Title: *The Witness*, January to December, 1994

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The sixties

The Witness

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Communion of saints/ancestors

I FOUND THIS TO BE AN exceptional issue in every way, and one that will bear reading again every All Saints' Day to give us fresh insights into the sacred meanings of this most practical, yet most Holy Feast.

William Davidson
Retired Episcopal Bishop
Loveland, CO

THE NOVEMBER *WITNESS* evokes in me the need to write to you and thank you for it and express my gratitude to Philip Newell for his beautiful *Saints in the Celtic tradition* and to Bishop Gumbleton for the profile of Franz Jaegerstaetter — whose witness to Our Lord is now known and will continue. Lastly your own article: *The blood of the ancients* made your parents alive in Christ our Lord for physical death cannot separate loved ones.

Our eldest son Robert Willoughby Corrigan died Sept. 1 1993 in Dallas, Tex. He was 65. He had Parkinsons for some years but in his last year a new disease struck him. He had been Dean of the School of the Arts of the University of Texas in Dallas and Professor of Dramatic Literature in the graduate school.

Elizabeth and Daniel Corrigan
Santa Barbara, CA

THANK YOU FOR THE HOPE in the November issue.

Mary Fisher Andrews
N. Waterford, ME

IN THE EARLY 1970S, as Anita Bryant was preaching her message of fear and hatred, a group of us in Salt Lake City, Utah, set out to organize a combined Integrity/Dignity Chapter. Two years earlier I had been formally excommunicated from the Mormon Church of my childhood for being gay. I had moved on to the Roman Catholic Church by way of the Newman Center at the University of Utah. Now as we were setting out to organize Dignity the word filtered down to us that our bishop not only had forbidden any priest to celebrate Mass for us, he was looking for a way to excommunicate us. I really envied my Episcopal brothers and sisters. Their bishop, Otis Charles, not only encouraged them, he also spoke out against Bryant's hatred.

The day of the Dade County election, Bishop Charles asked all of the churches in his diocese to pray for the defeat of hatred and injustice. I remember sitting in St. Mark's Cathedral after hearing the results of the vote. It all seemed too much to deal with. Bishop Charles sat down next to me, gave me a hug, and reminded me that no matter what anyone said God was on the side of justice and that I should never give up on God.

Otis and Elvira Charles did more for this gay man than they can ever know. I never gave up on God, but I did give up on the Roman Catholic Church. For the last nine years I have been "married" to the man who is now Pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church of Baltimore. Elvira's example as a thinking, loving, laughing, challenging pastoral spouse has been one of my best role models.

I pray God's choicest blessing on both dear friends. The battle is not yet over. I look forward to the great work they'll be doing.

Michael Totten-Reid
Baltimore, MD

Animal rights

A SUPERB ISSUE! Fr. Linzey is well known to and respected by many animal rightists. Our Church is painfully silent about "the innocents." Our Prayer Book has *not one prayer* devoted to non-humans! Thanks for speaking out!

Mary K. Rouillard
Ford Edward, NY

I SAID A PRAYER OF THANKS, when I read the October issue, that *The Witness* has finally gotten into the struggle for animals. Hang in there — keep it up.

Ginny Shannon
Kennett Square, PA

WHAT AN INCREDIBLE ISSUE of *The Witness* (10/93). I just discovered your magazine in the library of the church I've attended for over 50 years.

Janet Lovejoy
Carlisle, Mass.

New subscriptions

PLEASE SEND me a one-year subscription. I learned of you through your ad in "Utne Reader." I value my current subscriptions to "The Other Side," "Sojourners" and "The Plough" magazines. I'm an attender of Church of the Brethren and work for peace, social justice, and *not* taking ourselves so seriously.

Hoyt Maulden
Herndon, VA

I LOOK FORWARD TO receiving the Advent calendar — the illustration with the sheep and the conga line was enough to make me want to subscribe! I can't wait to see what the rest of the illustrations look like! Thanks for this special gift subscription promo.

Linda Strohmier
Seattle, WA

IT IS TIME FOR ME TO RETURN to *The Witness*. Being a first-time delegate to General Convention, I will need all the good help I can get!

Brian Thom, Rector
The Church of the Ascension
Twin Falls, ID

SOME YEARS AGO as an ordination gift one of my colleagues sent me a subscription to *The Witness*. I *loved* it then yet chose *Christianity and Crisis* as the journal to rest with and be informed by. I look forward to now being a subscriber to *The Witness*, espe-

Witness Awards

The Episcopal Church Publishing Company is seeking nominations from *Witness* subscribers for three awards to be presented during the General Convention in Indianapolis in August.

The awards are named in honor of William Scarlett, Bishop of Missouri from 1930-1950 and founder of the Church League for Industrial Democracy; Vida Scudder, prolific writer, educator and socialist; and William Spofford, an early and long-time editor of *The Witness* and labor activist.

