that, too. Storms do blow over. The sun does come out. The river finally subsides. The tide recedes. Spring comes again. And always, in the midst of the wildest and most terrifying encounters with this unfathomably powerful energy is the experience of awe. Mother Earth's special effects department knows no bounds. Loving weather means loving it all, and loving the mystery of it all. It means, to some of us, worshipping this mystery in a way that acknowledges our humility in the face of such power. We celebrate the seasons in the old way, many of us who went through the flood together. We gather at the equinoxes and the solstices to acknowledge connections we discover between inner states and external reality.

And we give respect to the material world as well. We observe the changes and encourage that attitude as a tool of survival. We tune into animal cycles—our fellow species have much to teach about the changes ahead. It is appropriate to become a weather-earthquake-volcano sensitive if we are going to live with these forces, not in spite of them. Mindfulness also means having decent raingear and a stockpile of candles and canned food. You can only be a resource for other people if you have taken care of yourself first—another paradox.

From attunement grow community networks, volunteer fire departments, neighborhood organizations, communications plans. We in Inverness, California learned a lot about weak links in our earthquake disaster plan when we had a flood instead. You don't often get a dress rehearsal for a disaster . . . or so we used to think.

DIVINING THE SOUL IN PLACE

by Steven Davison

At the 1982 AIM Summit Meeting in San Francisco (see RTS 5), Russell Means was asked if he thought non-Indians involved in Yellow Thunder Camp were somehow lacking something in their commitment. He replied, "Oh, definitely they're lacking something. They're lacking that tie to the land—that spiritual bond. But they'll get it. I'm not worried about that."

A poverty of approach in the Western industrial era and the emptiness in colonization of older beliefs has made "getting it" difficult for many people. Bioregional poetry, literature, theater, music, etc., have helped us glimpse a greater integration of belief and locatedness, but a formal spiritual development toward reinhabitation is still being tested.

Steven Davison has played the field looking for an approach to spirituality—one that develops a way of life, nurtures and celebrates a spiritual culture of place. From his particular vantage point of veteran experience with Judaeo-Christianity, yoga, EST, Silva Mind Control, Native American spirit-ways and current writings in feminist spirituality, he is initiating exploratory steps to an intriguing question—a question to which we'll all make a contribution.

Steve plans to attend NABC to help develop this interest. If you have any comments or ideas towards developing reinhabitory spirituality that you'd like to share or discuss with him, write: Steven Davison, 88 Guilden Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901.

—Robert C. Watts

Most people have developed their bioregional concerns from backgrounds in science, technics or politics. In my case, it was religion. I have deep roots in the Judaeo-Christian tradition, but at an early age, I severed those roots and began a zig-zag hejira in which I gradually refined an understanding of my self, my needs and my goals in my own terms. These I would sum up in the term *spiritual reinhabitation,* a way of life which nurtures and celebrates a spiritual culture of place.

By *spiritual* I mean those beliefs, attitudes, actions and forces which integrate life, which make whole the lives of individuals and communities, which connect them to each other and to the world around them. By *culture of place* I mean systems, institutions and other expressions of community life which share this consensus: that the host place deserves a central position in the development of cultural forms.

The union of these two, of the spiritual with the reinhabitory, I experience as a moral and political imperative. (In fact, the moral and political spheres are the first two things which spiritual reinhabitation integrates into one.) I have come to fear from my experience that unless bioregional reinhabitation sees itself as a spiritual movement, we will fail to transform all the vectors which are driving Western Civilization in its present disastrous directions.

Ecology is a good example. Ecological issues are at the heart of our reinhabitory work. But ecology itself is still a science in that it objectifies what is essentially a subject. I do not mean a subject in the sense of a subject of study, but in the grammatical sense, as the subject of verbs—verbs like create, sustain and heal. Another way to state the problem is that ecology is still primarily addressing nature as a system of systems. If *ecos* (which comes from Greek, *oikos,* meaning house or household—thus, "earth household") were a household of persons inviting relationship rather than a category of knowledge inviting study the situtation would not be much improved. Do we not treat, for example, the objects in our house quite differently from the persons who live within it? The key to this difference is that we communicate with people and even with the cat, but not with our sofa.

Let's suppose that we do acknowledge the personhood of the earth. Then spiritual reinhabitation becomes the celebrative embodiment of beliefs, attitudes and actions which seek to communicate with our place of culture. Is this communication crucial to successful reinhabitory work? I must admit that I am temperamentally inclined to say yes. But I traveled a long way before I could "own" the idea in a form that I was comfortable with. It was partly because Christianity failed in this respect that I left my first religious home.

I turned to yoga when I began to seek "mystical revelation" on my own terms. Here, at least, transcendental experience is the goal up front and it provides both philosophical support and concrete techniques to meet that goal. But does it serve spiritual reinhabitation?

After years of study and a summer spent in a yogic community in California, where the spiritual power of the land was everything one could hope for, I was very much disenchanted. I found nothing in yogic practice or theory which spoke explicitly from the land, or to it, although it is rich in natural imagery. For the student of yoga, "reality" is deep inside, and I found this kind of spiritual work drew people down into themselves, away from even their own families. I left feeling that yoga served me personally in many valuable ways, but that it was not predisposed or even inclined to be a reinhabitory path, either spiritually or culturally.

Odilon Redon, reproduction

I found the same to be true for what I will call the human consciousness movement—EST, Silva Mind Control, sensitivity training, and other disciplines. In several years of teaching Mind Control and of being intimate with the scene, I found nothing grounded in the Earth which took even environmental politics seriously let alone collective communication with the spirit-powers of a place. I encountered here, as well, the cult of the individual with no foundation for community life beyond the valuable consensus that "I'm OK and you're OK."

I finally turned to Native American spirit-ways. These are traditions which are potent from the practice of untold generations, which are born of the land and return their Peoples to it. Here, the spiritual connection is real: the spirit-powers actually respond to these ancient forms of communication.

I read voraciously for years, studying both aboriginal indigenous cultures and contemporary native movements. I fell into a romance of identification which seemed more and more to satisfy my needs.

When I met the people themselves and began to share a little of their spiritual life, I learned how much was unavailable to me and how often I was actually out of place. Not only is it nearly impossible to adopt another culture, regardless of its power; it is usually inappropriate to do so as well, regardless of the culture's value. Spiritual reinhabitation implies and requires a culture-wide transformation; and on this scale, cultural appropriation is usually called colonization. If reinhabitory communities are to be large enough to be significant as experiments in culture of place, it seems they will have to discover who they can be without denying who they already are. This does not invalidate indigenous spirit-ways as sources of guidance and inspiration. It is only that the work must be done by us and cannot be done for us.

Even more significant for me has been the discovery of the feminist spirituality movement. The work of Merlin Stone, Starhawk, Kay Turner, Mary Daly and others celebrates the Mother and the sacredness of the web of life in the Western cultural context we all share. It also criticizes that context with exhilarating clarity and depth of analysis. Women's spirituality has rediscovered the pagan—that is, the land-based—roots of Western spiritual culture and made of it a living tradition again. Though some of this material has been hard going for me, I believe a real start has been made by these women toward true spiritual reinhabitation.

But we are asking for quite a lot now, aren't we? No less than the overthrow of patriarchy, voluntary revelation from the spirit-powers of the Earth and the magical reanimation of a devastated landscape. No wonder spiritual reinhabitation seems like an overwhelming task.

It can also be lonely; at least it has been for me. Most of my friends accept these concerns of mine as quirks to which I have a right. They still take me seriously, but not my quirks. Others are merely amused. The heart of the problem for me is that spiritual reinhabitation must, of necessity, be a community process—it must be shared with others. It must nurture the individual's own personal search and work, but it must also tie a People together, and further, tie them to the web of life which sustains them. Community is the high priority of the reinhabitory spiritual movement.

The greatest obstacle here is our deep religious cynicism—feeling uncomfortable with references to Mother Earth and spirit-powers. I often feel this way myself, depending on my mood. But recent religious history has been far too dark, with its Moonies, Mansons and Jonestowns; and we have been far too thoroughly demythologized to stand innocent before spirit, even in its humblest manifestations.

GEOMANCY: A TAWNY GRAMMAR

by Steven Post

If natural science chaperones Mother Earth to just one dance and a wallflower dimension, is there another vision in town that sites her in the land of a thousand dances?

The idea that mountains "walk," land forms "speak" their own languages, place has a "temperament," and a site has "movement" of energies that can be read and harmonized is one of the many ways geomantic practice perceives the earth's "vibrancy." Geomancy instructs one in the natural positioning or siting of person, place or thing in a balanced relationship to local expressions of energies and land forms. With a tradition of practice going as far back as the siting of megalithic stone circles and up to the recent positioning of a Chinese Pavilion in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, geomancy opens up our atrophied sense of place.

Steven Post has been a fire lookout on Mount Tamalpais, a student of hermetic walking traditions, a follower of traditional movement practices, and an explorer into the many facets of geomancy. He foresees a practical synthesis of these many traditions into a North American geomancy.

In the following article, Steven points out ways in which geomancy might enrich bioregional thought and keep the many dances of place alive. For additional information relating to this article and other geomantic concerns, write: Steven Post, 2231 32nd Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94116.

—Robert C. Watts

"To the Eyes of the Man of Imagination, Nature is Imagination itself."

