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Thanks to Bloomington Public Library for their Banned Books Week display & all of their information



POST AMERIKAN



BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL

VOLUME 28

FREE

NUMBER 5

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1999

FREE PEOPLE READ FREELY

The First Amendment

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

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About us

The *Post Amerikan* is an independent community newspaper providing information and analysis that is screened out of or down played by establishment news sources. We are a non-profit, worker-run collective that exists as an alternative to the corporate media.

We put out six issues a year. Staff members take turns as "coordinator." All writing, typing, editing, graphics, photography, pasteup, and distribution are done on a volunteer basis. You are invited to volunteer your talents.

Most of our material and inspiration for material comes from the community. The *Post Amerikan* welcomes stories, graphics, photos, letters, and new tips from our readers. If you'd like to join us, call 828-4473 and leave a message on our answering machine. We will get back to you as soon as we can. Don't worry if it takes a while--we don't meet every week.

An alternative newspaper depends directly on a community of concerned people for existence. We believe it is very important to keep a newspaper like this around. If you think so too, then please support us by telling your friends about the paper, donating money to the printing of the paper, and telling our advertisers you saw their ad in *Post Amerikan*.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions to the *Post Amerikan* are available for the low price of \$6.00 per year for six complete issues. Please send a check (made payable to the *Post Amerikan*) to: *Post Amerikan*, P.O. Box 3452 Bloomington, IL 61702.

This issue of *Post Amerikan* is brought to you by...

David, Linda, Ralph and Sherrin

Pick up a copy

Copies of the *Post Amerikan* are now available for free at the following locations:

- Bloomington**
 AIDS Task Force, 313 N. Main
 About Books, 221 E. Front
 Barnes & Noble, Veterans & Rt. 9
 Bloomington Public Library, 205 E. Olive
 Common Ground, 516 N. Main
 CoffeeWorks, 608 N. Main
 Gaston's Upper Cut, 409 N. Main
 Heartland Community College Adademic Support Center, 1226 Towanda Ave.
 Last Chance Newstand, 404 N. Main
 Lizard's Lounge, 612 N. Main St.
 Medusa's, 420 N. Madison
 the Movie Fan, 401 N. Veterans (Cub Food Plaza)
 Mystic Link, 1206 Towanda Ave. Su.4
 Shockwaves, 415 N. Main
Twin City Exchange, 411 N. Main
Normal
 Acme Comics, 115 W. North
 Babbitt's Books, 104 W. North
 Co-op Records, 503 S. Main
 the Coffeehouse, 114 E. Beaufort
 Deadpan Alley Records, 107 W. North
 Koffee Kup, 205 W. North
 Mother Murphy's, 111 W. North
 Normal Public Library, 206 W. College Ave.

What's your new address?

When you move, be sure to send us your new address so your subscription gets to you. Your *Post Amerikan* will not be forwarded (it's like junk mail--no kidding!). Fill out this handy form with your new address and return it to us, P.O. Box 3452, Bloomington, IL 61702.

Name _____
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Due Date:

The due date for submitting articles to the *Post Amerikan* is: (please laser print your articles in columns of 3" using Palatino 10pt. type if possible.)

Nov 15

Good numbers

- Advocacy Council for Human Rights.830-2521
 AIDS Hotlines
 National.....1-800-AID-AIDS
 Illinois.....1-800-243-2437
 Local.....827-AIDS
 Alcoholics Anonymous.....828-7092
 Amnesty International-ISU ...Miami@ilstu.edu
 Animal Protection League.....828-5371
 Better Business Bureau.....1-800-500-3780
 Big Brothers/ Big Sisters828-1870
 Boys & Girls Clubs of B/N.....829-3034
 Clare House (Catholic workers).....828-4035
 Countering Domestic Violence.....827-7070
 Dept. of Children/Family Services...828-0022
 Gay, Lesbian & Bi teen drop in center.828-3998
 Gay & Lesbian Resource Phoneline...438-2429
 Habitat for Humanity.....827-3931
 Headstart.....662-4880
 Home Sweet Home Mission.....828-7356
 IL Dept. of Public Aid.....827-4621
 IL Lawyer Referral.....1-217-525-5297
 Incest Survivors Support Group.....827-0790
 LIFE-CIL.....663-5433
 Lighthouse (substance abuse treatment)....827-6026
 McLean Co. Center for Human Services...827-5351
 McLean Co. Health Dept.....888-5450
 McLean Co. Housing Authority.....829-3360
 McLean Co. Humane Society.....664-7387
 McLean Co. Peace Coalition.....828-7070
 Mid Central Community Action.....829-0691
 Mobile Meals.....828-8301
 Narcotics Anonymous.....827-4005
 National Health Care Services/
 abortion assistance.....1-800-322-1622
 Occupational Development Center...452-7324
 Parents Anonymous.....827-4005
 PATH (Personal Assistance Telephone Help).827-4005
 Phone Friends.....827-4005
 PFLAG(Parents, Families and Friends
 of Lesbians and Gays).....663-0831
 Planned Parenthood (medical).....827-4014
 (bus/couns/edu).....827-4368
Post Amerikan..... **828-4473**
 Prairie State Legal Services.....827-5021
 Project Oz.....827-0377
 Rape Crisis Center.....827-4005
 Runaway Switchboard.....1-800-621-4000
 Salvation Army.....829-9476
 Safe Harbor Mission.....829-7399
 TeleCare (senior citizens).....828-8301
 Unemployment comp/job service.....827-6237
 Western Ave. Community Center.....829-4807
 Youth Build.....827-7507



Community News

Bloomington Public Library offers reading program for adults

Adults now have the opportunity to be rewarded for reading. Bloomington Public Library is offering a reading program for adults eighteen years or older. Registration for "Revel in Reading" began September 13. Participants can register at the reference desk or at any bookmobile stop. The program, which continues to November 13, is easy and offers many valuable prizes.

Readers pace themselves based on their own schedule. Participants can win in one of three different categories depending on how many books are read. Some of the prizes donated by area sponsors include gift certificates from merchants, tickets to local theatre productions, and much more. The grand prize is a Silver Sunday Package from Jumer's Chateau.

For more information call the Bloomington Public Library at 828-6091.

Rescuing greyhounds

PEORIA GREYHOUND RESCUE, INC. is a not-for-profit, volunteer organization dedicated to saving the lives of retired racing greyhounds.

Greyhounds are good-natured, intelligent, clean, quiet, affectionate, lazy dogs, definitely NOT the hyper aggressive dogs many people think they are! Most get along great with children and other pets, including cats. They are usually between the ages of 2 and 5, and can live to 12 or more years of age. They are indoor pets, not to be left outdoors. Greyhounds must never be allowed to run loose, so must be kept in a fenced yard or on a leash at all times.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ADOPTING A GREYHOUND OR ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION, PLEASE CALL LORI REYNOLDS AT 309-685-6818.

PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION. WE ARE FUNDED SOLELY BY DONATIONS AND FUND RAISING EFFORTS. THANK YOU!

"relentlessly" pursue a suit against his client after failing to bring the case to trial and after losing his suit against his former client during an arbitration hearing.

When given a choice to continue the proceeding or recuse the judge, delaying the event of a jury trial, this lawyer opts to delay the proceeding. Delay tactics, false accusations, annoying me at job, placing me under surveillance, and a large law firm are the weapons this lawyer uses against one who is not an attorney.

One would think that the lawyer would want to bring this proceeding to a speedy trial. However, when you are pursuing a suit in which you failed to follow your own contract terms and have already failed during arbitration hearing, debauchery and trickery are your weapons of choice. After all, the truth is far from you.

One would have to ask, "How is the public protected by such a rogue attorney?" Not everyone has thousands of dollars to hire another attorney. Judge Judy would not stand for such dishonesty. One would think that a judge would be insulted at the disrespect shown by an attorney who knowingly misrepresents the truth. However, here in McLean County this unethical attorney has remained unscathed.

Again, "How is the public protected from such a rogue attorney?" I don't know the answer but this system reeks of foul fish! I have chosen to place placards all over my car exercising my right to Freedom of Speech. HEED THE WARNING!

Sincerely,
Gregory A. Royal



Men Seeking Men

GWM couple 40ish seeking GM couples 40ish for friendship. New to Bloomington-Normal. Not bar-goers. What else is there to do? Help!

love
(post) amerikan
style

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Letter to the editor

How does a layman fight a rogue attorney?

Dear Editor:

Lawyers enjoy immunity from punishment for libel and slander committed during legal proceedings. This privilege or shelter was given so that lawyers would not be inhibited or stifled while representing their clients.

But in a country whose courts are founded upon truth, justice, and fairness, how far should a lawyer be allowed to push the limits of this privilege? How many times should a lawyer be allowed to commit blatantly dishonest and false accusations in the presence of a judge before it is just to punish that lawyer?

In baseball it's three strikes and you're out! In football it's fifteen, not five, yards for flagrant violations of rules. But in a courtroom, where civilians are punished for committing perjury, a lawyer is allowed to run amok making blatantly false accusations that he knows to be untrue. He also asks for monetary compensation for his false accusations that are, in layman's terms, "lies." A lawyer can obviously disobey the direct orders of a judge and not be sanctioned because he alleges that he acted on the hearsay of another.

In addition to his dishonest behavior, a lawyer can create a contract, induce a client into signing it through misrepresentation of facts, not follow all of the contract terms, and



International Forum on Globalization

The International Forum on Globalization (IFG) is pleased to announce the release of a new publication titled *Blue Gold: The Global Water Crisis and the Commodification of the World's Water Supply*.

This 45-page study examines the encroaching water crisis and new trends to privatize fresh water supplies. According to the report, one billion people on earth already lack access to fresh drinking water, a figure that will rise by 56 percent within the next quarter century. Maude Barlow, IFG board member and national chair of the Council of Canadians, is the author of the report. Barlow has been the leader of the Canadian resistance to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and a leading figure in the international citizens' movement against the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI).

As the water crisis intensifies, governments around the world—under pressure from

multinational corporations—are advocating for a radical solution: the commodification and mass transport of fresh water. While proponents argue that this is the only efficient way to distribute water, this report discloses that selling water on the open market does not address the needs of thirsty people. On the contrary, only 10 percent of fresh water is being consumed by people—the great majority goes to industrial agriculture and water-intensive high tech industries. After his community's water was diverted for high-tech industry use, one New Mexican resident observed: "Water flows uphill to money."

Blue Gold cites new global trade agreements as stimulating the privatization and commodification of the water supply by creating rules that give corporations unprecedented rights to the waters of signatory nations.

The publication also addresses the following issues: Who owns the water? Who should own it? Should it be privatized? What rights do transnational corporations have to buy water systems? Should water be traded as a commodity in the open market? What is the role of the government? What laws should be enacted to protect water? How should water be shared between water-rich and water-poor countries? Who is the custodian for nature's lifeblood? How can ordinary citizens become involved in this process?

For further information contact:

IFG
1555 Pacific Ave.
San Francisco, CA
94109

ifg@ifg.org <http://www.ifg.org>

NAMI Illinois medication update

Access to timely treatment and appropriate medication is a key to the quality of life for individuals recovering from severe mental illness and their families. In this era of managed care, the needs of the patient and the welfare of their families, are not always the priority of insurance and managed care companies.

Recently, NAMI Illinois became aware that one of the largest insurance providers in Illinois, BlueCross BlueShield (BCBS) of Illinois, has removed one of the most successful medications used to treat mental illness from their formulary. What this means is that those individuals who are being successfully treated with Prozac will either face a higher copay for their medication or be forced to change medication. Physicians are being encouraged to switch patients from Prozac to a

different type of medication in a move which BCBS calls a significant cost advantage in the interest of saving money for BCBS.