Nominations should be sent by March 15.

cially because I find it helpful to think thematically and I enjoy religious artwork.

Deborah Adams
Standish, ME

In response to our promotional brochure

[We mailed a letter inviting subsc riptions to all Episcopal Clergy and former *Christianity & Crisis* subscribers. In response, several hundred new subscriptions have come in. We also recieved some vitriolic letters.]

YES! YES! YES! I was pretty impressed when I saw names like Carter Heyward, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Dorothee Solle — and oh, yes! Walter Wink and Manning Marable. But even before I saw all those names, and others, I saw what instantly — and completely — convinced me. "*The Witness* is not Anglican! It is a radical left, pagan, new age, feminist, propaganda rag!" And Dorothy Granada — I knew her when!

Casey Davis
Houston, TX

REMOVE MY NAME from your mailing. Future mailings will be considered as harassment.

Richard Watson
Newfield, NY

DROP DEAD.

Unsigned

PLEASE REMOVE MY NAME from your generic mailing list of Episcopal Clergy. I have read your publication and neither like it or agree with it. Moreover I do not like what you seem to stand for.

It is my view that the Church is currently being driven by a minority who latch on to whatever the latest secular cause happens to be. It might be women's "rights" or the homosexual scene, or racism or something else. The problem is that the leaders of these causes are so one-sided and if one disagrees with anything they say, one is branded racist or homophobic or whatever. There are actually some black people, for example, that I wouldn't like if they were snow white because it has nothing to do with color but personality. And I figured that out years ago.

But your publication seems to aid and encourage this onesidedness and this is why I don't want it. I'd rather read comics for laughs.

While it is true that there is ample evidence in the New Testament that Our Lord ministered to the poor, the sick, the lame, the outcast, et al; it is also true that he did not write one sided editorials or promote placard waving demostrations for some popular cause. What he did do was feed people's souls. I fear that your publication only feeds people's frenzies.

So I have no use for your magazine. Moreover I hate to see this trend in the Church toward jumping on every bandwagon that gets organized to support some small group that wants their 15 minutes of fame, fleeting as it may be.

What you could be doing is proclaiming the Gospel. The Gospel is that Jesus died for those who oppose abortion as well as those who want to use abortion for a birth control device. Now that would really be radical. It would also be something no one else is proclaiming in any publication I have read. It would be a refreshing change. And it would be so New Testament!

I hope this little essay convinces you to remove my name from your list.

Alwin Reiners, Jr., Rector
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Hanover Courthouse, VA

PLEASE REMOVE MY NAME from your mailing list. I consider (and have for years) your magazine to be perverting the morals and order of the church and many of your articles border on the obscene. Years ago I registered it with the Post Office as obscene and have not received any communication from you until this. It is obvious from the label that you have purchased (or been given) the mailing list of *Episcopal Life* (which I class with your publication).

Please remove my name and so inform your source!

Lewis A. Payne
Coon Rapids, MN

NO SALVATION OUTSIDE THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Unsigned

Classifieds

Conference

THE COLLEGE OF PREACHERS at the Washington National Cathedral is pleased to present, **Preaching in a Pluralist Society with Kwasi Thornell and Floyd Naters-Gamarra, March 7-11, 1994.** This conference will address how the preacher can effectively bring the Gospel message to the pluralist society in which we live. Are there differences in sermon preparation, content or style when preaching to a pluralist community? What aspects of culture and ethnicity should be included in delivering the Word of God? What resources are available to assist preachers in this task? These are among the issues to be examined with two clergy who speak to their particular communities with power and sensitivity. For more information, call the College at 202-537-6380.

Wanted

L'ARCHE SYRACUSE is an intentional Christian community where persons share their lives with persons who have developmental disability. We need mature Christians to share our life. We offer community, growth and benefits. For more details, call Robert at 315-437-9337.

Video

LIVING MEDIA IS A 60-MINUTE VIDEO that helps people who have traveled to the Third World in a human rights or outreach capacity to work with and influence the U.S. media. Tapes are $11.49 from GW Associates, 702 South Beech, Syracuse, NY 13210.

Classifieds

Classifieds now run in *The Witness.*

A section titled "Cloud of Witnesses" will provide space for photos or tributes on the anniversaries of the deaths, ordinations, acts of conscience, whatever.

The cost for ads is 75 cents a word or $30 an inch, whichever is less. Payment must accompany submissions. Deadline is the 15th of the month, two months prior to publication. For instance, an item received January 15th will run in the March issue. If you wish to include a photograph we can run them at half-column width, if you prefer.

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Find the cost of freedom

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

We can change the world,
rearrange the world,
it's dying, if you believe in justice
it's dying, if you believe in freedom
it's dying to get better.

— Chicago, *Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young*

When Clinton's bid for the presidency raised questions about whether he had smoked marijuana or avoided military service in Vietnam, a whole generation was invited to apologize for its youth.