—William Blake

Jeanne Carstensen

photo 1

On a walk with Steven Post in Golden Gate Park, some of us at Planet Drum visited the "Dutch" windmill, restored a few years ago by a Navy Seabee team headed by John Wayne Blassingame, then president of the San Jose chapter of the American Society of Dowsers. The windmill and its environs disclose interesting geomantic characteristics, with veins of underground water and a geopathic area—a noxious vapor, or irritation, zone. Using dowsing instruments, we followed two water veins to near the center of a nearby stone-circle where they intersected, a result that had been authenticated earlier by master dowser Jess Pitts. The stone-circle was originally built as the border of a now dry artificial lake. How it came to be sited there isn't known, but intentional geomantic siting is unlikely. Nonetheless, its positioning harks back to Paleolithic Palestine, where megaliths are associated with streams and springs (Sibylle von Cles-Reden, The Realm of the Great Goddess: The Story of the Megalith Builders,*) and, especially, to England where the specific connection between* blind springs *(intersections of water veins), standing stones, stone-circles, and sacred sites has been re-explored over the past fifty years.*

I
An Introduction to Geomancy

Geomancy (literally, *Geo*, 'the Earth', and *-mancy*, from *mantic*, 'system of divination or knowledge', and thus, a way of knowing the Earth) is a subject of the widest parameters and affiliations. It can address practical questions of where to put your bed or desk, or where to site a house, on to ideas of mediating heaven and earth in the human body at a site, and then to planetary/local healing and attunement. It has done this from megalithic and earlier human skillfullness in regard to the energies of the earth and nature to developments of many kinds in contemporary science, including such specialties as geo-biology, ethno- and archeo-astronomy, historical metrology, geo-psychics, aspects of design disciplines, etc. It includes study, appreciative synthesis, practice, and application (in part made possible by planetary consciousness and the recovery of a unified human past) of archaic, 'primitive', old, indigenous, and now re-inhabitory cultural systems of local/universal perception, understanding, relation, and skillful means as regards earth, land, place, and natural process. These systems express remarkable "unity of diversity." Everywhere conditioned by place—the Mesopotamian steppes, Egypt, coastal or interior China, Crete, or the bioregion of Shasta—their character, sites, and culturally specific means of human adaptation to factors of geomancy seem to show both unique individuality and a tremendous regularity.

A rich and fruitful co-ordination is possible between geomancy and bioregional thinking. Understanding and use of geomancy can nuance, inform, and help shape sensitive bioregional transformation. It can offer ideas and *techne* to gladden re-inhabitory life. Careful exploration of views between bioregional and geomantic thinkers could offer pragmatic and theoretical benefit.

Geomancy may be further defined as an art of harmonizing with the energies of nature, with natural positioning and modulations of energies within or on the earth. As a language or perception, geomancy codes an accurate understanding of some subtle energy aspects of nature. It includes a psychology and phenomenology of place. Because it is an attempt to understand the language of the forms of the earth in terms of "dispositions and organizations" (Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*), "traces of making and transformation" (James Legge, *I Ching: The Book of Changes)*—a term identified simultaneously with increase and decrease of seasonal process, with operation of spiritual beings and beings of nature, and with aspects of the human mind—and finally because of its connection with our personal lives, feelings, and, especially, the wild and inspirational aspect of nature, we can call geomancy, following Thoreau, a *Gramatica parda*, 'tawny grammar'. From the standpoint of application, Chinese geomancy, in particular, has been described as the 'scientific' study of cosmic influences on housing, water, location, buildings, and environment that affect a person's daily activities and moods... as since antiquity, an elaborate body of intuitive knowledge that deals with the realm of humans in relation to their dwelling and "the art of adapting the residences of the living and the tombs of the dead with the local currents of the cosmic breath" (Needham *op cit.)*. The designations *astro-biology* and *astro-ecology* have been suggested by recent commentators.

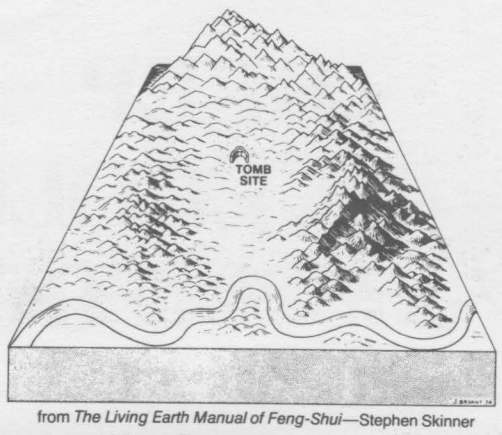
An excellent way of beginning to explore connections between geomancy and more formal ecologic/bioregional thinking is to examine and compare some of their underlying figures of regulation, archai-first principles, starting points, and vital organs of knowledge and activity.

II
Figures of Regulation in Geomancy

These suggested patterns of understanding begin to allow for consideration and analysis through a radical paradigmatic mutualism of heaven, man, and the planet.

1— The Earth is alive and has both planetary and local intelligence.

The traditional idea of our Mother Earth as a living being, the Hopi say like a spotted fawn, has been reasserted in many ways, with stress on its living and self-regulative character, supporting an interconnected, interpenetrative web of life. The "positively ecological" relationship of paganism and nature finds resonance in the consequences of such ideas as, "Ecosystems are akin to organisms" (George Tukel/John Todd, *Reinhabiting Cities and Towns*). The idea of an "historical materialism of natural development" (Bookchin, *CQ* Winter '81), of an "active nature," can be extended to include examples among sites which seem to point to surprising



from *The Living Earth Manual of Feng-Shui*—Stephen Skinner

The dragon and the tiger: ideal and real landscape

cases of local conditioning, intelligence of site and influence of place.

(See photo 1)

2—Wisdom, Movement, and Energy.

> *The Master Ta-Yang Shan-Kai addressed the assembly: 'The blue mountains are constantly walking. The stone woman gives birth to a child in the night.' The mountains lack none of their proper virtues; hence they are constantly at rest and constantly walking. We must devote ourselves to detailed study of this virtue of walking. The walking of the mountains is like that of men: do not doubt that mountains walk simply because they do not appear to walk like humans. These words of the Patriarch (Ta-Yang) point out the fundamental meaning of walking, and we should thoroughly investigate his teaching on 'constant walking'.*
>
> *—Dogen, 1240*

The idea of movement of energies in the earth, of the *chi* of the earth, and of the possibility of harmonizing with such energies is very old. Associated ideas of blood, water, breath, *chi*, spirit, circulation, machine, and organism figure here. A 4th century text speaks of water as the blood and breath of the earth, "flowing and communicating within its body as if in sinews and veins" (Needham, *op. cit.*). A 14th century text, of interest for current thinking about 'universal planetary grid' or 'earth acupuncture', refers to a "mysterious network" thus:

> *spreads out and joins together every part of the roots of the earth . . .Thousands and ten thousands of horizontal and vertical veins like warp and weft weave together in mutual embrace . . .Taking all (including land and sea) as earth, the secret and mystery is that the roots communicate with each other.*

If the *chi* of the earth can move through the network, the earth will be "fragrant and flourishing" and men "pure and wise", but "if stopped up . . . all men and things will be evil and foolish" (Needham, *ibid.)*.

An important part of geomantic siting is planning for a restrained gathering of factors of movement, tapping without deadening, harmonizing with dynamic process, approaching the ideal of naturalism in its true meaning . . .when process and product is the same in the accommodation of human beings, dwelling, and site. *(See photo 2)*

This suggests certain aspects of training in geomancy, offering experiences which give a physical form to models of human reactivity and unity with place. We have an open invitation to participate in wider sensibilities; one area, touching dimensions of field and process, might be recovering sophistication as "anthropomagnetors," and as "Homo sapiens electromagneticus."

The use of movement analysis, ecoscores, motation, energetic analysis, bioregional inventories, and other models offers many procedural possibilities for geomancy. Among them are their use as adjuncts in studying variations at sites, and as bridges of comparison toward reconciling geologic and geomantic understandings of a place.

Speaking, as we have of movement, of the walking of mountains and men, permits me to enlarge on the intimate connection (a prominent feature in my own work) between walking and geomancy and the theme of movement, wisdom, and energy. Plutarch writes that the Egyptians named nature's generative and conservative principle . . .Isis, from the word signifying 'knowledge' and 'motion' at the same time. In teaching, I've found it useful to help incorporate the theme of movement in two kinds of walking—"the woodsman's walk," modelling fluidity, rolling interpenetration of movement and space, and the "bamboo step," which translates movement into stillness. While geomancy sometimes concerns itself with intervention at a site, its perceptual knots should remain tied to freedom, and thus, to surprises, and to a real feeling of recognizing, as the Greek proverb puts it: "'Where has not Artemis danced?'" (Martin Persson Nilsson, *Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and Its Survival in Greek Religion*). A responsibility for geomancy, as for ecological design, is to harmonize with patterns of movement and variation through solidarity with the site, representing it first, and with a shift of emphasis from power or energy to seeking a wisdom of relationship, respecting the long results of time, but with some justified adaptive confidence in a helping potential toward, when appropriate, completing nature's work.

3—Heaven, Man, and Earth.

A central regulating idea for geomancy is the similar conditioning and functioning of 'Heaven, Man, and Earth'. In mediating these at a site, traditions of geomancy have sometimes associated Heaven with adapting to cosmological, astrological, calendric, astronomical, or seasonal factors, and a sense of universal structure, or intuitively perceived order. With Man, they have associated the human body, human culture and understanding. With the Earth is associated the land itself, its forms, processes, and energies.

An interactive model of Heaven, Man, and Earth might take a human form. A geomancy text we referred to earlier stated that the "body of the earth is like the body of a human being." Practical applications include specific ways of looking at houses, rooms, and sites as if they were people, as well as ways of studying the human body as a site.