Like the battle for insurance parity, we once again see insurance companies and managed care systems making treatment decisions for those with severe mental illness with little regard for the patient. The impact of this BCBS decision on those who are having treatment success using Prozac and then being switched is alarming to say the least. As advocates, patients and family members we must act now to make BCBS aware that we are watching their actions and find it inconceivable that they are putting profits before the patient and their health.

Please call, write and fax the decision-makers at BCBS and express your views on their new "cost saving" policy. Contact information is below.

Kevin Slavik RPh.
Director of Pharmacy
BlueCross BlueShield of Illinois
300 East Randolph Street
Chicago, Illinois 60601
Phone: 312-653-7202
Fax: 312-240-0381

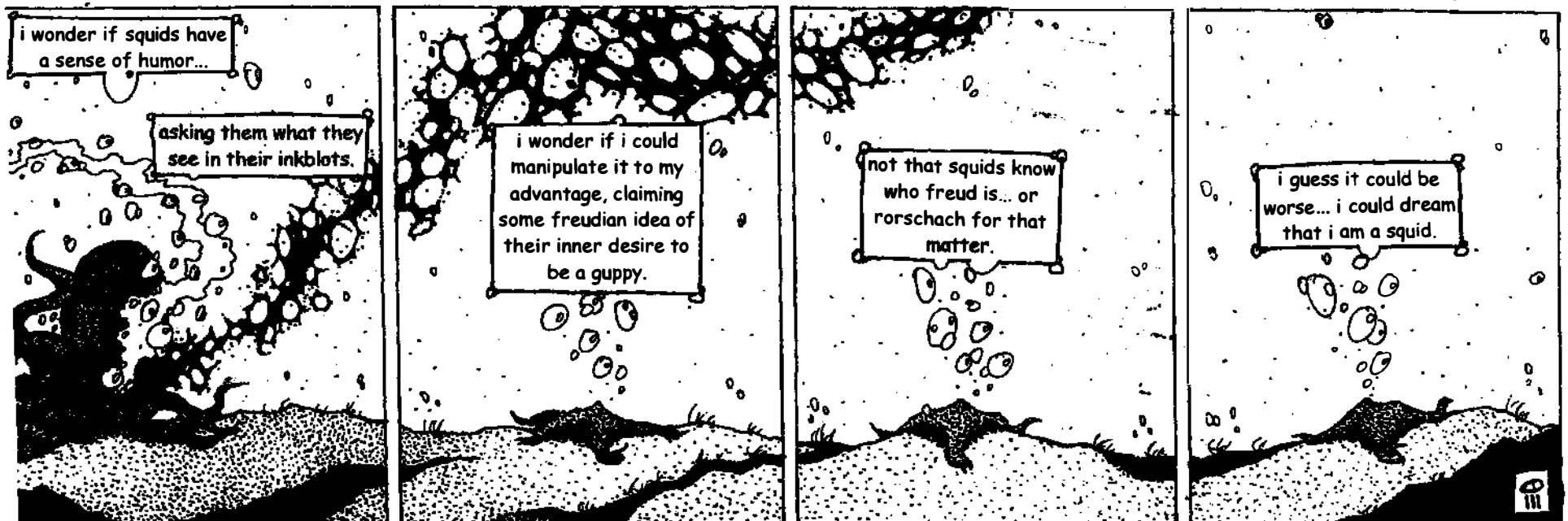
Kim Reed, M.D.
Medical Director, HMOI
BlueCross BlueShield of Illinois
300 East Randolph Street
Chicago, Illinois 60601
Phone: 312-653-5487
Fax: 312-228-6392

Raymond McCaskey
President and CEO
BlueCross BlueShield of Illinois
300 East Randolph Street
Chicago, Illinois 60601
Phone: 312-938-6000
Fax: 312-819-1220

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Leonard Peltier Freedom Month Proposal

We, the members of the *Leonard Peltier Defense Committee*, are writing to ask for your support, endorsement and collaboration regarding our plans for a November 1999 - *Leonard Peltier Freedom Month* in Washington D.C. As you know, Mr. Peltier is a Native American leader who has been unjustly incarcerated for 23 years in the United States. FBI documents released years after his trial, together with other sources, have proved that critical ballistic evidence establishing his innocence was withheld from the defense, and that witnesses were terrorized into giving false testimonies against him. Though long overdue for parole, and in deteriorating health, Mr. Peltier remains in prison. Amnesty International and numerous other human rights organizations have recognized him as a political prisoner and demanded his immediate unconditional release. In 1991, over 300 representatives of First Nations, Black and Popular Movements from Alaska to the Tierra del Fuego, gathered in Xelaju (Guatemala) for the 500 Year Continental campaign. They recognized Leonard Peltier as the symbol of Indigenous Resistance. His call for freedom is supported by numerous Indigenous organizations worldwide and has repeatedly been a major concern in the frame work of the United Nations - International Decade for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. At the historical National Congress of American Indians/ Assembly of First Nations joint meeting in Vancouver, which occurred April 21 through 23, both organizations passed unanimous resolutions in support of Mr. Peltier's freedom.

It is clear that the judicial system in the United States has utterly failed Mr. Peltier, and thus, indirectly, all of the American people. We recognize that we must now demand justice from the other two branches of our government, specifically, the executive and legislative branches. President Clinton has the power to grant clemency to Leonard Peltier at any time, and the United States Congress is charged with overseeing the correct conduct of affairs by such agencies as the United States Parole Board, and the FBI. Even misconduct by the courts is subject to comment and review by the Congressional judiciary committee.

In order to obtain action and justice from these offices, all sectors of society, both domestic and international, must make themselves heard, all with the same message, and all at the same time. This will require an enormous amount of public education as well as coordination. For this reason, we are seeking your assistance for our November 1999 - *Leonard Peltier Freedom Month* in Washington D.C..

As we all know, November is the month of Thanksgiving in the United States. According to historical legend, the first Thanksgiving was held by the pilgrims to give thanks to God for their very survival in North America. They had been saved from starvation by kindly Native Americans who taught them about local crops and wildlife. The pilgrims, in turn, thanked the Lord and exterminated the tribes. Leonard Peltier is but one more of the most recent victims. As people this year sit down to their feasts, surrounded by friends and family,

we plan for them to think carefully about the treatment of all Native Americans, and in particular about Leonard Peltier, alone in his prison cell.

November has also been declared Native American Heritage month by President Clinton, and we plan to hold him to his word. Traditionally, Clemency Petitions are granted by the President at the end of each year. November will thus be a critical month. Moreover, the Parole Board could reconsider Leonard's parole situation in the early spring, making a November action extremely timely.

Our actions on behalf of Leonard Peltier will be very strong, but non-violent in all ways, as requested by Mr. Peltier himself. We will ask all sectors of society to join us in Washington D.C. for as long as they are able to arrange. The event will begin on November 1, 1999, with Native American ceremonial runners at the historic Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. After a speech and prayer session there, they will run all the way to the White House in Washington, D.C., where they will be met by all local supporters, and a religious leaders of high standing, such as Archbishop Desmond Tutu, together with a Native American religious leader of equal standing. Together they will welcome the runners, and officially open Leonard Peltier Freedom Month. We plan to erect ceremonial teepees behind the White House for the month, and conduct a Native American ceremony in front of the White House each and every morning, inviting public attendance. Meanwhile, ten young Native Americans will carry out a Freedom Fast for Peltier in front of the White House from November 1 through Thanksgiving day itself, underscoring the urgent need to grant him justice at last.

Additionally, we are asking for cultural activities including dancing, drumming, and singing from different Indigenous nations to represent the pride for Native tradition and culture that Mr. Peltier has always advocated. We will also invite peoples of all races to carry out support activities, both in Washington and at home. Such activities could include educational efforts as a reenactment of the massacre of Wounded Knee in key public parks and other symbolic places.

Throughout the month, Mr. Peltier's family and friends will work carefully with Congressional offices, and there will also be carefully coordinated with the domestic press corps. For those who cannot travel to Washington D.C., a coordinated and massive telephone campaign to the White House will be organized.

Our goals are both educational and political. The true facts of the Leonard Peltier case are well known and notorious abroad, but have been heavily censored within the United States. We must teach the American people what had truly taken place, and urge them to speak out. Most importantly we must bring these facts to members of the United States Congress. They alone can bring the appropriate and effective pressure to bear, both upon President Clinton as well as the Board of Parole and the FBI itself.

Please give us your full support. Leonard Peltier is a gifted American leader who still has much to give his people. 23 years of his life have been taken away and his health is beginning to fail. Please help him to obtain justice and freedom for him so that he can continue to give his gifts to us all.

If there is something that you would like to do help, write to:

Leonard Peltier Defense Committee
P.O. Box 583, Lawrence, KS 66044
phone: (785) 842-5774
fax: (785) 842-5796
<http://members.xoom.com/freepeltier/index.html>

--Leonard Peltier Defense Committee

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Reviews, reviews, reviews

The Mountain: Bluegrass salute an original

American musical traditions resonate with their own sounds: the gut-wrenching soul of the blues or the high pitched twang of a country fiddle immediately conjure specific images and locales.

Staying true while still innovating is what keeps a musical tradition alive. It's one thing to play the established classics, another to write new music that echoes traditional themes and instrumentation while adding a contemporary edge.

Steve Earle and the Del McCoury Band recently united to do that in "The Mountain," a disc featuring 13 original compositions by Earle. Earle's intent was a salute to bluegrass pioneer Bill Monroe. He's completed that task and gone a step further, completing a disc true to bluegrass tradition but with an innovative flair.

Working class themes echo through these songs. Earle builds a nice contrast of Appalachian realities in two songs, "Harlan Man" and "The Mountain." "Harlan Man" is a song of pride, a coal miner's anthem to roots, tradition, and hard-work. "I'm a Harlan man.... I'm a family man.... I'm a union man.... A coal minin' mother 'til the day I die," the song proclaims. With a steady, throbbing beat, echoing a piece of machinery or the cadence of pick and shovel, this song could become a coal miner's classic.

"Harlan Man" and its upbeat, proud stance is offset by the melancholic next cut, "the Mountain." This lament is a cry for a sacred land rich in human memory, stripped mined by greed.

"The Graveyard Shift" brings the blues back to bluegrass, leaving one to ask whether this

"shift worker" is actually laboring away, or simply a midnight, back-street prowler.

No bluegrass session would be complete without at least one train song and Earle draws from his Texas roots with "Texas Eagle," telling of his railroader grandfather taking him on the Missouri Pacific Lines' premier passenger express.

An Irish beat and whistle sings through two songs, the instrumental "Paddy on the Beat" and a Civil War anthem, "Dixieland," about an Irish immigrant marching in the Union Army. Earle said Michael Shaara's novel, "The Killer Angels," inspired this tune. The song's main character marches southward angrily proclaiming, "I damn all gentlemen whose only worth is their father's name and the sweat of a working man." One can feel a diverse nation forming in the battlefield's storm.

This disc not only echoes Bill Monroe, but other musical forbearers. "Leroy's Dustbowl Blues" is a Woody Guthrie-style story of a displaced 1930s Oklahoman, sweating in California's pastures of plenty. Hank Williams' influence is heard in two tunes, "Yours Forever Blue" and "I'm Still In Love With You." No album is complete these days without a duet, and Iris DeMent lends her voice beautifully to this last song. You'll hear Emmy Lou Harris and other artists on the disc's finale, "Pilgrim," a moving song Earle wrote at Roy Huskey's funeral.