A sudden disjuncture between our lives in this society — where we are now the teachers, the politicians, the responsible adults — and some of our early convictions seemed to be thrown into light.

Something weighty was in the balance — something was coming due. Would we at least keep silent so that it can be presumed that we are sorry?

A number of books and movies about the sixties have been released. Fashion experts are trying to resurrect bellbottoms. But most media references to the sixties have them safely packaged — an era of rebellion and youth culture.

Movies like the Big Chill have been disappointing because there is a middle class, upwardly mobile feel to the plot line and a way in which the sixties seem to have offered nothing more than a promiscuous backdrop to some long-lived friendships.

But the music. ... Some part of me walks out of the theaters wakened from a long sleep. The music throbs in my footsteps and I feel like I could lean off a high building and fly. The cellulose images fragment, but Janice Joplin, Bob Dylan, the Stones, CSN&Y — they tap a root power that will not go away.

Jay Stevens writes in *Storming Heaven*, "Strip away the decade's thick impasto of sex, drugs, rebellion, politics, music and art and what you find is a restless imperative to change, a 'will to change,' and one that could be as explanatory for the latter half of this century as Nietzsche's 'will to power' was for the first."

I have to believe that part of the problem in locating the will of the sixties now is that the root ran so deep that many of its demands have been adopted into mainstream society and commercialized.

On one hand, it's good that some of the cultural assumptions about women, people of color and ecology have changed. On the other, the packaging these ideals get in T.V. sit-coms puts a pejorative spin on something we hold sacred.

It's hard somehow to keep our vision clear when corporate supermarkets sell whole grain foods in recycled boxes. It's the right thing in the wrong wineskin. When we worked at food coops we knew that "People not profit" was the motive and that the food was revolutionary, anticipating even then the horrendous genetic engineering of food that is now showing up (unlabelled) in our grocery stores. But cruising the health food aisle right next to toxic detergents, and overpackaged, processed food equivalents — like garish blue, artificially-flavored popsicles is disjunctive. There's no whole cloth here just a drive to sell what people will buy for profit.

Beyond the ways that the opulent capitalist system has twisted sixties' ideals (which we see extending through the early seventies) to fit its own aims, there's a second weight and that is how much fear we have buried with the sixties.

I was forged in an era when people committed to justice were assassinated. The Kennedys and Martin Luther King start the chain but it goes on and on and on. In a real way those are the guideposts of my generation's life. There are ways in which we can never be naive about the deadly force behind the United States' commitment to protect corporate interests and white supremacy. It throws our analysis into high relief and that's a gift.

But deep down, outside the scope of our ideals, I wonder if there isn't a barely audible voice that says, "Don't let me die. I'll demonstrate outside the federal building, but I won't let the heat applied to the system ever reach the point again where gas and fire hoses, dogs and bullets are turned on human beings."

The articles in this issue give me chills.

Over and over again, good people quite consciously applied blazing heat to the system. They sat at lunch counters even when they had been forewarned that vigilante white youth were coming. They strategized and trusted one another even as government informants moved among them. They went up against the U.S. military machine. People died.

The stories are familiar. The telling of them is not new. They just bring the time back to life without the commercial gloss society applies. They ask us whether we could do it again. They invite us, if nothing else, to make sure our children know the sixties were serious not fashion.

And no, we won't apologize. TW

editor's note

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

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Staying power

by Carter Heyward

[The Witness introduces editorials by our contributing editors in this issue. The reflections may be within the theme.]

I am one of those fortysomething people who are grateful for the sixties. I'm thankful my spirituality, my experience and understanding of the world and God, has some tenacious roots in that period, I'm grateful for what the sixties taught me and lots of other folks about values and priorities and dreaming *big* dreams.

Three decades later some folks, including lots of sixties people, deride that moment in our recent past as a poignant one of dreams that either could never have been realized ("the age of Aquarius") or already have been (as if racism were a thing of the past). This repudiation is either a dismissal of the power of a dream or the failure to make connections between what was achieved during that turbulent decade and what was not. For people who lived during this period, or who have met it mainly through media and oral tradition, to disavow the sixties as hopelessly idealistic and culturally chaotic, or as a long ago time which is no longer ours, is to turn away from a wellspring of our most sacred power to participate in shaping our own historical moment, today.

For history is a movement, not a collage of separate pieces that can be judged apart from one another. Like Rosa Parks and Martin King and Malcolm X, we too are dynamic organisms whose lives cannot be either lived fruitfully, or assessed fairly, apart from the broader sweep of history and the communities of sisters and brothers who came before us, who will come after us, who are with us now. The meanings of the sixties do not lie behind us but rather are ours to create, for the value of a historical moment is not inherent, self-evident or static. We are creating the meaning of the sixties in the relation between then and now, them and us, ourselves and our forebears and our children.