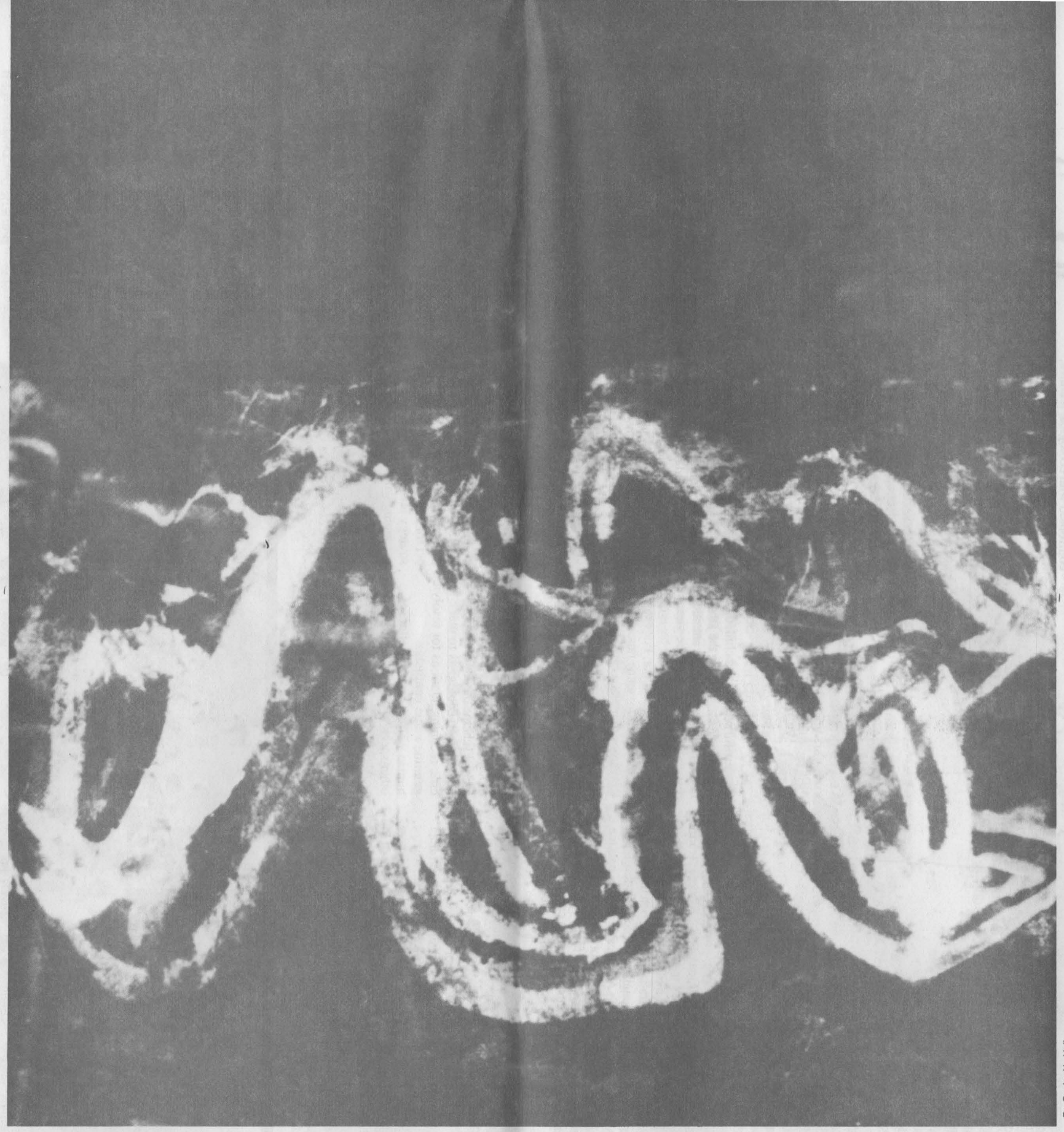
We can indicate how such ideas may actually be 'built' into the framework of the human body. A valuable example is the Kai Thien cosmology, in which the Way of Heaven is spoken of as being circular, the Way of Earth as square. Derived from factors of perception—the four directions, 'the horns of the earth', and the circle of the sky—this idea is used in geomancy in many ways. It is said that: "'the head of man corresponds to Heaven, being round like Heaven and uppermost, the foot to Earth, being square like Earth and below'" (Mai-mai Sze, *The Way of Chinese Painting)*. There is a method of physical practice and training called "The Pillar of the Universe" or "Standing in the World," a way to stand, which embodies this "idea of wholeness, literally from head to foot, of total harmony, like Heaven and Earth" (Sze, *ibid.*), part of the 'internal' martial arts heritage of Sifu Kuo Lien Ying. It is a model that teaches us about movement in stillness by experience, based on working with the formal properties and difficulties of an open system, working with the conservative and generative aspects of our physical natures. In simplest terms, in this exercise the hands are raised in a circle, and the feet placed in a square position, suggesting heaven and earth united in the human being. One purpose of this exercise for martial arts is to create a "structure," such that if someone, for example, pushes on one's arms in any direction, the entire body system remains connected as a whole to the ground. To stand in this way involves meeting with the ground, gravity, place, and polarity. This stance can be used as a way to begin to know a place, to find benefit in particular place, even a kind of biorelative doubling. It pleases me to take literally, in regard to this standing, Peter Berg's words: "For our heads to be everywhere our feet have to be someplace." To learn to stand like a tree, to be in human form a standing stone, are considerations here. In this sense, I link the standing with the body of delight, standing stoned, and with the wild inside informing structures of action and thought.

Editor's Note: *For a complete reading list and bibliography for this article, write to: Planet Drum Foundation, P.O. Box 31251, San Francisco, CA 94131.*

Jeanne Carstensen

photo 2

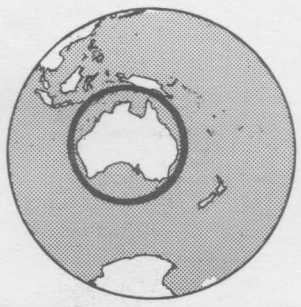
The Golden Gate Pavilion at Stowe Lake in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, a gift from the city of Taipei, is an example of a structure sited according to classical Chinese geomantic principles. Located at the base of the longest axis of the highest hill in the park, the site is organized to gather and dispense energies in a conservative and beneficial fashion. At the back is the treed slope of Strawberry Hill, conforming to the idea of protection to the north and rear of an ideal site. To the front (south), we have the lovely view and desirable frontal water of the lake. The pavilion is completely surrounded by water through the creation of serpentine water courses. Entry is by stone footbridges aligned east-west, corresponding to the left and right protective ridgelines sought for such a site. Siting on an offshoot branch rather than a main water trunk, a water situation of 'interior chi', is comparable to multiple and diverse channels of communication, more undulating boundaries, greater relational intensity and interface of mature ecosystems. The restoration of nearby Huntington Falls illustrates unskillful intervention. Cutting the main axis of the hill, the violent downfall of water may reduce the gentle penetration of energies collected and coordinated by the so carefully sited pavilion.



Dr. Gaylord L. Hall

"Rising Moon" by Morris Graves

DEEP ECOLOGY DOWN UNDER

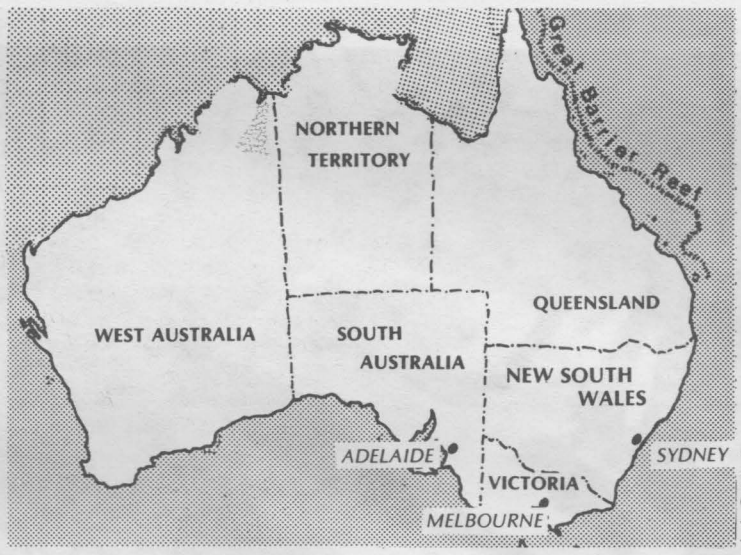


During a late summer visit to Australia in 1983, I was able to attend five major conferences on environment, ethics and ecology indicating the pace of intellectual and political activity developing there.

The landscape architecture students at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and the University of Melbourne organized a conference titled "The Edge." The theme of the conference was developing new perspectives on the Australian landscape and the quest for sustainable human communities. It was attended by over 500 students, teachers, activists, and farmers. Jerry DeGryse, one of the conference organizers, told me "as landscape architecture students we wanted to examine our role in society. We don't want to be just exterior decorators. The world that sustains us is dying. We must make choices and take responsibility for trying to foster social change."

Among the speakers at "The Edge" was Dr. Bill Mollison, who has developed a system of agriculture and living in place which he calls *permaculture*. While the place of wilderness in his theory is unclear, his goal for agriculture is "diversity and long term stability—a design of a perennial agriculture involving a special pattern of planting using a small amount of input energy and a system that can be adapted to a wide variety of environments."

Another speaker, sociologist Peter Cock, said that even if people espouse "ecology" or express an "ecological consciousness," they will not change their habits of behavior unless they come to terms with their values, and in Australia this usually means the primary value of individualism.



Judy Goldhaft

Other speakers at "The Edge" conference spoke of changing visions of the Australian landscape, from the desire for Arcadian pastoral to appreciation of the unique wilderness of Australia. But the rich theory of bioregionalism, which has developed in North America during the past ten years, has not been utilized in Australia. I also found little interest in discussing human carrying capacity or population limitations. The popular opinion seems to be that Australia is a small nation, meaning few humans (approximately 19 million).

The major conference for intellectuals was held at the Australian National University in late August, sponsored by the Human Sciences program and the Department of Philosophy. Dr. Peter Ellyard, Minister of Technology for the state of South Australia, opened the conference from the perspective of a practicing politician. He called development a "beautiful word" and chided "greenies" for ignoring the jobs issue. He called for more attention to discussions of changing the meaning of work and changing the basis of agriculture in Australia. For example, he called for game ranching of kangaroos to replace cattle and sheep grazing.