Keeping traditional musical styles vibrant is always difficult. A performer can technically reproduce the music, but the challenge is keeping the style lively with new ideas and input. Earle and the Del McCoury band succeeded in "The Mountain," a disc with a fresh edge, enriching the tradition it honors.

--Mike Matejka
Livingston & McLean Counties
Union News

Working class heroes still alive in Steelworker Alley

Americans squirm when we hear the word "class," especially the term "working class." In the U.S. folks are all lumped in some huge happy middle, with a few super wealthy at the top and a few tough break po' folk at the bottom.

Economic numbers and data, however, tell us the United States has always been an economically stratified society, built like a pyramid, with the majority at the bottom and a few at the lofty top. But do those of us in the bottom heap identify ourselves as "working class," or do we subscribe to that great American myth and call ourselves "middle class?"

Robert Bruno's new book, Steel Alley, takes a unique tack on those class questions. Bruno looks back on his own 1950s childhood in steel town Youngstown, Ohio, interviewing his father and other steelworker retirees about their perceptions.

Bruno probed the workers' beliefs and world views and found some fascinating stories, showing a working class culture alive and well in American society.

In a nation that prides itself on rugged individualism, these workers lived in mutual dependence and solidarity. Their children played together under the mill's orange clouds, while their parents worked and celebrated, consistently electing fellow workers to local government.

Bruno traces his own childhood memories through the book while mixing in the retirees' accounts. These workers knew their dependable support was not Youngstown Steel & Tube, but family and neighbors. They forged their own culture, centered around family, union, church and neighborhood, that bolstered their spirits and dignity.

At times mixing sociological data and personal narrative leaves a choppy text, but overall the

book succeeds. One leaves it with a feeling of new respect for working families, who labored hard with self dignity, leaving a proud legacy for their families.

For anyone who lived in working class America in the 1950s and 1960s the book will trigger a certain nostalgia, but also insight into workers' attitudes and lives. It also leaves questions for today. In an electronic world, where T.V. is the child's playmate and workers enjoy greater mobility, is a working class culture still alive? Do workers still see their survival in mutual dependence and solidarity? What about today's immigrants and their children -- are they living that same experience in their neighborhoods? And finally, while our culture celebrates individualism and go-it-alone, how do workers retain their identity and solidarity?

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Bruno's book doesn't answer those questions, but it's a good place to begin answering them. "Steel Alley" shows that "blue collar" and "working class" aren't derogatory terms. This book proves again that folks who bear those labels are hard working, decent people, building a good life even when dealt a tough hand.

--Michael G. Matejka
Livingston & McLean Counties
Union News

In the Absence of the Sacred

I believe Jerry Mander's book, In the Absence of the Sacred, is the most important book of our time.

I say that because I find its core ideas to be true beyond argument. And the analysis that Mr. Mander develops to make sense out of our situation is vast and drawn from many sources.

And the story it tells of the struggles of the indigenous peoples of the world to protect and maintain their traditional way of life against the overwhelming onslaught of Western Civilization, is one that we desperately need to hear.

And it portrays Western Civilization's corporate state as being essentially soulless. (Why else would the book be named In the Absence of the Sacred).

And it makes absolutely clear just what is ultimately at stake: the survival of the human race.

The full title is fraught with implications, keys, and messages: In the Absence of the Sacred: the Failure of Technology and the Survival of the Indian Nations.

And at what I consider to be the very heart of the book is the "Statement to the Modern World."

It is an excerpt from A Basic Call to Consciousness: the Hau de no sau nee (Iroquois) Address to the Western World, delivered at the 1977 U.N. Conference on Indigenous Peoples.

Preceding the excerpt is a brief introduction. In that introduction Mander says that the concept and sense of "reverence for the earth" is "an idea that is subversive to Western Society and the entire technological direction of the past century."

There it is, the stark, painful, tragic truth. Reverence for the earth, the sense that we walk on sacred ground is subversive to our society. And so, of course, our society is

subversive to the earth.

That "Statement to the Modern World" is, I believe, absolutely vital to a reasonable understanding of the times in which we live. And it covers only 3 pages -- 191, 192, and 193.

My suggestion would be to go to a library or bookstore where you could hold that book in your hands, and read those 3 pages -- 191, 192, and 193. If you can, read them 3 times. It might take 10 minutes. Then put the book down and walk away.

If it doesn't call you back, so be it.

But I think that some would find it does call them back. I think that some would find that reading that statement would be like a brief dip into an ocean of sanity. Something inside recognizes truth when it sees it.

To those I say: take the plunge. Read the book.

Walk in beauty

Gregg Brown

Crisis in Iraq: Understanding U.S. Motives Behind Economic Sanctions and Confrontation

Noam Chomsky, 1/30/99;
Sponsored by Boston MOBE

Noam Chomsky begins his January 30, 1999 talk about ongoing U.S. aggression against Iraq with some cautionary words about the absence of a documentary record and the complexity of motivations of both persons and states; "Even participants don't know what they are." However, as he demonstrates by piling fact on fact for 30 minutes, or so, it is still possible to say what they are not.

The methodical way in which he lays waste to the standard motivation projected by the State Department and media is vintage Chomsky. Surveying the history of U.S. involvement

with the "Beast of Baghdad," Chomsky arrives at an undeniable conclusion: "It's plain that there cannot have been any moral or humanitarian motive behind what is going on, and it cannot be Saddam's crimes that are motivating us."

He finds his explanation for U.S. motivations by looking at the big regional picture, the pivotal role oil plays in U.S. strategic thinking, the current oil glut, and the need to keep Iraqi oil off the market at a time when prices are the lowest they have been since World War II. He weaves into this analysis of prime U.S. concern that "stability" prevail so profits will continue to flow to the West, and Israeli-Palestinian "peace process" designed to set up a brutal Palestinian bantustan capable of repressing its own people, and a looming Israel-Turkish-Palestinian Authority alliance representing U.S. interest in the region.

How can the U.S. ensure these interests are safeguarded in this most crucially important region of the world? By using its "overwhelming advantage in the use of force," and not really caring if the reasons given in explanation are credible, since opinion makers and "educated Americans" can be counted on "to march in the parade." Behind the

humanitarian rhetoric, the message to Saddam - and to the world - is an uncompromising snarl: "We're a violent, lawless state: get out of the way, or else."

If you want to make sense of U.S. actions in the Middle East and elsewhere, this tape is indispensable. Both the talk, and the penetrating question-and-answer session, are recommended especially for those who find it difficult to accept the image of the U.S. as "a rogue state that's violent, and lawless, and is projecting this as its national persona." Listen to this tape and drop out of the parade.

--Radio Free Maine
written by Nancy Murray, founder of the Middle East Justice Network and director of the Youth Project at the Massachusetts CLU.



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Mind Candy

In this edition of Mind Candy, I have a fist full of gems for you to devour. Eight "must have" zines and three web sites. So let me quickly hit you off with the web sites first.

I've written about www.wpkn.org before, and I probably will again. It's a faboo college station out of Bridgeport, Connecticut - commercial free and volunteer run. It not only furnishes you with a playlist, but the format basically changes every four hours. Offering a marvelous mix of sound from salsa to hip hop, trance to the best world beat show around, to the rarely heard minimalist genre. You name, it if it's good, they play it. The second web site is also a music blessing. www.mp3.com For those of you lucky enough to be able to enjoy MP3, this site offers thousands of bands and up and coming performance artists which can be downloaded if you have the MP3 toys. The last site today, is www.NYTimes.com. The New York Times web site is a one stop "know it all" site. If you need to know it, www.NYTimes.com is your answer. Need I say more...

OK, let's dive into the zines. I basically cast the I Ching (figuratively) and write to 100 zines asking to review them, in my never ending and up hill struggle to find new and fabulous stuff to review. What came was mostly wonderful. A few I'll not mention and I'll leave to another for review, but let me turn you on to seven faves, and one close to my heart - "Post Amerikan."

Underdog Zine (1513 N. Western Ave., Chicago, IL 60622-1747) Underdog Zine is Chicago's longest running, regularly published punk/hardcore zine. Lots of it relates to the neopunk scene and the happenings of the Chicago area. But with that said, a large portion of Underdog translates to the national psyche. They blessed me with 18 issues, so I had the chance to review a body of work rather than a single issue. I really prefer this method even though it is time consuming; because in the zine universe a single issue may not be reflective of the big story. The bottom line is; Underdog Zine is like channel surfing through eclectic realities. Each issue is wonderful. The

cherry on the yummy sundae is a regular feature called "Buffy and Sissy" which was so funny I needed oxygen to recover. There is a lot of regular features- all pretty good. In each issue there is at least one or two really well written articles, on a myriad of subjects from glam rock, to jazz history, Free Masonry; Chicago's notorious past, from a profile on Frank Lloyd Wright to Richard Speck, to meatballs to vegan munchies. Underdog Zine has one regular writer, Sophia Emergency, who is the poster child for troubled youth, but she is brilliant and has the making of a dynamic literary figure. They have a good section of reviews and news flashes, along with a well sculpted sounding board called "All deliveries in the rear." All in all, Underdog Zine rates a 9+. Write to them, and enjoy.

Clown Hunter (c/o Jim Schaefer, 946 N.W. Circle Blvd. #300 Corvallis, Oregon 97330) The premise of Clown Hunter is awesomely funny- that the world is filled with evil clowns that must be stopped. This inspired me to create a new episodic series entitled, "Adventures of Agent Z." If "Clown Hunter" would stick to their premise, they could be the neonoir Fireside Theatre. Yet they drift into various articles, pulling them away from this penstroke of genius. Their other musings are good and their interview with a band was good although I wish they would crank out more of what they're really good at. Still, it is well worth it to grab up what few issues still remain of "Clown Hunter," and hopefully they'll produce more in the next millenium.

Living Free (c/o Jim Stumm, Hiler Branch, Box 29, Buffalo, NY 14223) Six issues/\$12.00 It was hard to believe that this 8 page zine could be filled with so much information. I reviewed three issues and absorbed things I never knew before. Such as, did ya know there is an antihoarding law, which states if you hoard over six months of food, you can be thrown into prison for 15 years? Gulp. Beyond tidbits like that, there are all kinds pragmatic and useful info to entice your life cheaply from inexpensive shelter, to sweet and sour cabbage. The price will be repaid in what it teaches you.

Scenery (P.O. Box 14223, Gainesville, FL 32604) This little zine is wonderful. Its photocopier art is seductive to the eye, and it's 90% plus of

hand printed text makes it seem like a letter from a friend. It's a farrago of quantum philosophy, funny daily events, adroit bits of prose, lots of glimpses into the writer's lives. It's just fun and cheap. #9 is shirt pocket size, so ya can tote it around to share with your kindred. Bulk copy rates make it the primo stocking stuffer, even in July...

Drop Out (1114 21st Street, Sacramento, CA 95814) A youth generated zine dealing with alternative education, home schooling, autodidactic wonders (like myself), free schools etc. There is some very good letters sent in by disgruntled current and former students. There is also many hard to find alternative education resources, all of this is mixed in with comics, fabulous illustration and a great collection of vintage photos. This zine is a must for students and educators alive, and anybody involved with "the learning machine."