Rather than finding a place to stand in history that is somehow "ours," a moment in which we are comfortable and from which we draw our spiritual strength through memory, or nostalgia, or repudiation, we need to help each other find ways to move and bend and change together. This is the church's spiritual work, our ethical foundation as Christians. We need to be learning, theologically, to experience time itself as movement in the life of all that is human, creaturely and divine, forever changing and always in relation to whatever has been already and whatever will be.

In the movement of God, the sixties are not over and done, and they never will be. We who are here now, in this moment, are creating the pastoral and prophetic significance of that decade by how we are living our lives today. We ourselves are responsible for whether the sixties will be remembered largely as a decade of cynicism, violence and pipedreams or as the sacred moment of a dream of justice that was and still is possible.

But to keep the dream alive, we, like Martin, must let it grow and change and become whatever it needs to become to include the well-being of those whom we didn't remember in the sixties — women and children of all colors and cultures; gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people, disabled people, the earth and its many creatures, Native people, Asian-Americans, Palestinians, most poor people and the many, many others left out of a nation's struggle for justice being waged primarily in black and white.

Thanks to Martin Luther King, Jr. and other prophets that were seeing further as the decade wore on in the context of Vietnam — a despicable war that was wearing us down — the sixties brought progressive Christians to the brink of recognizing the spiritual bankruptcy of advanced capitalism. For the next 30 years, our political economy would advance globally. Purely for profit, it would be tightening up *economic* structures of racial, sexual and class exploitation that most white middle strata liberals had barely noticed during the sixties. And this brings us to the nineties, in which every ethical issue in our life together — in the U.S. and thought the world, from healthcare to sexual violence to rainforests to children dying of hunger, is defined politically and addressed economically primarily in terms of how it upholds, or threatens, the advancement of global capitalism. What in this world are we Christians to do about this treachery? What *can* we do in the nineties?

If the sixties are alive in us as an inspiration, then we progressive Christians are being called to dream, and to let our dreams grow bigger and to make no peace with those who would thwart the dreams of a world in which *all* God's people and other creatures are sister and brothers, friends in the sacred Spirit that is our power to keep on keepin' on. We should remember however that we too are failing to see fully who is left out in this moment. Let us pray that we can live and work, struggle and celebrate, humbly, grounded forever in an openness to all that we cannot see. TW

Carter Heyward, a contributing editor to *The Witness*, is a theology professor at Episcopal Divintiy School in Cambridge, Mass.

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Into History

by Joan Aleshire

to my daughter

A child then, you knew less
than we — but not by much —
what the cloud was, filling our ground-floor rooms,
stinging our eyes, burning our skin.
You understood less why that neighbor
let loose such an expression of his rage
into our yard, and those of the other
"hippie nigger lovers" on our block.
When the police came, after months
of observing, he cowered in a bedroom
filled with guns and swastika stars.

One end of the street dead, the other
exposed to Smith's hurtle of cars,
fruit and fish markets in Spanish and
English, cut-rate furniture emporia,
botanicas and corner bodegas, gypsies
in storefronts, locations for prescription
and non-prescription drugs — the short block
would vibrate, whatever wind blew
through the city, the country in those years.

The night after the murder in Memphis,
we heard it in the pavement, feet
pounding up from Smith, pausing, thudding
on again, not in the patterns of tag
and stickball the kids carried out
in daylight, but a pace now bold,
now furtive under the vapor-light moons.
A whistle at a distance, a footfall
up close — through the slats
of the front-room blinds I saw
a human shape add itself to the shadow
of our van in front. A man or boy
set down the TV he must have carried
with difficulty, even on adrenaline,
out of a smashed window on Smith Street,
balanced beside it, crouched like a runner
waiting for the gun to start.

I called your father to watch with me;
you were asleep in the room I thought
serene: high-ceilinged, facing the backyard.
I thought it a cloister, though really
you had no distance from all the workings
of that house. One then, your father and I
stared as the street was caught at both ends
by pincers of blue light, slamming doors,
shouts. In the middle the boy — did I mention
his dark skin? — tried to surrender or make
a reflexive run. At least six white cops raised
their fists, their nightsticks
over their heads, over his, and brought them down.

Your father ran outside cursing; I was close
behind, with Mrs. Mas from next door.
Mrs. Kelly from up the block was yelling —
all the accents on the same words to stop
hitting the boy who had rolled himself small
and still they got in enough strikes
to his close-shaved head that his groans
came from us. Mrs. Mas was crying to God
in Spanish then, but your father began
a boxer's dance, taunting the cops, until two
turned from their business and threatened
to take him too. Loud, foul-mouthed —
always someone in authority would see
the danger in him, something unbound.