Charles Birch, author of *The Liberation of Nature*, was most critical of the concept of intrinsic value in nature. He said he could not understand what deep ecologists mean when they talk of "thinking like a mountain," and he presented a hierarchial scheme of values. He challenged deep ecologists to make specific recommendations for resolving genuine value conflicts.
human welfare and the welfare of other species and ecosystems.

At the conclusion of the conference, John Seed suggested that eco-activists must face up to the desperate situation on this earth. "Change is still possible," he said, "but not likely." Given the depression and apathy that many people feel when confronted with ecological realities, John Seed suggested holding despair workshops rather than intellectualizing seminars during which people could expose their fears of extinction, nuclear warfare and destruction and work those fears to a positive, affirmative, realistic praxis.

John Seed also organized a conference on deep ecology at Ballina, New South Wales in early September. Over fifty people from many occupations gathered on the beach for a weekend of intense discussions counterbalanced by volleyball, surfing and bird watching.

An aboriginal elder opened the discussions by contrasting the Westerner's lust for knowledge and domination with the aboriginal's sense of place. Later, we visited an aboriginal initiation site on the coastal sand dunes which had been used for hundreds of years to help young people understand their responsibilities as adults and their relationship to the earth. The Bora ring, as it is called, is now surrounded by expensive homes in a subdivision. Teenage boys were doing "wheelies" on motorcycles through the site when we arrived.

In the Blue Mountains of New South Wales, reform conservation groups were meeting at the Third Australian Wilderness Conference to discuss writing a national wilderness act for Australia and to coordinate strategy in all states to protect remaining wild habitats.

At present, the wilderness preservation movement and the aboriginal land rights movement have an uneasy alliance in Australia. Creation of new national parks is frequently seen as an infringement on traditional native uses of the land. While both the North American and Australian ecology movements use ideas from "primal" peoples, the modern institutions such as national parks and "designated wilderness areas" do not adequately fit the concept of "sacred land."

At the Nimbin festival in Lismore County, New South Wales, healers, activists and philosophers diligently explored the lessons of the last decade and discussed the importance of transforming Australia into a society based on deep ecological principles. They also had an ecology tent and led hundreds of people on hikes through the rainforest while planning direct action before the parliamant buildings in Canberra to protest the government's uranium policy.

The Nimbin festival concluded with a celebration of the equinox. On a grassy hillside that had once supported enormous rainforest trees, overlooking the volcano walls where remnant rainforest trees still survive, celebrants drummed up the full moon, "renewing the dreaming" that had been practiced by aboriginals for thousands of years on that continent.

—*Bill Devall*

(Editor's Note: Bill Devall is a contributing editor to Eco-Philosophy Newsletter, *the leading forum of deep ecology commentary. The latest issue is available by writing to:* Eco-Philosophy Newsletter, *c/o George Sessions, Sierra College, Rocklin, CA 95677).*

HESSIAN GREENS

The third runway at the Frankfurt Airport, runway "West" in southern Hesse, and the nuclear reprocessing plant (NRP) in northern and central Hesse are planned large-scale technological projects which would affect all fields of politics—nature conservation, energy, jobs, and peace. They are immensely significant to Hessian politics, and the credibility and success of the growth-oriented parties depend on them. Both projects would destroy our essential bases of living to an extent unknown in Hesse since the end of World War II. The effects would be disastrous: a vast loss of forest, lowering of the groundwater level, radioactive contamination, noise pollution, loss of jobs, energy waste, centralization, and reduction of democracy (atomic state). In consequence, the population's conditions of living will unbearably deteriorate. Cycles of nature and thus our bases of life will be irrevocably lost.

More and more local citizens, both young and old, actively but nonviolently challenge this kind of politics. They reject any tutelage from above and demand the right to decisions "from the roots" which are made directly from the regions. Established politicians and their bureaucracy no longer represent this will of the population. Referendums, included in the Hessian Constitution, are being demanded; but the ruling growth-oriented parties—CDU, SPD, FDP—are refusing these constitutional rights. The only thing left for those concerned is nonviolent resistance, citizens undertaking the execution of politics themselves.

Both large-scale projects, the runway and the nuclear reprocessing plant, are allegedly going to be built because of economic necessity. They are based on a megalomaniacal idea of unlimited growth. Those who are responsible for these projects refuse to realize the negative ecological and social consequences of these politics.

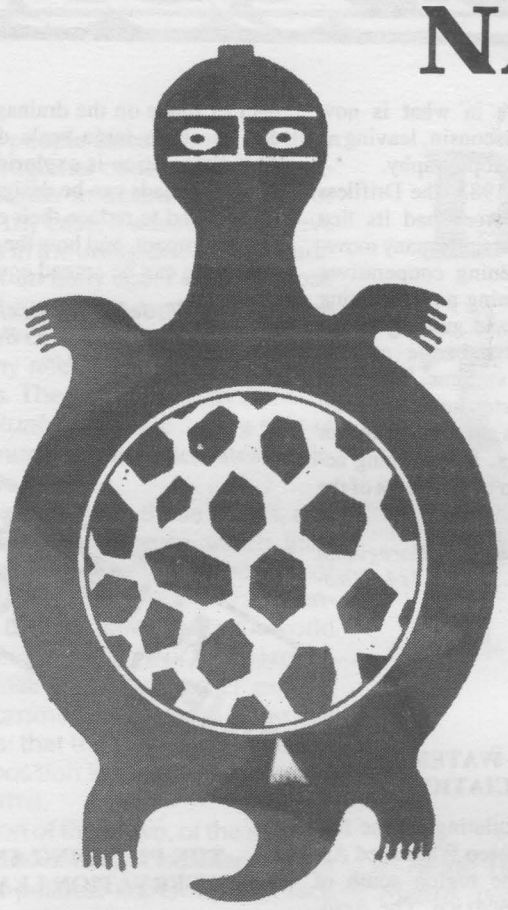
The Greens seek to replace the blind destructive ideology of growth by politics where the cycles of nature are accepted as the basis of ideology. Man is part of nature. Accordingly, ecological politics means accepting this context, standing for the consideration of ecology in all fields of society. Instead of exploiting nature, the declared aim of ecological politics is the combined effort of man and nature and abolition of man's exploitation by man. This excludes any kind of exploitative and destructive economy.

—*The Greens, Hesse*


THE GREENS—HESSE

The complete pamphlet Thinking within contexts–Acting for a future worth living in *from which this has been excerpted offers an authentic primary-source statement of German Green alternatives to supplant the blurred "press of personality" that has been presented in the U.S. lately. It is available from DIE GRUNEN-HESSEN, Schwanthaler Strasse 59, 6000 Frankfurt-70, Germany.*

NABC UPDATE



Mimbres pottery design

The first North American Bioregional Congress will convene May 21-25, 1984, north of Kansas City, Missouri.

The major reasons for convening NABC I are to accomplish the following: **(1)** bring continental bioregionalists together with those working in political ecology, "deep ecology," sustainability, and the broad-scale green movement; **(2)** share the culture and history of the bioregions represented; **(3)** help unify the bioregional movement; **(4)** explore the great comon ground between bioregionalists and indigenous peoples; **(5)** seed new bioregional congresses/councils, and organizations; **(6)** help focus green movement political energies towards new coalitions and impact on existing political/electoral systems; **(7)** determine whether NABC can be an ongoing event and continuing organization; **(8)** celebrate North America, Turtle Island, our continent.

Congress proceedings will be issued after the event, containing committee and caucus reports, resolutions, writings done by participants during the congress, position papers, information on future NABC events, and any number of other items of bioregional interest. This will be especially helpful if for some reason you can't come to NABC I but still want to find out what happened and stay connected to the continental bioregional network. If you would like to receive a copy, please reserve one now by sending $10 to cover printing and mailing costs.

CONTACT: The Bioregional Project/NABC, Box 129, Drury, MO 65638. (417) 261-2553. (Editor's Note: As of press time, the preregistration deadline for the North American Bioregional Congress has already passed. If you are late registering or have just learned of NABC I, there may still be some openings. To find out, write: The Bioregional Project/NABC, Box 129, Drury, MO 65838.

Turtle Island Visions and Soundscapes

The Turtle Island Visions and Soundscapes Project, a slide and music show depicting all the bioregions and their cultures in North America, was enthusiastically received by the NABC coordinating council for the opening presentation of the North American Bioregional Congress. The project is being coordinated by members of the Ozark Area Community Congress and the Kansas Area Watershed Council.