Lily on the Beach (40 East Main Street, Box 170. Newark DE 197111) One day, the sun smiled at me and dropped this rare gem into my lap. The publisher of Lily on the Beach was fed up with the original format, and had the guts to redo the whole thing. What we lucky readers are left with is a well written, open ended fiction novellaesque zine. Lily on the Beach follows the adventures of a character called "Jamie" who deals with her own emerging spirituality, as she also deals with quasi-deities, reide in "black helicopters," and copes with betrayal. This story brings all of the conspiracy theories almost to life. I did get a little seasick riding the continuity wave yet it's a real gape turner and it left me thirsty for much more. Grab up issues #6 and #7 which contain the "Jamie" story line. Both of which can be pruchased for #8.00 PPD. In the closing pages of #6 is a beautifully poignant story of a young woman who is rebuilding her life after an acute stroke; which will either make you fall in love with her, or declare her as your new best friend. You must add this to your library.

Eye (c/o Lisa Crosby, 301 S. Elm Str. Suite 405, Greensboro, NC 27401) Wow! Glossy! Well written! Truly informative! Fun 'n' witty, and that's the parts I didn't like. Parts of Eye are gruesome and brutal, but it's like a peppercorn to a mostly delicious stew. This dichotomous delight zigs from suicide cults to the history of





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Santa Claus, and zags from Ted Kaczynsky to the children's game Candy Land, to the museum of Bad Art, to the Bindlestiff Family Circus that deals in the bizzare. Plus, they sell sea monkeys, yes, I said they sell sea monkeys. Eye has crisp imagery, well done reviews of zines, music, and underground cinema. Eye also has a section called "Eye Express" which is like an expanded version of news from the weird. It's cost is an amazingly low \$14.00 yearly and it's worth twice that. Empty out your piggy-bank and subscribe to Eye now!

Post Amerikan (P.O. Box 3452, Bloomington, IL 61702) OK, OK, I'm partial, and biased, but I love this up and coming zine. Post Amerikan is a newsprint, bimonthly, that is gearing up to take over the universe, or at least I hope it is. It has lots of dities on the Bloomington, IL scene, yet it's easily read as a national zine. There is plenty fine examples of poetry, all kinds of articles from writers across the country, including moi, articles range from healthy eating, to domestic violence, to Indonesia's plight. From alternative architecture to mental illness, to teaching us ways to live lightly upon this fragile earth. Classified and

advertising rates are very reasonable and well worth the investment. Get in on the ground floor of this zine, and enjoy its growth with the rest of us.

Well folks, that's all for this edition. If I'm wrong, shoot me!

--Nikolai Zarick

Note: Please, if you or you know of someone who has a zine, or some mind candy to be reviewed, please send your work to me so I may potentially add it to this syndicated article.

Likewise, send your comments, and letters of adoration to:
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The Poetry Page

.....I see wanting of belief
 though you throw confusion to my head
 I feel you asking me to prove more
 but with your words you say to go
 if I stop giving & courting your precious soul
 I'm just like all the others
 and you'd be disappointed
 but if I press and go all out
 I'm a psycho stalker pathetic sap
 and you'd be just like all the others
 runnin' away from this gigantic heart
 & I'd be disappointed
 so which will it be
 you or me disappointed
 but oh wait now
 there is another choice
 both of us we go all out
 and both of us we do accept
 now wouldn't that be lovely
 oh yes, I think that would be lovely
 you&i in unity
 happiness & clarity

guess you'd call this my opinion
 oh wait
 I guess to you it could be all wrong.....

--Matt

Peer into the window

Peer into the window,
 tell me what you see,
 could it be the soul,
 that once belonged to me?

Does it hold a rainbow,
 basking in the sun,
 as if it were still innocent,
 and having so much fun,

Or does it weep in sadness,
 felling rather wrong,
 does it cry a lonely tear,
 and sing a lonely song,

Does it hold a reason,
 or promise in its hand,
 of why we must be apart,
 or once be joined again!!!

--Bert Fasking

Cloudlet #44

clinging to the dragonfly corpse
 trembling angel
 in drunk Heather's palm
 bawls brokendown kitchen tears

--Chris Zimmerly

Struggling to keep the train of ever peaceful-
 thought I am constantly bombarded from the
 outside

HEY!

can't you see what i'm doing

distracting mind sits down in the
 shower

exhausted with doubt
 questioning unanswered

he reaches up

gmqlon

he writes
 in the steam covered glass

to be seen from the outside

help yourself!

he writes above
 staring down like some mystical giant
 ready to crush

make you stronger
 make you stand

--Matt Erickson

This joke is no longer funny

casual flirtations
 with drunk car death
 hungry diseased woman

my cooling corpse
 behind the broken wheel
 useless as unopened condom,
 unspoken word of Truth

--Chris Zimmerly

The knighting of a pawn

In the evening of the dawn,
 I bear the duty of a pawn,
 somehow toward the battle drawn,
 until at last I'm dead and gone,

Ere tomorrow has gone past,
 I must somehow break my fast,
 Even must I eat the grass,
 I'll end my hunger at long last,

As of long forgotten lore,
 My deathbound body is so sore,
 Why I fight I shan't implore,
 All I know's I'm off to war,

My country may be wrong this time,
 Our majesty is heartless grime,
 The consequences will be mine,
 For I ride off to do the crime,

It matters not who's wrong or right,
 although I know not why I fight,
 At my hands good men would die,
 And die they shall I am a knight!!!

--Bert Fasking

Weather report, A modern haiku

momentary light
 nuclear star, mask spirit
 tiny storm diamond
 hot atom bomb of summer
 the motionless wilt
 dry scuttle wind dust devil
 refusing the dance
 angels leap in the lightning
 time to harvest now
 deep earth cornucopia
 jubilee of song
 dusk birds cresting eternal
 substance of day gone

--Chris Zimmerly

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Notes from the land of anti-fat

Suit du Jour

Two years after diet drugs fen-phen and Redux were pulled off the markets, and the lawyers are finally starting to see some profit off em. In August, a Texas manicurist who said her heart was damaged by the diet drug combination known as fen-phen was awarded \$23.3 million in the first jury verdict against the makers of the controversial weight-loss regimen.

The award against American Home Products, which marketed fenfluramine, the potent half of the drug cocktail, is significant according to legal experts because the first such product liability cases typically are the weakest ones. "There classically is a learning curve, and plaintiffs typically lose the first couple of lawsuits," says John Coffee, a legal expert at Columbia Law School in New York, speaking to the Los Angeles Times. "Once they get the first couple of (successful) verdicts, it can become hyperbolic. That's what happened in asbestos."

That the award is so high so soon has not been viewed as good news by the pharmaceutical companies.

Debbie Stone Lovett was one of an estimated 6 million Americans who took the diet cocktail, the fenfluramine portion of which was pulled off the market after it was found to cause heart valve damage in some patients and lung problems in others. Her unexpected victory -- Lovett's own doctor testified against her -- could be disastrous for American Home Products, the Madison, N.J., pharmaceutical company that marketed the drug under the brand name Pondimin. Already, 3,100 lawsuits have been filed against the company nationwide, and legal experts said that a win such as this might lead to tens of thousands of new cases.

The company's stock dropped 11.9 percent on news of the verdict, to \$44.88, a decline analysts attributed to fears of more large verdicts.

American Home Products is no stranger to lawsuits. Last year it settled a class action suit filed by users of its Norplant contraceptive implants; and it took over a company that manufactured the Dalkon shield, another birth control device that was linked to a number of deaths and resulted in a number of liability suits.

It's worth noting at this point that all the above-mentioned suits involved women patients.

The jury's willingness to award millions of dollars to a woman whose own doctor testified against her shows the public's growing distaste for actions by corporations that appear to be deceitful, says Sharon Arkin, a health care liability attorney who in March won a \$120.5 million verdict against Aetna U.S. Healthcare for delaying potentially life-saving treatment to a San Bernardino County, Calif., patient.

Within a week of the Lovett verdict, jury selection began on a class action case involving several thousand patients who were not injured by fen-phen but must undergo medical exams for several years to make sure that heart damage doesn't surface as time goes by.

In Bloomington-Normal, the September 15, 1999 issue of Twin City News even contained a law firm's ad soliciting the attention of former fen-phen or redux users. (It's clear the legal community has scented a weakened prey.) "If you used fen-phen or redux, you should know your rights," the ad notes. "Valve damage is a progressive disease, and often symptoms are not noticeable." The ad goes on to list some possible symptoms. Too bad this news wasn't being disseminated two years ago.

The most frustrating aspect of all this is that the potential risks of fen-phen use were known about back when hearings on FDA approval of the drug were first being held. Both the FDA and the pharmaceutical companies decided to take a calculated risk with women's lives, and the results have been disastrous: a slew of lawsuits and an army of women who would willingly trade in their status as lawsuit plaintiffs for a healthy pulmonary system.

It'd be nice to hear that people were learning from this debacle, but fear of fat still continues to overrule common sense. As long as this attitude prevails, we'll continue to see the drug companies rushing out product - and lawyers rushing in later to reap the fiscal benefits of their irresponsibility.

Heavy suits

Of course, pharmaceutical companies aren't the only ones culpable when it comes to dieting disasters. Sometimes we have only our own stupidity to blame. Take Martin Lawrence, the black comedian, who recently nearly died trying to lose weight.

Seems Lawrence passed out jogging in heavy clothing during 85-plus degree weather and had to be hospitalized with a 107 degree body temperature. The actor was reportedly trying to drop some poundage for an upcoming movie role; for his efforts, he wound up in a three-day coma and was nearly put on a dialysis machine. Martin Lawrence: poster child for the Land of Anti-Fat?

--Bill Sherman

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Banned Books Week-



Free Speech?

For two such seemingly simple words to stir a multi-millennial debate boggles my mind. From 4th century BCE to the present, battle lines have been repeatedly redrawn by those who embrace the free exchange of human knowledge and experience, and those who would suppress it.

Our Amerikan founders placed freedom of speech as our first and foremost constitutional amendment and at that time, the singularity of such a right was as revolutionary as our country.

Yet, even as countless other nations around the world have since espoused free speech, our own country continues to struggle through the quagmire of censorship, instigated by the fear, intolerance and/or personal agendas of a parochial minority.

As much as I personally despise finding well-meaning Bible tracts while opening my Yule cards, or quickly surfing past NRA propaganda on the Outdoor Life network, or even more quickly driving past an anti-choice rally without venting my opinion, I would defend to my last breath the right of those people to speak their minds. "The sound of tireless voices is the price we pay for the right to hear the music of our own opinions." n Adlai Stevenson

Conversely, "The right to be heard does not automatically include the right to be taken seriously." Tongue-in-cheekily, Hubert Humphrey underscored the reality that not all speech contains pearls.

But can or should any one person or group of people claim responsibility for sorting jewels from junk? Especially when it affects our children? Since individual values are at stake, there cannot be one single value. Every situation deserves personal scrutiny that should never be universalized. Ergo, "Censorship, like charity, should begin at home; but unlike charity, it should end there." n Clare Booth Luce

Each year, hundreds of formal challenges are presented throughout schools and libraries in the US. These are not just informal expressions of someone's point of view n they are serious attempts to remove or restrict information. Just in the years 1998-99, perennial classics like Huck Finn, Of Mice and Men and Little House on the Prairie have come under fire as offensive, pornographic or racist. Accredited science books have been targeted for perceived prurience and history texts challenged by revisionists. Not even renowned poet laureate Maya Angelou and Newberry Award winners have escaped unscathed.

When zealots can't filter (restrict by criteria such as age) or ban books outright through Boards of Education or other established forums, they often simply "ban-by-removal" (stealing or destroying) the items they deem offensive. With public libraries hobbled by the financial restraints of replacing such pilferage, far too often these thieves ultimately succeed.