That night he thrilled us all, yelling insanely
for sanity in the murky night, all his rage
turned out. You ask what I remember
of then, the moments that blur
into one length we call *history*
from a distance. What's clear to me: a man
putting his head out the door, on the block,
calling the cops the motherfuckers
they were, without being asked, without
having to. Not letting those blue arms
come down unimpeded — that was someone
I loved.

Joan Aleshire is a core faculty member of the Warren Wilson MFA Program for Writers in North Carolina. She lives in rural Vermont where she operates a small community library, translates Russian poetry and writes. Aleshire has published two collections: Cloud Train, *Texas Tech Press, 1982, and* This Far, *in the* Quarterly Review of Literature, *1987.* Into History *is reprinted from the* Quarterly Review of Literature: 50th Anniversary Anthology, *ed. Theodore and Renee Weiss, Princeton, NJ 1993.*



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SDS, SNCC and the Communist Party: an interview with Michelle Gibbs

The following is an interview with Michelle Gibbs, an American artist living in Mexico. Gibbs, who was active in Students for a Democratic Society, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Freedom School Movement, was raised by communist parents. Her own political commitments and those of her parents span the century. We interviewed her recently when she had a show at a Detroit gallery.

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann: Tell me about your experience of the 1960s.

Michelle Gibbs: I was 13 years old when the sixties began. My mother and I had just moved from Chicago (in 1959) to southern California. Coming from a political family, the sixties for me were simply my generation's awakening to the same things that my parents had experienced 30 years previously.

My father left the Communist Party in 1960. He did not leave in 1956 or 1958 (during the McCarthy purges). For him, the straw that broke the camel's back was the International's position on the revolution in Algeria — which they defined as a civil war in France. For him that was the ultimate racist betrayal, so he — along with many other black people, especially internationally — found themselves breaking ties with the Communist Party.

It was a very pivotal sort of question for me, because in the sixties many people of my generation were just discovering Marxism and the organizations that sustained themselves under that banner. But I had already reached a point, by the age of 14, of being disillusioned with that particular international franchise. So for me the sixties were continuity *and* an opportunity for a new beginning to rethink what fundamental social change really meant.

In 1961, my father died. He had a cerebral hemorrhage. Up until that time I had been primarily focussing my attention on the arts — music, visual arts and literature. With his death and with the first stage of the Civil Rights Movement, I found myself painting picket signs; I traded in the piano for the guitar.



Michelle Gibbs

We were desegregating Woolworth's. I joined SNCC [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee], as well as SDS [Students for a Democratic Society] in 1962 and remained active in both organizations until 1966. This paralleled the years that I was at university.

Everything was working in sync: the institutional setting encouraging us to ask, experiment and learn and the social setting of the ferment of the times. I became involved in the Freedom School Movement. While everybody else was registering voters, we were doing freedom schools. That became very important in 1965 when Watts erupted and the major task was to channel that angry energy into some creative redefinitions of who we are and what we wanted to imagine about how our world could be.

I should also say that being from an interracial family, my attitude toward nationalism was much more complex than my contemporaries; so it was very fortunate that I was no longer a student in 1966 when SNCC had its big split, because I would have had to leave anyway. Nationalism has never appealed to me, because of my organic experience of growing up. I don't think it's a very useful purchasehold on the world, even though I understand it as a defensive reaction.

J.W-K.: Tell me about where your parents came from and how you came to be.

M.G.: My mother was the youngest of four daughters and the only one born in the United States. My grandmother, Fanny Rabinowitz, was born in Estonia of a slavic, gypsy kind of mix. She was very radical for her day and age. She left for the United States from Vilna, Lithuania where — having left her first husband — with her three daughters, she worked as a seamstress. She was hiding 1905 revolutionaries during the repression; the soldiers were on her trail. She took the boat with her three daughters as a divorced, single woman and wound up in Chicago where she met my mother's father, who was also from Vilna working as a sheetmetal worker and was very active in the Workman's Circle.

They were both Jewish. My mother's side of the family grew up in Chicago, although their cultural memory was not limited to Chicago. The Jewish culture that they kept alive was the culture of the ghetto and of the diaspora. The culture

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Michelle Gibbs left Detroit in 1980 disillusioned by the extent of the damage done by the auto industry layoffs. She and her husband, George Coleman, spent two years in Greece, then settled in Grenada, from which she was deported during the U.S. military intervention. They now live in Oaxaca, Mexico.

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was international which allowed them to remain radical throughout all the twists and turns of the Zionist movement and a variety of other more reactionary forms of Orthodox Jewish culture.

They were anarchists and by the time my mother, who was born in 1909, was 18 or 19 years old, she joined the Young Communist League. She was one of the more conservative members of her family. My Uncle Sal was an anarchist and went into hiding because he didn't want to fight in World War I.

J.W-K.: Were any of them practicing Jews? Did the faith ...

M.G.: Ethical culture, ethical culture.