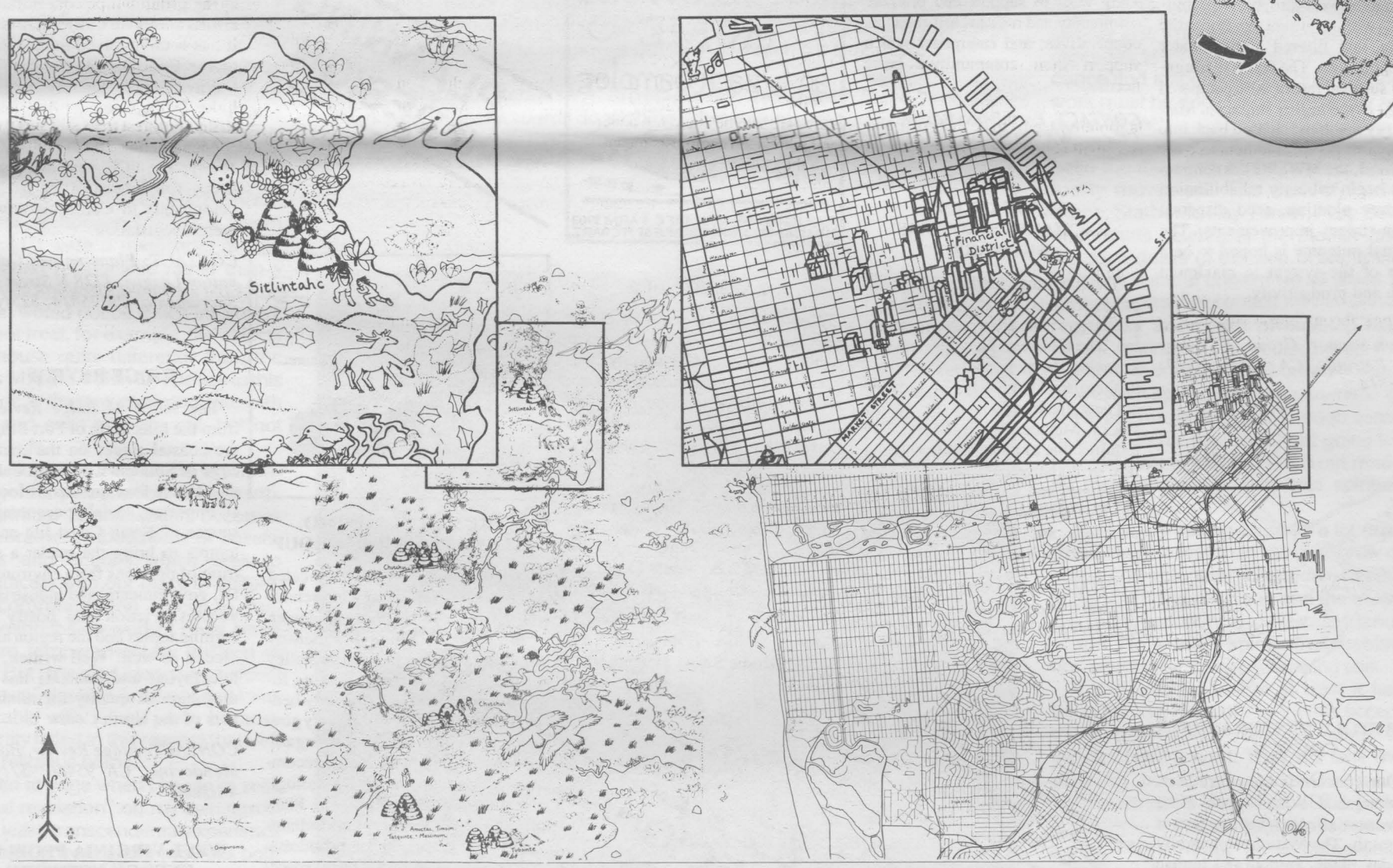
We are working to provide a visual and musical link between bioregional groups and individuals that will give all of us attending NABC a chance to learn about one anothers' homes not just as geographical points charted into cities and states, but a blending of what motivates, what teaches and what touches all of us where we live.

Duplicates of the show will be available for ecological education and for sharing the culture of bioregional inhabitation.

—Caryn Mirriam Goldberg

CONTACT: Turtle Island Visions and Soundscapes, 4200 Rock Quarry Road, Columbia, MO 65201. (314) 442-8743.

WILD IN THE CITY: The Bioregional Mapping of San Francisco



"Wild in the City" 23x36 poster by Nancy Morita

Tule elk in the Mission?
Grizzly bears downtown?

To the untrained eye that scans the glittery skyline of San Francisco at dusk or the Cartesian blocks of many of the city's snugly-packed neighborhoods, the sight of bald eagles, tule elk or the "Grizz" cruising the streets would probably come as quite a shock. But surprising as it might seem, these very wild creatures, and a wealth of others, are quite native to this place that we now call San Francisco.

"Wild in the City" is a mapping of these native inhabitants, block by block, throughout the city. In a graphic map/poster, it correlates both neighborhoods (today) and ecosystems (past/present) to show the native roots that underlie the city. Included are the natural watercourses, original shoreline and topography, native animal and plant species, Ohlone Indian village sites, and a complete ecosystem key. This information serves an important purpose: it forms a basis upon which appropriate land use for a sustainable future can be determined. Elements of this future could include stream restoration, native landscaping, municipal alternative energy planning, re-districting along watershed tiers, identification and protection of unique and sensitive habitats, and the reintroduction of native species into San Francisco.

In its native state approximately 200 years ago and before, the place we now call San Francisco was abundantly inhabited by birds (over 150 species), mammals and sea mammals. In spring, the hillsides were very green, and wild violets, California poppies, Mariposa lilies and many other flowers blossomed in profusion. In the bay, whales, shoals of dolphins, sea otters and sea lions could be seen. The water table was much higher back then and springs were everywhere. Mission Creek and Islais Creek (the vestiges of which are the Mission and Islais Creek channels) had their headwaters in the Twin Peaks and Glen Canyon Park areas respectively. Their flows supported silver salmon and steelhead rainbow trout. Along these waterways bald eagles, osprey and grizzly bear hunted.

In what has become downtown San Francisco, the Ohlone Indians had a small tribelet village called Sitlintahc. There they had a sweathouse and sweetwater lagoon which they plunged into after their sweats. Their homes, storehouses and balsas (canoes) were made from the tule that grew in the marshland nearby. They ate abundantly from the bay shore where clams, mussels, oysters, crabs and shrimp were in generous supply along with at least 29 species of fish.

Although today the city has crowded out much of the wildness and spirit of nature, many survivors remain. Sea otter, heron, egret, brown pelican, sea lion and perhaps a few coyote still find sanctuary here. And the anadromous fish still come to the creek channels in anticipation of the time when the creeks will run free again. "Wild in the City" is both historical and visionary: it shows a time when people lived alongside the wild in harmony and balance, and establishes a template for doing it again.

—*Nancy Morita*

Copies of this map/poster are available from WILD IN THE CITY, 6 Cypress, San Anselmo, CA 94960. Send $4.50 plus $1.50 postage and handling for each copy requested. Tax deductible contributions to further this work may be sent c/o Planet Drum Foundation, the sponsoring organization, and earmarked for the "Wild in the City" project.

WEAVING ALLIANCES

Next to personal awareness of place, reinhabitory institutions are the backbone of the emergent bioregional movement. As traditional forms of organization become increasingly divorced from political and environmental realities, new bioregional groups become the next step in social succession.

Listed on this page are organizations which are making efforts toward that succession in agriculture, green economics, architecture, design planning, and bioregional governance.

Use Weaving Alliances *as a resource to obtain services, information and advice. Most of these groups are open to new members and interested people. You can also participate in making this page an effective tool for the bioregional movement by sending your additions, suggestions and updates. If you would like your organization or project listed in* Weaving Alliances, *send a brief description along with a contact name, address and telephone number to Planet Drum.*

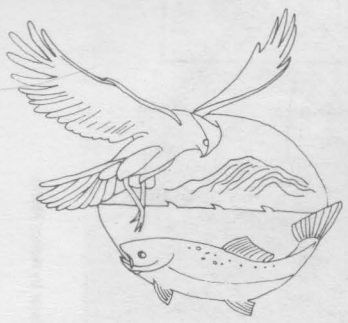
—Rob Young

AGRICULTURE & ECONOMICS

MATTOLE WATERSHED SALMON SUPPORT GROUP

One of the central theses of green economics is that a natural system in maximum health will offer the most value. The Salmon Support Group is attempting to increase salmon runs in the Mattole River of northern California. Native king salmon are caught and their eggs incubated in stream-side hatchboxes. The hatchboxes are built of redwood, with a gravel layer on the bottom that filtered stream water passes through. The result is an egg-to-fry survival rate of 90% compared to 15% in the highly impacted Mattole. Fry are then released back into the stream. As salmon numbers are increased, the MWSSG has contracted to begin tributary rehabilitation with tree planting, seed dispersal and in-stream improvements. The eventual outcome is hoped to be a return of the system to maximum health and productivity.

CONTACT: Mattole Watershed Salmon Support Group, P.O. Box 188, Petrolia, CA 95558. (707) 629-3514.



MATTOLE RESTORATION COUNCIL

"Our concern is the entire Mattole watershed. What happens at the headwaters affects what happens at the mouth. The Mattole community includes plant, animal and human communities. The health of individuals within these communities depends on the health of the whole."

Over the past several years, independent efforts and projects began in an effort to reverse the trend of increasing habitat degradation and to restore the health of the Mattole watershed in northern California. These efforts include coastal headwaters protection, a road and taxpayers association, a land trust, and a salmon restoration project. People in these interrelated groups felt the need for a plan encompassing the entire watershed. Reluctant to make decisions about their own projects which might affect the whole valley, they convened a watershed-wide council. The Council is a forum for overall planning, assistance and internal education for restoration and alternative management techniques. Through coordinating independent and collective efforts toward restoration and enhancement, the Council looks to play a major role in restoring the health and productivity of the Mattole watershed. *The Mattole Restoration Newsletter* has been launched as its voice.

CONTACT: Mattole Restoration Council, c/o Coastal Headwaters, Box 12, Whitethorn, CA 95489; Mattole Restoration Newsletter, *$10/year.*

EARTHBANK

EarthBank formed to assist in the creation of socially responsible banking and financial institutions. The purpose of these institutions will be to make capital available within a region for ecologically sound uses. They wish to support and promote community and regional self-reliance, cooperatives, and enterprises which support their community's basic needs.

CONTACT: EarthBank, Box 87, Clinton, WA 98236.

SEED SAVERS' EXCHANGE/GROWERS' NETWORK

The Exchange publishes over 700 pages of seeds available through seed exchanges from all over North America. The Growers' Network is active in saving the gene pools represented in these seed exchanges by growing out new, fresh seeds from the existing stocks. Membership in the SSE/GN requires one to make an offering—a rare or endangered seed variety for exchange, and a contribution of $8/yr. This entitles you to access to the exchange and the seed catalogues published each year by the SSE.

CONTACT: Seed Savers' Exchange/ Growers' Network, RR#2, Princeton, MO 64673.

EDUCATION

GENESIS FARM

Genesis Farm is a "reflection center" and organic farm in northwestern New Jersey, a community of religious and lay people who are united in the journey toward personal and global transformation. Genesis Farm focuses on the linkages between global spirituality, simplicity of life, land stewardship, and the search for a more just and peaceful world order. Workshops are held throughout the year on organic gardening, peacemaking, health, and spiritual issues. An Appalachian crafts fair is held there in the fall.