Since we live in an era where a burgeoning mass media daily exposes us all to a world of human ills and evil, I can understand the desire to shelter and keep our children safe, even as a non-parent. But should we as adults assume that youth shouldn't be given the freedom to make their own choices or learn their own truths?

By restricting access to intelligence which enriches, clarifies or empowers, young people have instead been set up for the confusion and alienation which results from ignorance. When restraints are imposed on the availability of knowledge in a free society, can that society be truly free, no matter the age of its members?

Successful efforts to ban such books as What's Happening to My Body? Book for Girls: a growing up guide and Two Teenagers in Twenty support the notion that female-ness is somehow inferior, that homophobia is supreme. These efforts recall a past when censorship of information about being black or Jewish (or any other non-Christian existence for that matter) fostered xenophobia and misunderstanding. And without constant vigilance, they may foreshadow a future where diversity is ultimately quashed as well.

Is Anne Frank's Diary "pornographic"? Last year two parents in Texas decided it was. Should Roald Dahl's fantasies be burned? Decades of parents who don't have faith in childish discernment have so believed. Black Like Me? Heaven forbid a white man personally experience the brutal truth of racism. When limits are placed on the free, open exchange of ideas, human potential is immeasurably limited as well.

As Dwight D. Eisenhower warned in his 1953 Dartmouth College commencement address, "Don't think you are going to conceal thoughts by concealing evidence that they ever existed." Only by sharing the knowledge and experience of others can humanity move forward, savoring the triumphs, without perpetuating the tragic mistakes. For in the words of XTC, "Books are burning" and you know where they burn books, people are next."

--Becky Fox

"The fact is that censorship always defeats its own purpose, for it creates, in the end, the kind of society that is incapable of exercising real discretion.... In the long run it will create a generation incapable of appreciating the difference between independence of thought and subservience."

Henry Steel Commager.



Free People Read Freely

Books Challenged or Banned in 1998-1999

Adler, David. *I Know I'm a Witch*. Holt. Retained on the shelves at Prarieview Elementary School in Elgin, Ill. (1998) despite a parent's complaint that the material gives children the impression that witchcraft is "fun and harmless." Source: May 1998, p. 87.

Angelou, Maya. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. Bantam. Banned from the Dolores Parrott Middle School in Brooksville, Fla. school library and classrooms (1998) because of a passage in which Angelou tells of being molested and raped as an eight-year-old. Removed from the Turrentine Middle School's reading list in Alamance, N.C. (1998). Returned to the Anne Arundel County, Md. approved reading list for ninth grade English classes (1998), overriding some parents' complaints that the book is too sexually explicit. Removed from the Brooksville, Fla. eighth grade reading list (1998) because of the book's strong sexual content. Source: May 1998, pp. 69,72; July 1998, p. 120; Sept. 1998, pp. 143-44; Nov. 1998, p. 182; Jan. 1999, p. 20.

Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale*. Fawcett; Houghton; Simon; Hall. Challenged for use in the Richland, Wash. high school English classes (1998) along with six other titles because the "books are poor quality literature and stress suicide, illicit sex, violence, and hopelessness." Source: Mar. 1999, p. 40.

Blume, Judy. *Blubber*. Bradbury Pr.; Dell; Dutton. Banned at the Clements High School in Athens, Ala. (1998) because of objections to two instances of the word "damn" and one of "bitch" in the novel. Source: Mar. 1999, p. 35.

Frank, Anne. *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl*. Modern Library. Removed for two months from the Baker Middle School in Corpus Christi, Tex. (1998) after two parents charged that the book was pornographic. The book was returned after students waged a letter-writing campaign to keep it, and a review committee recommended the book's retention. Source: July 1998, pp. 119-20.

Harris, E. Lynn. *Invisible Life*. Anchor; Consortium. Challenged, but retained, at the Central High School in Louisville, Ky. (1998) because of claims that the book was pornographic and a recruitment tool for the gay community. Source: Mar. 1998, p. 55; May 1998, p. 71

Kazantzakis, Nikos. *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Simon & Schuster. Challenged, but retained, at the Sussex County Community College in Newton, NJ. (1998) despite an employees charges that the book is "totally offensive" and "an outrage and insult to every

Christian in the world." The 1955 novel has long been a source of controversy and was banned by the Roman Catholic Church. Kazantzakis was excommunicated by the Greek Orthodox Church and denied a Christian burial. A 1988 movie adaptation by director Martin Scorsese caused widespread protest by conservative Christians. Source: Mar. 1999, p.47

King, Stephen. *Cujo*. NAL; Viking. Removed at the Crook County High School in Prineville, Oreg. (1998) because it contains "profanity, sexual content, and other factors." The parent also requested that all books by Stephen King be removed from the school because, "I object to any book written by Stephen King as he writes horror fiction, which has no value." Three other King books are under review: *The Running Man*, *Bachman Books*, and *The Green Mile, Part 1*. Challenged at the West Hernando Middle School in Brooksville, Fla. (1998) because of the book's sexually explicit scenes and language. Source: July 1998, p. 110; Jan. 1999, p.7

Madaras, Lynda, and Area Madara. *What's Happening to My Body? Book for Girls: A Growing-up Guide for Parents & Daughters*. Newmarket. Challenged at the Crescent Harbor Elementary School library in Oak Harbor, Wash. (1998) because of the books frankness and use of slang terminology for body parts and sexual acts. H.W. Wilson's *Children's Catalogue* recommends the book for children from 9 to 15, and the book is also featured on Disney's "Parent Express" Web site. Source: Sept. 1998, pp. 141-42

Mapplethorpe, Robert. *Mapplethorpe*. Jonathan Cape. Seized by police from the University of Central England library in Birmingham, U.K. (1998). Lawyers acting for the Crown Prosecution Service decided parts of it were likely to "deprave or corrupt" under the 1959 Obscene Publications Act, and advised the police that they had grounds to ask the university to destroy it. The university and publisher have refused to destroy the book. The Crown Prosecution Service concluded that there was insufficient evidence to expect a conviction. Source: May 1998, p. 75; Mar. 1999, p. 48.

Mariels, Elaine Nicpon. *Human Anatomy and Physiology*. Scott Foresman/Addison Wesley. Challenged, but retained, in the Escambia County, Fla. schools (1998) because of pictures showing a vaginal birth, vaginal warts caused by herpes, and a self examination for breast cancer. Source: July 1998, p. 107.

Newman, Leslea. *Heather Has Two Mommies*. Alyson Pubns. Challenged at the Wichita Falls, Tex. Public Library (1998). The deacon body of the First Baptist Church requested that any literature that promotes or sanctions a homosexual lifestyle be removed. The Wichita Falls City Council is considering a proposal to create a restricted area for challenged children's books. Source: July 1998, pp. 106-07; Jan. 1999, pp. 8-9; Mar. 1999, p. 36.

_____. *Telling Fortunes: Love Magic, Dream Signs, and Other Ways to Learn the Future*. Lippincott. Challenged at Hightower Elementary School in Rockdale, Ga. (1998) because the "book involves instructions and teaches young kids how to tell the future by reading tea leaves, tarot cards, palms, crystal balls, by interpreting dreams, and by looking at an egg." Source: Mar. 1999, p. 35.

Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*. Bantam; Penguin; Viking. Challenged in O'Hara Park Middle School classrooms in Oakley, Calif. (1998) because it contains racial epithets. Challenged, but retained, in the Bryant, Ark. school library (1998) because of a parent's complaint that the book "takes God's name in vain 15 times and uses Jesus's name lightly." Challenged at the Barron, Wis. School District (1998). Source: July 1998, pp. 107, 120; Jan. 1999, p. 9.

Twain, Mark [Samuel L. Clemens]. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Bantam; Bobbs-Merrill; Grosset; Harper; Holt; Houghton; Longman; Macmillan; NAL; Norton; Penguin; Pocket Bks. The Pennsylvania NAACP called for the removal of the book from the required reading lists (1998) in school districts across the state because of its offensive racial language. Challenged in the Dalton and Whitefield County, Ga. schools (1998) because the books language is offensive. Source: May 1998, pp. 72-73; Nov. 1998, p. 182; Jan. 1999, pp. 13-15.

Willhoite, Michael. *Daddy's Roommate*. Alyson Pubns. Challenged at the Brevard County, Fla. Library (1998). When a request to ban the book failed, the complainant kept the book from other patrons by keeping it checked out for a year. Challenged, but retained, at the Hays, Kans. Public Library (1998). A resident objected to "the teaching of the homosexual lifestyles another way to show love." Challenged at the Wichita Falls, Tex. Public Library (1998). The deacon body of the First Baptist Church requested that any literature that promotes or sanctions a homosexual lifestyle be removed. The Wichita Falls City Council is considering a proposal to create a restricted are for challenged children's books. Source: May 1998, pp. 69, 88; July 1998, pp. 105-07; Jan. 1999, pp. 8-9; Mar. 1999, p. 36.



Testimonials from Bloomington

What Huck Finn Means To Me

When I was first introduced to Huck Finn's friend "nigger Jim" I have to admit I could not help to grin a bit. There I was in the middle of a stupid English assignment freely reading a word that was somewhere between love and the "F" word on my never say list. Like most immature male adolescents, and everyone else in class, I felt the need to exploit this previously unauthorized word and boldly say it at the end of every sentence. I had the point of view of a child. As far as anyone cared we could say nigger whenever. I mean if the word was used in a book assigned by our teacher it must be OK. I was not fully aware of society and how people spoke or lived in that particular time in our nation's history. After reading more of the book and discussing the topic and language with the teacher and class, I realized that Mark Twain was not being mean or a bigot. Mark Twain was writing in the context of the day. He was trying to make the book seem authentic and realistic, and make people understand and see what a boy like Huck would have been going through. I remember how hard the text was to read at first because Twain had used the dialogue of the time for realism. Eventually the word's luster wore off and the "F" word was then flowing out of my mouth like water out of a firehose.

This book never gave me any kind of biased opinion against black people. Rather it

broadened my scope of life and the world around me. I grew up in an all white rural community and was never confronted with many racial issues or many African Americans. That did not make me racist but it did mean I had no real experience except for what I read in books. The impression I got from Huck Finn was the treatment of slaves and African Americans at the time was very wrong and immoral. Written very effectively, this book made me aware of how close-minded society can be. To learn from history's mistakes and especially our own is something I will always remember.

As I read the book and dreamingly found myself next to Huck throughout his adventures the contrast between our two worlds became much more defined. Every time I closed my book and returned to this world I would bring something with me. Mostly I would bring back emotion, Huck's thoughts, our thoughts. ? Huck cared for Aunt Sally because it seemed she was the only one that loved him. She worried so much about Huck when he had been gone to long on some crazy adventure but Huck would always know he had to return because he did not want her to worry. Although he was gone on his adventures she never left his mind. I realized how important my family was and how I can take them for granted.

My mind would race for hours, reaching for answers to questions that Huck and I where searching for. Like was it right the way Jim was treated when he was captured as an escaped slave and locked in a cell? Questions of right or wrong, question of myself and who I was, what kind of a person am I?

Huck's father was a bad man and Huck was afraid of him. It would be hard for any kid at that age to know that his or her father was dangerous and did not care of their well being. To have the courage to stand up to him anyway and escape from his father's remote cabin gave me inspiration. It takes a strong soul to know you have been abandoned by your father and still have faith in yourself to live your own life. That can be a tough lesson at Huck's age, but he persevered.