Now my father's side: My father was born in Fort Worth, Texas in 1906. He was the oldest in a family of five. His family always talked about themselves being African and Indian and it wasn't until I found myself in Grenada in 1980 that I realized — because I was recognized as a Gibbs by the Gibbs of Grenada — that the Indian they were talking about was *West* Indian. And he didn't know either. Typically enough, he never knew his father.

He left home when he was 13 because he came home from school one day and opened the door and saw his mother — my grandmother, Estelle — getting raped by one of the white men she was doing laundry for. He said, "If I'm not going to kill somebody, I'd better leave." And so there is the radical disjunction in terms of his knowledge about where he came from and the less he knew about it, frankly, from his point of view, the better.

When he left at 13, he worked his way around the country and by the time he was an adult, 19 or 20 years old, he was working as a stevedore, a dockworker, in Seattle. He got organized into the Communist Party in the context of a general strike. Then he went into organizer's school and wound up in Cleveland.

In 1929, he finds himself being sent to Chicago to organize unemployed councils and that's how my parents met, putting evicted people's furniture back into their houses and fighting the cops in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

J.W-K.: When were you born?



Civil rights activists, trying to integrate a lunch counter in Jackson, Miss., in 1963, are pelted with food by white locals. Fred Blackwell via AP/Wide World Photos

M.G.: 1946. They lived together for about ten years before my father convinced my mother to get married. That was around 1941, after he had spent three years in the Spanish Civil War along with all the other male members of my family.

J.W-K.: So you arrived — and even before you did — housing must have been a problem.

M.G.: It was always a problem, always. That was the worst aspect of my growing up. It was a combination not only of what we were doing, but who we were, how we looked.

If my mother would rent an apartment, they'd say "Sure." Then the two of us would show up and they'd say "Sorry." We wound up living in store fronts, next to the gypsies, mostly on the south side of Chicago. We couldn't find jobs either, so we wound up having to go into business for ourselves and do that in a way which allowed us to maintain community ties. I grew up in the back of what used to be called variety stores. You know, basic household goods, school supplies, notions, that kind of thing.

J.W-K.: Say something about the background checks and government harassment you experienced.

M.G.: A common policy of employers was to do checks on their workers. If you were engaged in activity they found reprehensible, they let you go. That's the pattern, a very simple pattern.

My mother was a bookkeeper. She was the only one in her family who finished high school. My parents always

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encouraged me to do whatever I felt I could do, while telling me that I'd better be serious about it because I'd have to be twice as good as anybody else to get anywhere. I took everything they said very seriously, so I excelled in a lot of things. And at every point that I was recognized for my excellent achievements, whether that was being chosen as a red feather kid, a Community Chest representative, winning an essay contest or doing a prize-winning poster and getting a scholarship to the Art Institute of Chicago, they'd publish your picture in the newspaper along with the names of your parents and your address. Every time my mother would come into work the next day after something like that happened, her boss said "Oh, is this your daughter?" and of course she would say, "Yes" and they would give her her check.

J.W-K.: How did you sort that out? Did your parents help you?

M.G.: They were very honest! They said this is the world. We're sorry, this is the world that we have to live in and we have to know how to live in it. It's not our fault. We didn't make it. That's why we have to change it.

J.W-K.: A lot of people whose parents were politically active talk about being neglected ...

M.G.: I was not neglected. I never had a babysitter. Where my parents went, I went. In the forties and fifties the government had numerous agents specifically in the Communist Party and people's spouses were turning in reports. You had to be very security conscious. If anything, my parents were over-protective, because they were scared to death. You know, "Be sure to tell me where you're going, how I can reach you and when you are getting back," because everything between here and there is called threat with a capital T.

Within that context they were very careful not to make me fearful, because it was clear that we couldn't hide. They were very committed to giving me the maximum exposure to the maximum amount of choices that they could create, so that I was always with a varied group of people.

J.W-K.: What about the McCarthy times? From your vantage point, what did it look like? What was happening to your friends who were communists?



Military police, backed up by Army troops, throw back anti-war demonstrators at the Pentagon during a dmonstration in October, 1967. AP/Wide World Photos

M.G.: A lot of politically committed people 1) were losing jobs 2) were changing their names, 3) going into hiding — if not to jail or getting deported. (There were a lot of naturalized citizens who were the backbone of the radical movement in the United States. Bringing European consciousness and experience with them, they fueled the Left movement. McCarthy was busy getting rid of them — sending them back to where they came from with all deliberate speed). And so a lot of very close family and friends were either lost to us or in jail.

J.W-K.: Did people give up their political commitments?

M.G.: No, my family, no, not at all.

J.W-K.: Others?

M.G.: In some cases. The unfortunate thing is that for people who did decide that it was necessary to take the step of going into camouflage — a lot of them became Unitarians — they did not pass on the memories of the best part of their commitment to their children.