CONTACT: Miriam Therese MacGillis, c/o Genesis Farm, Box 622, Blairstown, NJ 07825. (201) 362-6735.

OZARK BUNDLE

Home, Sweet Home: an Ozark Sampler has recently been released by the Ozark Area Community Congress. Drawing on music (there is a record enclosed), poster art, photography, and prose, *Home, Sweet Home* offers a broad introduction to the Ozark bioregion. It contains, among other things, native history, a bioregional bibliography, a green pages directory, and a watershed map. The bundle is an excellent tool for teaching bioregional basics and an understanding of place.

CONTACT: Ozark Area Community Congress, Box 129, Drury, MO 65638; Home Sweet Home/*$10.*

BIOREGIONAL GROUPS

DRIFTLESS BIOREGIONAL NETWORK

The Driftless bioregion is the unglaciated area in and around watersheds of the Mississippi River Basin in southwestern Wisconsin, southeastern Minnesota, northeastern Iowa, and northwestern Illinois. As glaciers moved south during the Ice Ages, they were slowed and diverted by highlands in what is now northwestern Wisconsin, leaving an island of unique topography.

In the fall of 1983, the Driftless Bioregional Network had its first gathering. It is pursuing many movements: strengthening cooperatives in the area; learning and educating about the land; and guiding its actions toward sustainable energy, food and health systems. The DBN has initiated barter and communications networks and made plans for future gatherings. It is seeking active participation by residents of the Driftless area.

CONTACT: Driftless Bioregional Network, Route 2, Box 114, Viroqua, WI 54665.

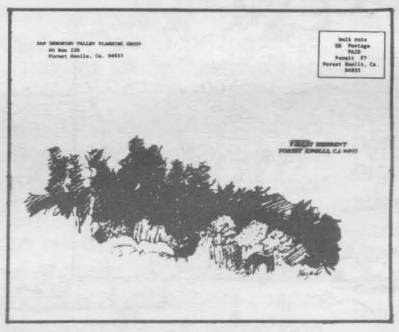
ALLIES & PUBLICATIONS

GALISTEO WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

Plans are circulating for the formation of a Galisteo Watershed Association for the region south of Santa Fe, New Mexico. The Association would focus on protection and enhancement of the watershed, and public education and outreach on watershed issues.

CONTACT: Patrick McGiven, Route 3, Box 33, Laury, NM 87540.

PLANNING & DESIGN



THE SAN GERONIMO VALLEY PLANNING GROUP

The Planning Group is dedicated to preserving rural character, retaining village identity, protecting open space, and obtaining low density zoning in the San Geronimo Valley of northern California. Finding focus in a practical and mutually beneficial relationship with county government and diverse local organizations, the SGVPG makes recommendations concerning the ecological futures of the valley. The Planning Group has hired two consultants and offers grassroots study addressing topics such as: "open space/ watershed," "affordable housing," and "Community Plan update."

CONTACT: Ron Thelin, c/o San Geronimo Valley Planning Group, P.O. Box 228, Forest Knolls, CA 94933.

DUTYVILLE ROAD ASSOCIATION

This past year, the people on Dutyville Road in the Mattole River Valley of northern California formed an incorporated road association. "Forming the association has been a tremendous educational process. We have learned about the effects of our roads on the watershed and also the legal and practical details of setting up a road association." The impact of roads on the drainage ways can result in large scale damage. The Association is exploring ways in which roads can be designed and maintained to reduce their environmental impact, and how the costs of such care can be spread equitably.

CONTACT: Jeff Moroso, c/o Dutyville Road Association, Box 114, Garberville, CA 95440.

THE PLANNING AND CONSERVATION LEAGUE

The Planning and Conservation League is a non-profit statewide alliance of citizens and conservation organizations devoted to promoting sound environmental legislation in California. PCL actively lobbies for legislation to preserve California coastlands, prevent dumping of toxic wastes, preserve wild and scenic rivers, and protect open space and agricultural land. PCL is the only multi-issue environmental lobbying group which concentrates its efforts solely on Californian issues. It has been involved in the passage of the Coastal Act, the California Environmental Quality Act, the Lake Tahoe Compact Act, and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Membership brings *California Today,* the PCL newsletter which keeps you abreast of the latest developments in California environmental legislation.

CONTACT: Planning and Conservation League, 1228 N Street #33, Sacramento, CA 95814; $25/year.

RIDGE REVIEW

The scope of *Ridge Review* is from the hills north of Fort Bragg to the coastal ridges on the southern edge of Sonoma County in California. Every four months, it looks at an important social or economic resource of North Coast life and attempts to bring the reader a spectrum of opinions from environmental, governmental and industrial advocates. Fiction and poetry concerning topics and the region are included as well. Well written, with fine layout and content, this is a magazine of quality for reinhabitants of the North Coast.

CONTACT: Ridge Review, Box 90, Mendocino, CA 95460; $7/year, 4 issues.

WEST VIRGINIA PEOPLE'S ENERGY NETWORK

The West Virginia People's Energy Network is a bimonthly journal which notes small scale successes in alternative technology which are being achieved by "non-professionals." Each issue carries a theme such as wood heat, waste disposal or landscaping. A recent issue described the organization of a firewood co-op that served as a clearinghouse for woodcutters, landowners who needed timber, land improvement, and handicapped or landless households that needed reasonably priced energy. The March 1984 issue of WVPEN will concentrate on bioregions.

CONTACT: West Virginia People's Energy Network, Route 1, Box 79A, Burlington, WV 26710.

RIFFS, READS & REELS

RIFFS


Philip Arnoult

BOB CARROLL

Without props, preferred landscapes, costumes or masks but occasionally embellished with local musicians ranging from Welsh pub R&B avatars to San Francisco subterranean post-modernists, Bob Carroll troupes his "cheap" productions of "Salmon Show" and "Dirt Show" to a variety of performance situations throughout North America and Europe.

Bob is the instigator of one-man, set-stark performances that cleverly entangle portions of animal behavior, totem popular culture, web-of-life considerations and radical political history, and infuse them with a solo style and delivery akin to an old Apollo Theatre "soul" review. He can improvise bio-sexual line dances that swim and sway an audience into storefront gospel-like responses that could send a salmon upstream to spawn or mourn about the Florence Ballard that Motown left behind.

"Salmon Show" (adapted from Planet Drum's *North Pacific Rim Alive*) roughly details the life-cycle of the Pacific Salmon *(Onchorynchus)* from a fish-eye point of view complete with commercial fleets as wasteful predators, habitat destruction and a foot-tapping "chain gang" chorus working upstream to the spawning grounds. George Jackson's solitary confinement and prison reform struggles are eventually brought into the parade of interconnected symbols of bioregional and contemporary culture.

"Dirt Show" (adapted from pieces by Dr. Loon and Robert Curry in *Reinhabiting a Separate Country)* investigates the four principles of economy in northern California and pits eco-nomics of place against displaced corporate economics. Bob moves through issues of exchange and value that teeter over continental drift and he eventually makes a subtle transition that dishes dirt on the demise of the Supremes, the lonely death of their founder Florence Ballard, and the exodus of Diana "Where Did Our Love Go" Ross, Barry Gordy and Motown from their roots in Detroit to shadowed success in the centralized music business of L.A.

If you think one-man shows only do second-rate rehashes of collected quotes from past personalities, or that flashy sets are the only reason to see any theatre, catch Bob Carroll anywhere and get sock-eyed and scaley behind some wonderful migrations of symbol and story.

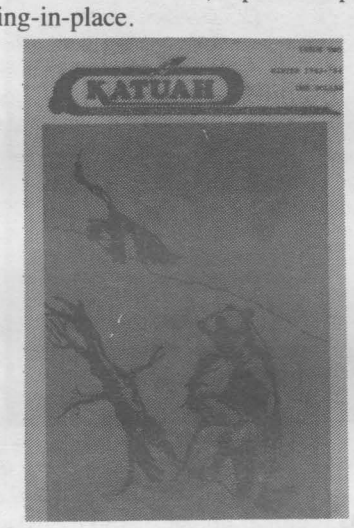
—Robert C. Watts

To find out about where Bob Carroll will be performing near you or booking "Dirt Show," "Salmon Show" or the new "(W)hole Show," write Bob at: 10 East 18th Street, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10003 or 220 Liberty Street, San Francisco, CA 94114.

READS

KATUAH and SISKIYOU COUNTRY

From the slopes and valleys of the Appalachian and Siskiyou mountains come two new bioregional journals that will take you on a tour Greyhound could never give. They begin with the terrain, the physical stuff of their bioregions, and through interviews, stories, and poems of the people who live there, uncover the intangible (at least to us outsiders) spirit of people-living-in-place.

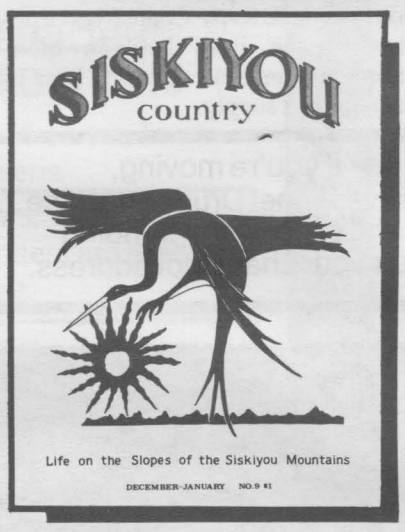


KATUAH, Bioregional Journal of the Southern Appalachians, is run bv an editorial staff of about twelve people and is a true bioregional exploration. Along with articles on the geographic, biotic, and watershed definitions of Appalachia, **KATUAH** initiates a search for a regional plant totem (red oak, yellow poplar, and ginseng seem to be the favorites), writes about Yanu the bear and two veteran Appalachian bear hunters, and reports on disappearing native apple varieties (endangered are such tongue-twisting types as Sheep's Nose Apple, Limbertwig, and Striped Ben Davis's).