Could I be as strong as Huck and do the right thing, would I be scared? When Huck was caught by Aunt Sally just before he was about to break Jim free he was told to sit in a room full of angry armed men. He could hear the men discussing their plans to capture the unknown thieves who were actually Huck and Tom. He was so scared he said he could barely talk but he never weakened and told of his outrageous plan. He just sat quietly while getting the third degree from Aunt Sally until he was free to go. Then putting all fears aside he was off into the night to free his friend Jim.

If someone wanted to have this book taken off the shelves of libraries so people could not read it I think that would be a big mistake. In no way do I feel this book would poorly influence children, or anybody, in any way. Huck Finn did not make me want to swear or run away to embark on some adventure. It did however educate me

about people past and present. It became clear to me the differences between how things are now, compared to when Huck was navigating the Mississippi. I can have friends of any race and not have to worry about an angry mob of armed gunmen shooting my door down. Every person should have the same opportunities as the next. If we as humans could overcome our fears of skin color and forget about superiority of race, we could all adopt the idea of equality and life would be a more enjoyable adventure. Our society is by far not even near perfect but it has come along way since Huck's time.

My adventure is to further the equality of people and the advancements in social behavior. I would like to make a difference in the world of some young soul, to show people how wrong our society can be in so many facets of life. To make good decisions, treat everyone as equals and to be a good person is more important than doing the "in" thing no matter what someone thinks or says. Huck taught me to stand up for what I believe and never back down no matter what. I believe in freedom of speech, to express to others my opinions and ideas. What you do or how you react to this information is completely up to you.

I am not much of a reader or writer and probably would have never read Huck Finn if I had not been required to do so. I can honestly say that Huck Finn made a positive impact on me. Even today when I think about the book it brings back memories and emotions from the past. Banning books is a big mistake in my opinion. To me every book is just information presented to me in different ways. It is my job to interpret this information into something I can use to better myself.

--James Payne

"Freedom of thought and freedom of speech in our great institutions of learning are absolutely necessary...the moment that either is restricted, liberty begins to wither and die and the career of a nation after that time is downwards."

John Peter Altgeld.

Throughout history people have always challenged art and literature. There are various reasons to deem them inappropriate for the public, such as, sexually explicit content, violence, language and vulgarity. Of the most frequently banned or challenged books of the 1990's is *Daddy's Roommate*. This child's story is about homosexual couples as parents. *Daddy's Roommate* is a series of books about the daily life of a young boy, his father and his significant other. Homosexual parenting is a controversial subject, and many people believe that the books promote homosexuality. However, this child's book also promotes open-mindedness and diversity. The question is should we ban a book because we do not approve of its message and deprive a generation of a valuable piece of literature? Perhaps a compromise could be reached and we could agree to disagree with the book and leave it up to an individual to decide how they feel and in

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ideas, interests, issues &
concerns to Bloomington
city government.

*Ward 6 is roughly downtown
Bloomington and all parts of its
surrounding neighborhoods. You
need not live in my ward to call me.*



Public Library's BBW display

the process hopefully learn something. *Daddy's Roommate* is valuable children's book and can help broaden a child's mind.

A common misunderstanding that occurs with the book *Daddy's Roommate*, is that it promotes homosexuality among young people. Parents feel that if their child reads about homosexuals and exposes them to their lifestyle they will be accepting of homosexuals or want to be one. Some people think that if their children read this book they will all of the sudden be lesbian or gay. It has been said that the book leads children to believe that homosexuals can be acceptable parents. Others yet challenge the book because it portrays gays and lesbians in nuclear family situations. One of the books of the series *Daddy's Roommate* is about the father and his marriage ceremony to his partner. Many feel that homosexuals should not be allowed to legally marry. Obviously, persons that protest this book do not believe that homosexuality is appropriate, and should not be discussed openly in society.

However, others believe that the book promoted open-mindedness among youth. Discrimination has been illegal for over thirty years, yet many minorities are alienated every day. This book does show children that it is okay to be homosexual and displays diversity among families. We should want to teach our children to be accepting and open-minded. If we fail to do this we have a population that discriminates and the accepted diversity our society has worked towards for decades would be lost. By introducing new situations and sharing their new experiences they will be better able to adapt to their surroundings. *Daddy's Roommate* is a book that will introduce a new lifestyle to most children.

Furthermore, *Daddy's Roommate* shows children that homosexuals can be good parents. Homosexual parenting is a very controversial subject. Some individuals believe that gay and lesbian couples have the right to be parents. The opposition argues that an individual chooses to be homosexual so they gave up their right to parenthood when they "chose" to be gay. Many believe that homosexuals are not moral, have no values, are dirty or impure and therefore unfit to raise children. Gay and lesbian homes are a new type of family in our society. Most children are not aware that these families exist. The books could be very beneficial to the children of homosexual families. Being able to read a story about a family similar to theirs would be reassuring to a child, as opposed to a story about the standard nuclear family, and we all know that they are now in the minority. Children with divorced parents went through the same things about twenty years ago that children of homosexuals go through now. It, too, will become more familiar to a community with time.

For those communities whose families feel these books are too inappropriate for a child, they have been moved to the Parenting section of libraries in the past. This is probably the

best option for all parties involves. The books will remain open to the public, but away from most children. If a parent wants their child to read the book, they may obtain the book themselves, read it with the child and then discuss it with them. This option is even more beneficial to a child because the parent can answer questions and explain homosexuality to their child as they see fit. As for parents who would rather their children not learn about homosexuality the book is no longer in the Children's section of the library so they are unable to read it.

Books on homosexual parenting such as *Daddy's Roommate* could be very valuable to a community. They can teach children to be more accepting of differences and possibly even help the topic of homosexuals become less of a taboo in our society. Hopefully persons who want to challenge these books will look beyond their dispute and recognize the value of such children's stories.

--Megan Busick

"Debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust and wide-open and that...may well include vehement, caustic, and sometimes unpleasantly sharp attacks on government and public officials."

United States Supreme Court Justice William Brennan, *New York Times v. Sullivan*, 376 U.S. 254, 84 S.Ct. 710, 11 L.Ed.2d 686 (1964).

Drawing Down the Moon by Margot Adler has been challenged for its "satanic themes." This volume, now in its second revision, is a wonderful informative volume on the Pagan religious movement. The book is full of factual information on the DIFFERENCES between the various Pagan religions and satanism. This is what makes it so necessary. It is a pity that those who challenged it could not open their minds while reading it to understand what it is actually saying. This book has done wonderful things for educating the public about Paganism in America today.

--Winter Wren

Winter is Illinois Director of WARD (Witches Against Religious Discrimination)

"If there is a bedrock principle underlying the First Amendment, it is that the Government may not prohibit the expression of an idea simply because society finds the idea itself offensive or disagreeable."

United States Supreme Court Justice William Brennan, *Texas v. Johnson*.

"Those who won our independence by revolution were not cowards. They did not fear political change. They did not exalt order at the cost of liberty.... If there be time to expose through discussion the falsehood and fallacies, to avert the evil by the processes of education, the remedy to be applied is more speech, not enforced silence."

United States Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis, *Whitney v. California*.

It is easy for me to defend the availability of most of the books that appear on banned/challenged book lists. They promote diversity. They provide awareness of different lifestyles and cultures. I agree with many of the values expressed in the texts.

But what if you don't agree with the values expressed in a book or speech? What if the book in fact is the antithesis of what you believe in?

Recently I interviewed white supremacist Matt Hale for the *Post Amerikan* newspaper. We then needed to decide whether or not we should print the interview. His white supremacist beliefs, his claims that the Holocaust never happened were horrifying, reprehensible to those of us who work on the paper.

We decided to print the interview. Some people thought that we made a mistake--that we simply gave more publicity to his dangerous and damaging ideas. Others felt that even though what he said was ugly, it was important that it be published.

If we didn't print Hale's words his racism would not have gone away. Shedding light on these thoughts exposes them and gives us the opportunity to speak out against them. I also had to realize that those books that I find so easy to defend are offensive to some people in our society. If we censor Hale's ideas, we risk the censorship of ideas that we feel are important.

Popular and unpopular ideas must be allowed to be expressed. It is then our right (responsibility?) to speak out against beliefs we find offensive--not to censor them.

--Sherrin Fitzer

"Correctly applied, (the clear and present danger test)...will preserve the right of free speech from suppression by tyrannous majorities and from abuse by irresponsible, fanatical minorities."

United States Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis.



cont.

When John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* was published in the 1930s powerful California growers tried to suppress this realistic portrayal of migrant farm laborers' dismal life. Sixty years later the book is still controversial and agricultural laborers still follow a trail of misery and poverty. Controversial books are an opportunity for discussion and fact-finding, probing why these printed words conjure such an emotional response. Perhaps then, rather than generating smoke and steam, we can instead foster the heat of real learning.

As a parent I know some books are inappropriate for all children at certain ages, or, if they are read, should be read with parental guidance, discussion and input. Banning books that raise disturbing and sometimes thoughtful questions for children is not the answer -- parental involvement is the key. These books can than be an entry for parents to not only teach their children, but listen to them and better understand their perceptions -- a winning situation for both.

--Mike Matejka

Mike is a City Council member, a labor activist, and a parent.

"I fear more harm from everybody thinking alike than from some people thinking otherwise."

Charles G. Bolte.

"Experience teaches us to be most on our guard to protect liberty when the government's purpose is beneficent. The greatest dangers to liberty lurk in insidious encroachments by men of zeal, well-meaning but without understanding."

United States Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis, dissenting *Olmstead v. United States*, 277 U.S. 438 (1928).

FREE PEOPLE READ FREELY

So many wonderful banned books, so little time to read them! One banned book that changed the way I think and has stuck with me over the years is *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, by Gabriel Garcia-Marquez. The novel for me was magical: I read it during a time in my life when I was open to new ways of thinking (early 20s); it was a book I chose to read (none of my professors assigned it to me, I picked it out for myself); I was beginning to learn and truly understand the different ways that people live their lives and see their worlds; I was eager to understand life beyond the United States; the language is rich and expressive and the story very much an epic -- these are just a few of the reasons this story "spoke" to me.

One Hundred Years of Solitude is everything that life is: tragedy, comedy, revolution, revelation, loneliness and finding. Why anyone wants to ban a book that gives the reader so many gifts will continue to baffle me!

I am grateful for the freedom to read and to be challenged in my thinking, and I am grateful to all the people, laws and organizations that keep it that way.

--Karen Schmidt

Karen Schmidt is a Bloomington City Council member, a librarian, and a parent

"Intellectual freedom, the essence of equitable library services, promotes no cause, furthers no movements, and favors no viewpoints. It only provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause, or movement may be explored. Toleration is meaningless without tolerance for what some may consider detestable. Librarians cannot justly permit their own preferences to limit their degree of tolerance in collection development, because freedom is indivisible."

Office for Intellectual Freedom, American Library Association. *Intellectual Freedom Manual*. Fourth edition. Chicago: American Library Association, 1992, p. 50.

"The layman's constitutional view is that what he likes is constitutional and that which he doesn't like is unconstitutional."

Hugo L. Black.

The Library Bill Of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgement of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Rape Crisis Center of McLean County

We're a non-profit volunteer group whose main purpose is to offer assistance and support to victims of sexual assault and their friends and families.