I had good friends in high school in California, whose parents (I know from my mother and some other people who were in the older generation) had been active but whose children had no idea what they had been through. Although the children were very committed, they had nothing to base their feelings on, so they had to reinvent the wheel.

J.W-K.: And even when these people watched their children going into struggle, they didn't come up with the history and offer it to them?

M.G.: Well, a spotty history, a spotty history. There was an important book that came out called *The Quarter Century of UnAmericana*. It chronicled the anti-Communist propaganda war from World War II through the early 1960s. There were materials available that they could direct their children to, without personally saying "Oh yeah, that was us!"

J.W-K.: It's hard for me to fathom.

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Stop children, what's that sound?

Black Panthers were murdered in their sleep, a civil rights worker was gunned down in her car, an American Indian Movement member saw his wife and kids burned to the ground in their home, activists of every sort heard rumors and received unsigned notes, notes threatening their safety, breathing rumors of sexual affairs and broken confidence.

It was the sixties and everyone would later learn that the U.S. government had a role in all these situations. Federal agents were wiretapping, opening mail, engaging in "disinformation" campaigns, hiring violent informers and agent provocateurs or working in tandem with vigilante groups.

In the mid-1970s when the role of the U.S. government was exposed, the public outcry forced Congress to curtail and monitor the political surveillance police.

But, lest citizens breathe easy, it is important to note that surveillance files — which traditionally document the movements of people interested in changing the policies of U.S. government or industry, generally constitutionally protected efforts — have been maintained throughout the century. When public police abuses result in public outcry, the surveillance efforts are simply passed into the hands of private investigators. Sometimes the same file boxes are carried from one location to the other. Occasionally the investigators themselves switch their public hats for private ones, never leaving the work undone.

Offering a quick history of this legacy, George Corsetti, an attorney who successfully sued the State of Michigan for the release of the "Red Squad" files in the mid-1970s, explains that from the start government police forces have been most interested in the protection of property and the establishment of order on behalf of the rich.

During World War I, Woodrow Wilson initiated all-out surveillance of Germans in the U.S., many of whom were socialists and labor organizers. Ostensibly his concern was over the number of "foreign spies." But at the close of the war, "J. Edgar Hoover, who had been responsible for compiling information on enemy aliens during the war, took over the newly created General Intelligence Division," according to Corsetti. "And Bureau authority was expanded to include investigations of anarchists, Bolsheviks and others advocating change in the government."

Public spying efforts at the beginning of the century culminated in the Palmer Raids in 1920. On one night, Bureau and Immigration agents, aided by deputized American Protective League veterans, arrested 10,000 people nationwide.

Public outrage constricted the public spying apparatus but for the next decade the private/corporate network went into overdrive.

Finally, in the mid-1930s, Congress convened hearings. The La Follette Committee reported that the list of corporations implicated in spying and harassment read "like a blue book of American industry." Private police had wiretapped phones, read personal mail, confiscated union literature, intimidated and physically abused union organizers. In addition to private police forces, the committee examined vigilante "citizen committees" established by industrialists "to do to labor on industry's behalf what the individual employer could no longer do legally."

With the private sector spy network exposed, the task shifted back into public hands. Franklin Roosevelt resurrected the FBI under the leadership of Hoover.

This trend continued through the early 1970s, culminating in the constant harassment of those active in the freedom struggle and the anti-war, women's and gay liberation movements. Literally millions of files were established and thousands of lives disrupted.

Finally, with Watergate, public outrage again restrained the government's surveillance apparatus. But in 1973 a study of demonstrations for the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration advised police: "Know their faces, addresses, cars, telephone numbers. Know the goals, strategy, and tactics of their organizations, the numbers of members, the level of their funding, and the sources of their funding."

In the early 1980s, University of Michigan social science professors were working on a similar study for the Justice Department. They were to interview participants in "collective disorders." The study targeted fast food workers trying to organize a union, Chrysler workers who vandalized an assembly line when they heard they would be laid off and Iranian demonstrators.

Lois Mock, coordinator of the Justice Department study, speculated that it might help cities formulate ordinances that would regulate protests, "so that people can't just go call a demonstration." Cities might require permits and advanced notice of the purpose of and numbers expected at a rally. She added that cities might experiment with ordinances that would put "limitations on the media."

With more subtle applications of social control the crude methods of the Klan may be less necessary to those most invested in perpetuating the current economic arrangement. But at hand, as they have been throughout the century, are vigilante groups; the private investigative agencies and provocateurs; the local police and their informers and the federal agents. — J.W-K.

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continued from page 11

M.G.: It was horribly schizophrenic, absolutely!

J.W-K.: Your parents gave you their beliefs and commitments. What accounts for the fact that you didn't rebel against your parents by rejecting their values?

M.G.: I *liked* their values! I still do. Their values have yet to be realized.