"Why do we need so many kinds of apples?" Mr. Bailey asks. "Because there are so many folks," he says. "A person has a right to gratify his legitimate taste. If he wants twenty or forty kinds of apples for his personal use, running from Early Harvest to Roxbury Russett, he should be accorded the privilege. There is merit in variety itself. It provides more contact with life, and leads away from uniformity and monotony."

—Jeanne Carstensen

KATUAH, BIOREGIONAL JOURNAL OF THE SOUTHERN APPALACHIANS • BOX 873 • CULLOWHEE, NC 28723
one-year subscription—$10



SISKIYOU COUNTRY uses a magazine format (KATUAH is more of a newspaper) and has one editor, Pedro Tama. In a recent editorial Pedro concluded by saying,

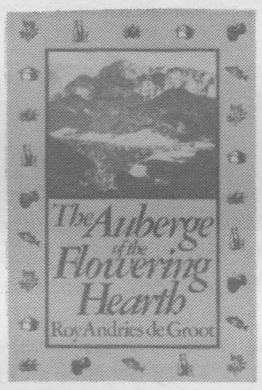
SISKIYOU COUNTRY will continue to chronicle the events changing the consciousness of our region. We'll do our best to illuminate the positive steps inhabitants of our watersheds are taking to create a healthy way of life, and to meet the threats to it.

Recent articles include "Preventing 1984," a clear-headed look at this year's Orwellian inheritance in light of economic and technological totalitarianism, "Vigil," Lou Gold's attempt to save Bald Mountain from logging by maintaining a spiritual presence there for 56 days, and "White Sturgeon," a story about a three-hour battle to catch a ten foot sturgeon and its subsequent release.

These journals represent a new kind of journalism, where "the news" is of the bioregion, not just of major cities and foreign wars. Read *KATUAH* and *SISKIYOU COUNTRY* to find out what's really happening in the Appalachians and Siskiyous. It's more than coal mining and logging.

—Jeanne Carstensen

SISKIYOU COUNTRY
10394 TAKILMA RD.
CAVE JUNCTION, OR 97523
one-year subscription—$8



THE AUBERGE OF THE FLOWERING HEARTH

The Auberge of the Flowering Hearth by Roy Andries de Groot has all the makings of an engaging culinary fairy tale. While searching for the source of Chartreuse, the liqueur made by the same order of Carthusian monks since the seventeenth century, Mr. de Groot accidentally stumbles upon an isolated "Shangri-la" of inspired French country cooking. The setting is the secluded valley of La Grande Chartreuse near the village of Saint-Pierre-de-Chartreuse at the inn, L'Auberge de l'Atre Fleuri. At this small stone farmhouse, les demoiselles Vivette Artaud and Ray Girard present a seasonally integrated series of menus that complement La Vallee through inspired combinations of French Alpine dishes. After only two days at the Auberge, Mr. de Groot decides to stay and record representative menus and recipes (which had never been written down) coupled with his reflections on the two resourceful and regionally considerate French women who have created a way of life at the Auberge. It reads like a fairy tale to many of us but represents good common sense to them.

Both women demonstrate a remarkable range of self-taught talents that one could never pick up in the comprehensive culinary academies and hotel schools of Europe. Mademoiselle Vivette beautifully balances the local wines with the kitchen's daily presentations that complement and elevate the region's offerings. Perhaps her most impressive talent is recorded in "A Frenchwoman Shops by Her Own Rules." Her sharp eye for quality and value and knowledge of the region's products ("Those frogs are too big—they're not from this region.") just barely surpasses her obsessive energy for finding the freshest and best of everything. Mademoiselle Ray discusses her simple kitchen setup and preparatory techniques along with her opinions on storing food: "We do not believe in *les conserves industrielles,* our French name for anything canned, dehydrated, frozen, etc. . . .Whenever I have natural foods directly from earth or water, they are incomparably better."

The Auberge of the Flowering Hearth was originally published in 1973, but due to its unorthodox approach to the cookbook genre—one that connects recipes to a detailed profile of the Chartreuse Valley, Mesdemoiselles Artaud and Girard and the Auberge—the book failed to attract much attention. The general public thought the only link in the food chain was from the kitchen to the dining room table via a recipe.

With the current renewed interest in seasonal regional cuisines, Ecco Press reprinted a high-quality edition in 1983 that should finally establish Roy Andries de Groot as one of the most thorough and influential food writers of the past two decades. He took cookbooks out of the kitchen and connected them to the soil and culture of place. When Paul Prudhomme, the popular Cajun chef of K-Paul's restaurant in New Orleans, recently announced plans for opening his new cooking schools, but established pre-requisite courses in growing vegetables and raising chickens before even setting foot in the kitchen, you get the feeling that Mr. de Groot indirectly had a hand in planning the curriculum.

—Robert C. Watts

THE AUBERGE OF THE FLOWERING HEARTH•ROY ANDRIES DE GROOT• ECCO PRESS•18 WEST 30TH STREET• NEW YORK, NY 10001•$17.95

REELS


CHRIS SIMON

IN HEAVEN THERE IS NO BEER?

That's why we drink it here.
And when we're gone from here,
our friends will be drinking all the beer.

Many people wouldn't connect the beer-swilling twirl-till-you-fall-down notion of the Polka to a 150-year-old dance form and a vibrant ethnic musical tradition complete with its stars and conventions. Fortunately, Les Blank does, and his new movie *In Heaven There Is No Beer?* takes you on one of his usual full-blown cultural anthropological tours of Polka communities. A Polkaholic vision come true.

The film was mostly shot at three major Polka festivals: Polka Fireworks at Seven Springs Resort outside of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Dick Pillar's Polkabration at Ocean Beach in New London, Connecticut, and the Chicago-based International Polka Association's annual convention. Among the nation's top Polka bands that appear in the film are: Eddie Blazonczyk's Versatones, The Dick Pillar Orchestra, The Mrozinski Brothers Aleatoric Ensemble, Happy Louie, Marion Lush, and Reneta Romenek and Girls, Girls, Girls. Also featured are New Jersey's famous Polka Star Dancers along with a slew of Polka dancing's avid followers, both young and old, out for a good time and a warm sense of community.

If Les Blank's treatment of Polka has the same effect on the ethnic music crazies as did his treatment of Louisiana zydeco music in *Spend It All* and Nortena music of the Tex-Mex border in *Chulas Fronteras,* expect to be stepping to accordian-laced rhythms as it infiltrates their eclectic talents. I've been warned by culture prospectors that a Polka trend was in the makes for the past two years. *In Heaven There Is No Beer?* could finally signal its arrival.

—Robert C. Watts

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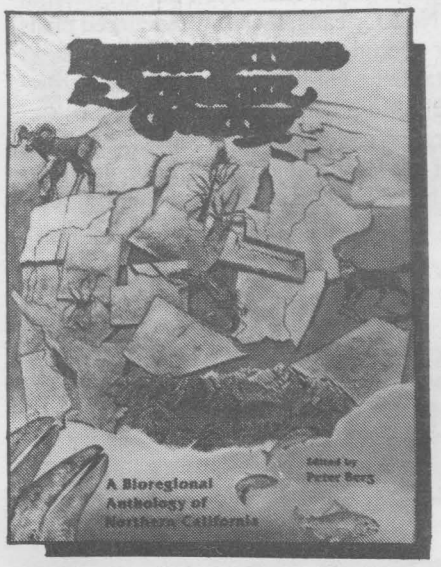
Planet Drum PUBLICATIONS

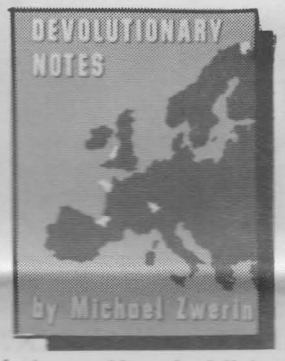
Books



• *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."

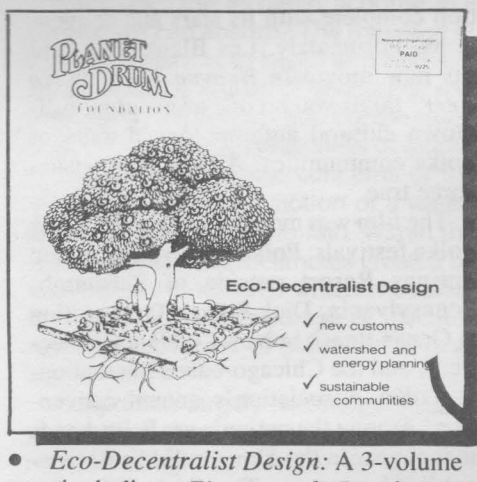
—New Age Magazine



• *Devolutionary Notes* by Michael Zwerin. 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 Tukel; and *Reinhabiting Cities and Towns: Designing for Sustainability* by John Todd with George Tukel. 98 pages complete. Critical preliminary readings for intentional bioregional planning. $10 postpaid.

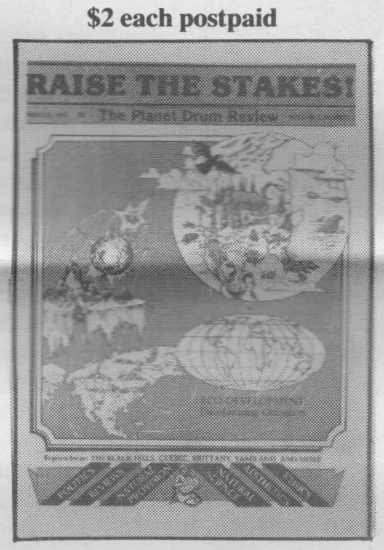
". . .Planet Drum is not just attempting to define a type of environmental management; bioregional planning may start from a firm sense of the environment but also takes into account the present state of, and possible futures for, cities and towns . . . . If we continue to conceptually isolate our forms of inhabitation all the singular wise goals of environmental management, sustainable agriculture and community economic development may be for nought. The Planet Drum package presents us with some beginning working tools to repair the broken fabric."