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If you want to talk to one of us
Call PATH 827-4005

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RAPE CRISIS CENTER



Blue Moon Coffeehouse

Carrie Newcomer Band

IWU's Main Lounge~Memorial Student Center
October 29, doors open at 7:30 PM; show goes up at 8PM

Carrie Newcomer returns as a warm and welcome friend of The Blue Moon. Carrie and her band return now with new songs and stories that are accessible, elemental and wrapped up with that voice. The Indianapolis Star has said, "She's a vocalist that has an impressive range, fluidly moving from a caress to an indictment. This woman who can growl or coo is a triple treat." Carrie is a singer-songwriter who is a dynamic performer, able to touch audiences in a very personal way, as well as delight listeners with her Midwestern storytelling and humor. She has been reviewed as amazing, haunting, strong but subtle, virtuoso, literary and poetic. Her latest CD, Bare to the Bone, on Rounder Records offers a long waited gift to fans that have ached for a live recording. Her national audience continues to grow—and she still comes back to play The Blue Moon Coffeehouse. To learn more about Carrie Newcomer, be sure to check out her Web site at: www.carrienewcomer.com/

Patty Larkin

IWU's Main Lounge~Memorial Student Center
November 20, 8:00 p.m. performance; doors at 7:30 p.m.

Patty Larkin is a Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter who combines her talents as a wordsmith with superb guitar work that includes electric and slide, as well as classic Martin D-18 acoustic virtuosity. She has been described as dwarfing the folk competition when it comes to playing acoustic guitar and writing first-rate ballads. Patty underscores her tough singing with spiky guitar punctuation that punches up the expressiveness of her lyrics. It has been Larkin's poetic song writing along with her warm, emotive singing and guitar playing that has earned her the reputation of one of the most original artists in the burgeoning 'new folk' movement. In performance, Larkin juxtaposes her intimate, heartfelt love songs and her frank expressions of social conscience with ironic and comic material. An established recording artist on both Rounder, as one of the original Four Bitchin' Babes, and as a solo artist on Windom Hill, Patty Larkin shines in live performances as she easily glides through a cappella humor, poignant philosophical ballads,

and her dead-on impersonation of Marlene Dietrich. Get to know Patty Larkin at The Blue Moon, and be prepared to be amazed! Be sure to visit the Patty Larkin Web Site <http://pattylarkin.com/index.html>

Not Blue Moon

Jack Gladstone - Native Reflections/A Musical Visual Narrative

IWU's Main Lounge~Memorial Student Center
November 12, 8:00 p.m.

Jack Gladstone, a grandson of Blackfeet Indian Chief Red Crow, guides the audience through myths, animal legends and character portraits into a better understanding of our Native American heritage. As a singer, songwriter and masterful storyteller, Jack touches the hearts of his audiences with his enlightening narrative and thought-provoking songs about the adventures, triumphs and tragedies of Native America.



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No matter where you

We're living in a time of inconvenience-- Compassion fails me with this meanness in the air. Our city streets are filled with violence. So we close the doors to anger and pretend that it's not there. Here I go again back out on these mean streets. The evil seems to cling to the soles of my feet. I'm living in a time of inconvenience At an inconvenient time.
--Nancy Griffith

Toto, I have a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore.
-Dorothy, The Wizard of Oz, Movie

Follow your bliss.
--Joseph Campbell

There are only two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.
--Albert Einstein

Shift Happens.
--Bumper sticker

I am 37 years, 3 days, 1 hour and 28 minutes old. I have had 2.1 children, 2 husbands (one I'm sticking with...I know a good one when I find him), have 1 dog, 4 cats (and a fifth that is warming up to us), 1 bird, 1 rabbit, and vehicles. We own 4.9 acres on a ridgetop, a house, an old summer kitchen and a machine shed we call the barn. Our land has an old apple tree, meadows, woods, interesting outcroppings of rocks, and an old rock quarry we call Bone Canyon. It took 3 hours and 24 minutes for the bontire to die out low enough for me to go to bed after my birthday party the other night, and another 12 minutes for me to stumble up those 4.9 acres in the dark. I am in perpetual celebration because we are living the life we have always dreamt of...debt free, mortgage free. We own what we own (as dumpy as it is!), have a great view, trees, meadows and ultimate privacy. There is no one to see us ever. Not another house in sight! We only get observed when folks drive down our road, and that is only the front 1/4 acre of our land. The rest is completely hidden. Last summer the kids and I got naked down in Bone Canyon for no other reason than that we could. How fun!

We have at last found everything we had dreamt of, hoped for, and thought we would never have. And where did we find this little slice of Heaven? Southwestern Wisconsin. We live in limbo-land. Our mailing address is Soldiers Grove, the nation's first solar village. Years ago their downtown, in the valley, kept flooding every spring, so the town leveled their downtown and rebuilt it on the ridge, and went solar. I've only been there once, actually. It has 1500 people in it, has a homeopathic and herbal pharmacy, and is pretty nifty, but I have no real reason to head in that direction usually. Our road is half in Crawford County and half in Vernon County, and unfortunately we live on the Vernon County half (higher taxes and more restrictions). Located a mile north of Rising Sun (a tavern and a country store, period), we have to drive our mail and recycling 5 miles north to Liberty Pole, the center of out township. North on 27 further still is Viroqua, the county seat of Vernon County. We live about 12 miles out of Viroqua, a town of 4000. And, in the middle of no where we have great neighbors and kids for ours to play with.

Besides the gorgeous rolling hills and valleys (locals consider this the oldest mountain range in the USA...and it is a lot like the Appalachians, only a bit lower), this area is a pocket of alternative bliss. Not enough to be truly out there, but enough to delight us all. Viroqua has a store-front cooperative natural foods store, with a huge selection. Local produce is featured in the summer, and prices are good when compared with...uh...other places I've shopped for years. They are open seven days a week. We have a REAL bookstore, not a chain, called Bramble Press Books, a shop featuring cool stuff and art supplies called Art Vision, The Temple Theatre (very similar in every way to The Normal Theatre), a solar energy store, and a caf, that offers not-so-good food. We have a bunch of CSAs, the largest organic dairy cooperative in the nation (Organic Valley), CROPP (another large organic cooperative that helps distribute products from locals to other businesses), and Earth Fire Products located in Gays (Gays Mills, for you out-of-towners) which specialize in miso and seitan (I make seitan for them part time now). Every house has a massage therapist and a carpenter, it seems. I personally know 3 other midwives and haven't yet met the fourth. And, there is Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School. Yes, a Waldorf school....

Waldorf School is an artsy-fartsy spiritual school that honors nature, the child, and all that. Children learn through stories, art, drama, music. Children start foreign language and music in first grade and by third they are beginning violin. Being non-graded, children are allowed to slowly unfold at their own pace without a lot of judgment placed upon their individual style of learning. Trusting the process, some children may not be able to read until third grade, but by the time they graduate their levels are consistently superior to public school children, with more mature, creative teenagers. In fact, a group of these teenagers were so disillusioned with public high school they helped start an alternative high school called The Youth Initiative Program, which has 35 students and teaches things like herbalism and tincture making for self-healing.

So my kids go to school. How odd. We always said we would never send them to school unless it was a Waldorf School, but would never have dreamed that we could ever afford one, and here we are living somewhere with a Waldorf School that we could afford. They had been begging to try school, so how could we say no? I am not a fan of my kids being gone from me so many hours a day, and don't believe that much socialization is a good thing, but we live in an imperfect world. It is a hard shift from homeschooling to having the kids in school. Still, we love the school. I get teary-eyed every Friday morning assembly when all the children come singing together into the gymnasium and present the things that they have been working on in class.

But what about moving to Dancing Rabbit in Missouri?

We had planned on moving to DR originally. Why? Because I thought we could get everything we dreamed about there. We figured out that we couldn't. Those folks just didn't know how to share, care and be kind. They sound so great on paper, and talk the talk, but when it really

comes down to it, they are mostly jerks. Obviously, not everyone, but a couple of the guys that have the main "power" in the "egalitarian" system are. They are classist and misogynist. Being sons of extremely wealthy families, they play at being poor and at "sacrificing" for the environment. Their ideals get in the way of a real life, and they are quick to judge and tell others how to live, and yet justify their anti-environmental decisions in a minute.

They do not honor or support motherhood and its contribution to society. In fact, DR will not even cough up money to build a playground for children, while justifying \$300 for a mural to be painted on a building. Some members have now come out and boldly stated they don't like children, and have even stupidly compared it to not liking computers. They even have been ignorant enough to imply that children are anti-environmental due to overpopulation in the world already. Being the sons of wealth, any time they would want to leave DR they would have no problem having jobs, homes, etc., and can't appreciate people who really do live simply and don't have money to fall back upon. And they don't appreciate the special problems inherent in raising a family and the cost involved in this in today's society.

Yes, there is some truth to the world being overpopulated (though I think the problems lie more with bad consumption practices and poor governmental decisions and not the numbers per se) but how is the world going to change and ever get better if we don't raise children who have a different world view and perspective? The world belongs to the children we have, not to us. We can do all we want, but it means nothing when we are gone. They will then be in charge.

I think the last straw was in their ridiculous statements about the car cooperative and one member's insistence upon how I was wrong about how much it cost to run our cars. I felt they were making a game out of my real life. We live simply, not because it is great for the environment and is a cause to fight for, but because it brings us joy. It allowed me to be home with the children when they were young. It has allowed us, in our mid-thirties, to be completely debt free. It is as natural as breathing. One of the "leaders" (but remember, they don't have leaders) is on video stating that he was looking for a cause, and picked the environment. Get the picture? It isn't even a love of nature with these folks. It is just something to do. These two in particular don't even LIKE nature or the countryside. They don't feel the spiritual presence around them, they don't even take walks. They aren't tree huggers. It is a cause. Granted, there are only a few bad apples at DR, but their presence is an overwhelming influence.

On my last visit there, we went to help our friends there erect the walls timber frames for a straw bale cabin. It was supposedly a

community project. A lot of folks from the community came to help, and Mark and Jim went there all the way from Bloomington...a 4 hour drive. Let's give you the scenario. My friend Christiane and I, from Bloomington, provided all the food. There was nothing to feed these hungry men doing hard physical labor. The work was mostly done by folks who didn't



go, there you are

live at DR. Cecil spent most of the day with his arm around a woman, and then he and Tony took off early (it was cold and rainy) to go do some paperwork at Sandhill. We cooked chicken (organic, naturally raised, thank you) to feed all these hungry people who had worked their asses off for no pay in the rain for a cabin that belongs to DR. Know what? Tony and Cecil, both vegan, made us take the chicken off the table and made these helpers all walk across the kitchen to the stove to get their dinner. I thought, personally, that that was a pretty fucking holier-than-thou attitude...some gratitude. Thank you guys for coming to help put up the timber frames for the cabin in the freezing rain and snow that we didn't really help with much though it benefits our community, but you have to go over THERE to get your dinner. I think the quote from me on the drive home about the incident was, "Fuck that shit."

I decided then and there that they were acting like ass holes. Mark had thought so all along, but I kept seeing the good in DR, trying to see the good in Tony and Cecil, trying to believe that they couldn't be that much of an influence, and seeing all the good things that could come out of being there with Hali's family. But you know, it just wasn't worth the headache of it all.

Enter...Viroqua

After that last trip to Missouri, Christiane and I were riding back together. She told me, "I know what you want...a sense of community, a cool place to live and raise your family. I really think you should check out Viroqua."

I was obstinate. "I am NOT moving my family just for a Waldorf School. We couldn't afford it anyway. I am committed to homeschooling, and I won't pick where my family will move based upon my kids education."

"Don't go just to check out the school. Go to check out the community. It felt really great there, and it is a cool town. I think you guys would like it." She was right.

At the beginning of November, I made a phone call and hooked up with Brian Wickert. He had lived in LeRoy and knew the Bloomington-Normal scene, and heard what we wanted. He sang the praises of the school, but also the praises of the community. He thought we would love what the area had to offer. I was excited, and told Mark all about it when we got home.