—Rain Magazine

• *Bioregions:* Winter 1981/2, issue #32 of *CoEvolution Quarterly*. Guest edited by Peter Berg with Stephanie Mills. 144 pages. Murray Bookchin on social ecology, Jan Morris, Gary Snyder, and Peter Berg with essays on devolution and the Fourth World. Jerry Mander, Winona La Duke, Wes Jackson and Paul Hawken are among others who contribute to this issue. Reports on the Southwest, Great Plains, North Woods, and Alaska in the U.S.A. $4 postpaid.

RAISE THE STAKES BACK ISSUES

$2 each postpaid



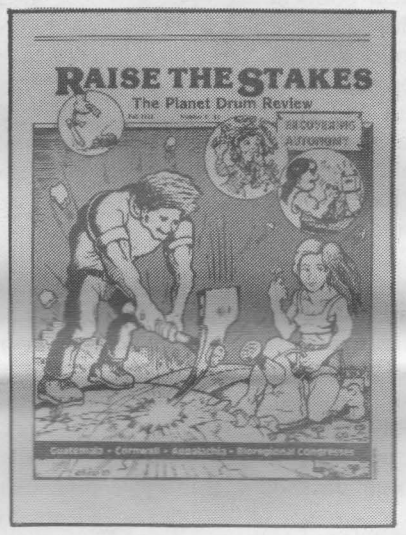
• *Eco-Development: Raise the Stakes, The Planet Drum Review No. 2.* Contains regional reports from Quebec, Northwest Nation, The Black Hills, Brittany, Northumbria, Scotland, Samiland, and northern California. Feature articles include: Reconstituting California by Jack Forbes, Eco-Development by Raymond 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, Aesthetics 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.

If you're moving, save Planet Drum extra time and expense by sending us your change of address.

• *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 Yerxa 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.

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

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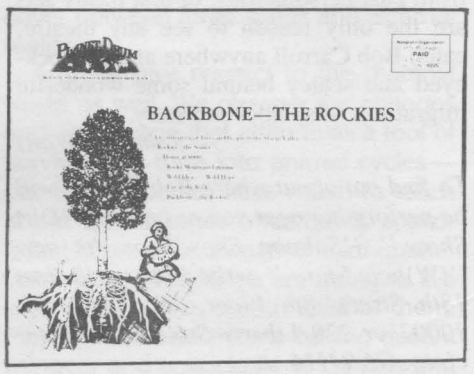
BUNDLES



• *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.

• *Turtle Sheets.* An exquisite hand-printed turtle shell rubbing with a poem by turtle's son (Peter Blue Cloud). Two sheets sewn together. $1.50 postpaid.

Planet Drum PULSE

Planet Drum Foundation's role has gradually been transformed from initiating to coproducing bioregional projects. We see this as a healthy, decentralized and pleasant change. The current array of coproductions demonstrates the quality and diversity of these associations.

At home base we are initiating a Green City Platform for San Francisco. (Nancy Morita's "Wild in the City" map [see page11] is a provocative banner for this effort.) Planet Drum and Tranet (in Maine) are preparing an up-to-date directory of bioregional groups that will be an insert in the next issue of RTS. We are collaborating with George Tukel on a Planet Drum-style bundle for the lower Hudson River estuary that will eventually be sent to Foundation members as a special publication. In association with Threshold Foundation we are helping to develop a Biopolitical Map of North America. We continue to support and assist emergent bioregional groups and publications (which are springing up weekly) as well as work toward the first North American Bioregional Congress/NABC (see page 11).

Rob Young, having developed a directory of bioregional groups, passes the baton to our new networker, Lori Brooke. With this issue, Robert C. Watts leaves the joys of merely writing reviews and editing Circles of Correspondence to take on the exhaustive and frustrating task of editing the rest of the paper as well. Jeanne Carstensen has been office yeoperson while also assisting Bob with RTS. Xenia Lisanevich is the new RTS production manager.

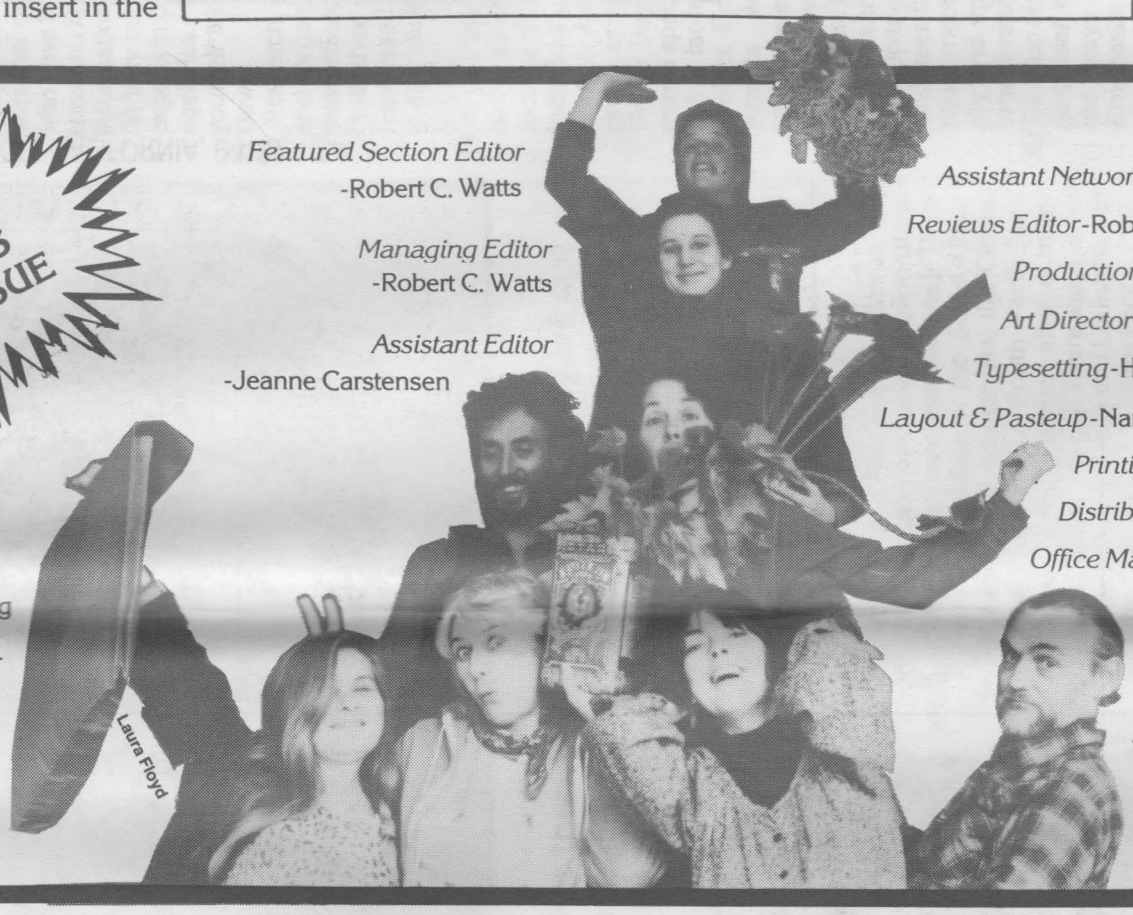
The next issue of RTS will be edited by Jim Dodge (editor of *Upriver/Downriver* and author of *Fup*). It will present constructive bioregional self-criticism and also serve as a walk-around guide to NABC.

PLANET DRUM OPENINGS

Planet Drum needs at least two more people to help maintain and expand its activities. If you are conversant with bioregional ideas and are enthusiastic about building the bioregional movement, contact us about positions with overlapping responsibilities in office management, project direction, public outreach, writing, and production of *Raise the Stakes*. Let us hear from you.

—*The Planet Drum Staff*

STAKES RAISERS THIS ISSUE


Laura Floyd

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Managing Editor -Robert C. Watts

Assistant Editor -Jeanne Carstensen

Special Interview-Peter Berg

Circles of Correspondence- Robert C. Watts, Jeanne Carstensen, Aaron Rosenberg

Networker-Rob Young

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Distribution-Diane Nettles

Office Management-Jeanne Carstensen

Library-Judy Goldhaft

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Thank You- Bob Carroll, The Phillips Collection, the owner of *"Rising Moon,"* and Sharpshooter Studios.

We invite you to join the Planet Drum circle in furthering the ongoing exchange of place related ideas and activities.

PLANET DRUM FOUNDATION

- **Become a member** of Planet Drum foundation. Membership includes three issues of Raise the Stakes, at least one bonus publication, a 25% discount on all our books and bundles, and access to our networking and workshop facilities.
- **Help build a bioregional group** in your area. We can help by sending a list of Planet Drum members there. To introduce your friends to bioregional ideas, send us their names and we'll forward a complimentary issue of Raise the Stakes. Send ten names and we'll mail you a copy of Reinhabiting a Separate Country for your effort.
- **Send a report** from your region to Raise the Stakes, for publication in the Circles of Correspondence section.

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THE ROCKS ALONG THE COAST

They were once like us, like we were.
A part of the continent.
The ones closer in get to keep their
green, sometimes a tree, a few birds.
Farther out they wear away & at
certain tides go under.

But in some opposite, equal justice
at a point not too close in &
not too far, to even the balance
They are added on:
barnacles, limpets, blown sand
maybe a seed.
Incremental droppings.

It could be the wearing down wins out
Leaving them stranded in their own
by the main body's day to day
breakdown and retreat.
Or they are thrust up and will remain
by the sheer memory of the
edge of the continent
Going over the edge of another continent.

It has to do with love and how love
has everything and nothing
to do with islands.
How it takes so much to be ocean
so little to be rock.

There are no islands left along this coast.
All the rocks have names.

—Jerry Martien,
The Rocks Along the Coast:
Findings in the Vicinity of
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Spring 1984 Number 9 $2

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