Around this time, mid-November 1998, I began Ascension, an incredible form of meditation that even I could effortlessly do. I gave up on the idea of moving anywhere for a while and focused on myself. My whole life began to flow more slowly, I gave up my ridiculous rage, and my whole family saw such a change in me that they all decided to try Ascension too. My relationship with my husband was growing by leaps and bounds, we were madly in love once again (and I, silly me, thought it couldn't get any better after almost 14 years of being together). I gave up on moving. I learned to be content where I was. I didn't like my location in Bloomington any better, didn't like the strip malls, but on the other hand I became engrossed in loving every aspect of it all. Sounds trippy, eh? I was lost in the paradox. It was pretty fun to just give up the dream.

And the dream? A home in the country, with absolutely no debt, and complete privacy. I wanted to be able to not have anyone see me, nor see any other houses. I wanted trees and hills and beauty. A wood stove for heating, and one for cooking. A garden. And I gave it up this dream and became content.

By the beginning of March, I helped out at an Ascension workshop, and hung out and meditated with everyone for a while. When I was updating my records and experiences, one of the questions is, "How are you compromising in your life?" I wrote in big letters, "BY LIVING IN THIS TOWN!!!" And I was. I was perfectly content, but it was a big compromise because I had planned on being in the country the summer of 1999. I wanted quiet. I wanted no Harleys belching by at 2:00a.m. I didn't want tons of strip malls. I wanted to practice midwifery and herbs without fear of jailing. I wanted to feel totally at home, fit in, not be stared at. I wanted to live in a place surrounded by a lot of people with our values of simplicity and how to live life, instead of only having a few of these folks around. I wanted to feel like we were the norm, not the exception. I knew Mark wasn't ready to move yet, and I so I had given it up and became content in the moment, but was compromising my needs still. I also learned that sometimes compromise isn't a bad thing when done with consciousness for the right reasons.

Then I got a notice in the mail about an open house at the Waldorf School in Viroqua. I thought it sounded like a good excuse to get out of town for a couple of days and visit the area, thinking in a year or two we could move there if we liked it. But, we were broke. Mark and I had just been talking during dinner about the timing of the visit...did I go to the March open house or the April? How would I afford it? We couldn't afford a hotel. We had this open question, no real answers, and then the phone rang. Normally the phone is off during dinner, and if it isn't we ignore it any way, but I got that "feeling" that it was important. I answered it. It

was Brian Wickert, from Viroqua, calling to tell me about the open house and offering to let me stay with them. I was on my way to Wisconsin.

The Dream Begins

I had a less than 24 hour trip. I arrived on March 23 for the open house. I couldn't believe it, but I fell absolutely in love with the school, and the next day I fell in love with the town. The catch? Hannah would start third grade in the fall of 1999, and if we waited any longer, she might not be able to ever really catch up with the curriculum. It was an important year, where formal language and music started. Oh, yes, and I found our home.

I was reading the bulletin board at the school, and found a posting for a house for sale. Five acres, two outbuildings, \$31,500. Outrageous, even for this area! There aren't deals like this left any more. The land alone \$6-7000, making the house and two outbuildings priced at \$25,000. I read it over and over. At the end of the second day I was at the Wickerts gathering my things and mentioned this property. Brian said, "Call!" I laughed and pointed out that we weren't even moving up here. He said, "Yes you are! Go back and get that number and we'll call!" So, I walked back to the school and got the number.

It belonged to Kris Gephardt, Brian figured out after calling. Kris was at the school teaching piano lessons. I sat and waited in the hallway, and when she was done, talked to her about the house. She chuckled and said, "Well, it's a real handy man's special!" I pointed out that, luckily for me, I was married to a real handy man (in

Radio Free Maine

The Impacts of Television on the Growing Mind

- *Data suggests that TV negatively influences normal brain growth and development.
- *A majority of researchers believe TV has a negative impact on children's attention span.
- *Research has linked TV to asthma, obesity and high cholesterol in children.
- *Research demonstrates significant depression of left-brain functions while viewing TV.
- *The average child in America views 6,000 hours of TV before they ever go to school.
- *Other countries importing American TV are reporting rapid increases in crime and violence.

This seminar, held in Portland Maine on April 4, 1998, was sponsored by Wyllaned, the Association of Waldorf Schools, and T-V Free America. There are four 90 minute audiotapes and one video.



more ways than one, heh heh), so she drew me a map. As I left town I went to the house.

Boy, what a handy man's special it was!!! I thought, geez, no way, I'm not going to think about it. I got back to Bloomington and said, "Honey, we're moving to Viroqua, sooner rather than later, and I've got us a house." I dreamt at night that the house was ours.

Two weeks later we came up to visit. The children and Mark fell in love with the school. We went through the house. Gee whiz, what a dump, but man oh man, what a gorgeous piece of property with an amazing view in all directions. Mark wasn't ready to move (would he ever have been!?) but he was willing to do it for the kids if they really wanted to go to school. They did.

May Day I came up with the kids and put money down on the house. May 23 we closed on the house. June 23 our home in Bloomington was sold...the second people who walked through it, before it was officially on the market, and we got our full price. July 23 they closed. We are debt free, have our land, have our privacy, and have our kids in a Waldorf School. I have 3, maybe 4 homebirth clients already, and Mark has plenty of business with his handyman/rehab work. We have a wood burning stove for heat (not functioning yet...we need to clean the chimney still) and have a wood cook stove in the barn that we hope to get set up soon. We have a very, very happy life, though having the kids in school is a very big adjustment for me. There are like minded folks everywhere. No one here wonders why we'd rather live in a beat-up old house debt free than a really nice new home with new cars. Lots of folks up here aspire to our lifestyle!!! Plenty up here do all sorts of odd jobs to make ends meet. Quality of life is valued over quantity of possessions. It seemed that all it took was to acknowledge my compromise, my compromise, and give it all up. To lose the desperation of the need, and consciously in the experience of the moment. And in losing that desperation, all of it simply was given to us. Every single thing. The only thing we don't have on the ridge top is a creek or pond, but we live on an unusual ridge....there are springs everywhere underground, near the surface. Next spring we are building a pond. Looking out the window right now, at the back of our property, I can't see a single building anywhere. I see a field with flowers, trees everywhere, all changing color. A glorious view. A glorious life.

Dancing in the Streets

The Viroqua Coop had their grand re-opening party the first weekend in September. They got permission to block the street off for the event. Free beer, free food, potluck, raffle. You name it. "Dr. Tractor and the Garlic Stackers" performed. It was amazing! Probably 400 people showed up and it was a wild, wild time. Folks were dancing everywhere, singing, carrying on. There were people there I had never seen around before. It was one of the best times I had in a long time! Another evening we were walking downtown and Soda Jo's, another little restaurant, was having a fifties dance in the street. Folks were dressed in period clothing, music was blasting. What a riot! On still another evening there was a barn dance before school opened, with fiddle music, guitars. Everywhere I go I run into music.

Whitdeer, who works with me for Earth Fire, plays percussion for a pagan band called, I think, Green Crown. They travel all the pagan

festivals nationwide during the summers, in case you happen to get to one. I call him "Deer" just to bug him (like "dear"...get it?) but he does plenty to try and bug me too. It is a game we play for fun as we work the dough to build up the gluten. We were talking about music, and how I always wanted to play the "weird" instruments growing up....fiddle, banjo, harp. He told me I've been hanging out in the wrong circles, because he knew bunches of people that played those very instruments, and they weren't unusual at all. In fact, his partner, Violet, has a violin for sale right now and is--are you ready?--FIDDLE TEACHER!!!! Guess who is going to be starting fiddle lessons? Uh huh. Me.

Jim, the janitor, is a very cool guy. His daughter goes to the school, and he is on The School Store committee with me. He also teaches guitar lessons for Youth Initiative and after school to kids from Pleasant Ridge (or adults...and I might be hooking up with Jim for some lessons too.) Helen, one of the secretaries, is also a musician with a gorgeous voice. They are starting a band (which I will be sure to catch) with some other folks connected to the school. A couple of Fridays ago, I was just closing up The School Store and leaving, and walking by the office. There were Jim and Helen sitting there, strumming their guitars, playing a beautiful song and singing. My oh my, what a great reality we dropped into.

Full Enlightenment Experience

The grocery store up here is called Jubilee. Hallelujah. I don't like going to the grocery store, but I kind of get into going here because it is a combination JC PENNEY catalogue outlet/flower store/grocery store/liquor store/movie theatres all in one. It is employee-owned, and folks are really nice in there.

Saturday was my birthday, and Keegan and I were going into Jubilee to go shopping for beer and wine for the party, along with a few food items. I was la-dee-da-ing it down the first aisle, fruits and vegetables, and had just reached the deli counter when it hit me like gang-busters. It felt like full enlightenment...or an LSD flashback. My eyes were filled with tears of joy. Everything became beautiful, bright, sparkling. I could see an aura around everything. My hands were filled with energy, and I wouldn't have been surprised to have seen sparks coming out of it. The examples of gross American excess that I normally find so annoying I found infinitely humorous and paradoxical. Who cared? Everything was beautiful and funny and joyous, and if not everyone got it, that was okay. They would in good time. Things felt slow and powerful. EVERYONE seemed unusually friendly and happy that day, smiling at my son and me, nodding their heads, even lifting their hands to wave. I swore it felt like they were all experiencing exactly what I was. It was wild, beautiful, and completely irrational.

We left, and I was still glowing from the experience, cracking up over it in my head. I stopped at my neighbor's on the way home to pick up our dog's lead which I left there. I looked at her counter. There, piled up, were groceries from....Jubilee.

"Oh, did you just go shopping at Jubilee?" I casually asked.

"Yeah, I just got home," Jane said.

"That's weird," I told her. "I just came back from there and didn't see you in the store."

"That is weird," she agreed (it's not that big of a store, and you run into people you know everywhere all the time up here.)

"So, Jane, let me tell you something even weirder. I just had the most amazing experience in Jubilee."

Her mouth dropped open. "Oh my God! Did it start when you hit the deli counter? Was it completely cosmic, and suddenly you were one with everyone, and everything was beautiful?"

She was telling me my experience. We compared notes, and had the exact same cosmic experience in grocery store at the same time. It was uncanny! Happy birthday to me!!! I have everything I have ever dreamt of and more. Who says small town life is boring? I found Nirvana in Jubilee.

--Marcee Murray



Imagination • Exaggeration
by dot williams

Growing Up Postmodern

October 5 through November 1, 1999

While Baby Boomers review their pension plans and incidents such as Columbine create international shockwaves, artists are examining the contradictory and perverse reverberations of childhood and adolescence with renewed fervor. Growing Up Post Modern gets its name from Paul Goodman's "Growing Up Absurd," a landmark study of the conditions of adolescence and early adulthood during the 1950s. Fourteen artists will be represented in this exhibition, which is presented in conjunction with an interdisciplinary two-day conference dealing with issues of race and class in youth culture and literature. Works in this exhibition consist of painting, sculpture, photography, and site installation. Artists: Donald Baechler, Mike Cockrill, Francesca Fuchs, Jack Hallberg, George Horner, Larry Mantello, Paula McCarty, Wendy McMurdo, Karl Rademacher, James Reilly, Christian Schumann, Michael Scott, Kathryn Spence, and Thomas Wrede.

Hours:
Saturday-Monday: 12:00-4:00 p.m.
Tuesday- 9:30 a.m.-9:00 p.m.
Wednesday-Friday: 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.