J.W-K.: Your work with SNCC and SDS was part of trying to realize their vision. What did you do next?

M.G.: I went to graduate school. I had a Woodrow Wilson and went to Brown (1966-1970) for a doctorate in American Studies. We founded an organization called the New University Conference, a national organization of socialist teachers committed to a variety of projects which obviously involved activism against the war in Vietnam and a whole redefinition of the academic universe. I was also on the national steering committee of Resist, helping draft dodgers and doing GI coffeehouses. What brought me to Detroit the first time was that we [at Resist] organized the Winter Soldier hearings in 1969. The Winter Soldier hearings were the first public testimony of returned Vietnam veterans who made the American public aware of the atrocities being committed in the name of the American government.

J.W-K.: And you decided to move to Detroit in 1970?

M.G.: I wanted to leave the United States in 1969. I was in Washington, D.C. A lot of my friends whom I worked with very closely, like Ralph Featherstone, were getting blown up by the government for simply saying what was on their mind. I said "Right, I'm going to be next — not me, no thank you." So I was ready to go to Tanzania and get a *real* education. Instead, I came to Detroit in 1969 and met a variety of people who were engaged in the organization of the most longstanding and exciting wildcat strikes since before World War II. [During that time the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM) struck Chrysler's Dodge Main plant and the League of Revolutionary Black Workers was created. A succession of strikes directed against racist practices and challenging capitalism followed at a variety of plants.]

Detroit was also one of the only major cities in the United States at the dawn of the 1970s which maintained a growing and principled multi-racial movement and that was critical to me. So the combination of the multi-racial community aspect of the movement and the line-centered plant base of the movement convinced me that it was worthwhile giving the United States another chance to see what we could do in Detroit. So I came to Detroit, because it was the only context in the United States in which we could work.

Because the movement was based in the south — it was possible to sustain community. It was possible to give a political voice to all those strengths that had allowed people to survive so long. That's something that students from the north learned from those that they went to help. If we can't all come up together, ain't none of us coming up.

J.W-K.: And?

M.G.: And there was an internal split in the League of Revolutionary Black Workers — one part became the Black Workers' Congress and the other part became the Communist Labor Party (which to my way of thinking was more of a sect than a movement). I got involved in the Congress. Then — I don't want to get into this because it's very convoluted organizational history — but to make a long story short, Ken Cockrel, Greg Hicks, Ted Spearman and I were purged from the Black Workers' Congress and went on to found the Labor Defense Coalition.

We felt the primary problem in the early 1970s in Detroit for the black community took the form of STRESS [Stop Robberies Enjoy Safe Streets, a decoy police unit that was responsible for shooting members of the black community point blank]. We were doing the State Emergency Committee and other things. We helped elect Coleman Young who forced at least some initial reforms in the Police Department and got the pigs off our back for a minute.

I continued to work with Ken Cockrell in one form or another until 1980. I was on the steering committee of DARE (Detroit Alliance for a Rational Economy). And in the mid-1970s, because I was tired of the male chauvinism of the movement, I had become increasingly committed to the women's movement nationally. So I spent a lot of time outside Detroit working in the women's movement and a lot of time inside Detroit fighting the cops.

J.W-K.: Any thoughts on what we could have done differently in the 1960s?

M.G.: I think much of the energy of the sixties was fueled not so much by commitment as it was by charismatic leadership. And to the extent that those charismatic leaders were ego-driven and encouraged a similar style of behavior, I think it was self-defeating.

What happened after the heroic period of the early sixties in the south is that, to my way of thinking, individuals — pri-

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marily male — rose to prominence in ways that they understood the media would appreciate and that in turn produced not only styles of behavior, but styles of organization and internal conflicts within organizations.

An offshoot of this particular problem as I see it, was that, many people felt that personal transformation could wait. Eldridge could beat up Kathleen but when we get on the barricades we're all together. Well that doesn't work. I mean, that kind of personal-political schizophrenia builds in an internal conflict which is psychologically self-destructive.

Now there is the other portion of the sixties movement, of course, which goes by various names — the hippies, the rainbow people, the alternative lifestyle movement — which went to the other extreme and said that personal *expression* is everything and the structures will follow. That resulted in some very pristine enclaves, usually in the country, which may have saved some people from madness, but — in terms of overall effectiveness — only communicated a desire for personal pleasure at the expense of the body politic. Its expression in sexual terms is one of the things that has produced the AIDS epidemic.

JWK: Say a little more about that, because at the time the idea was that active sexuality was a rebellion against ...

MG: ... proletarianism, anybody over 30, Protestant repression, the Calvinist ethic, all those kinds of things. Fine, we went too far. They were rebelling against everything except the cornerstone of capitalism, which is individualism!

JWK: How does one rightly deal with individualism? What's the alternative?

MG: Well, most of the people in the world do not believe in individualism and don't have the luxury or even the idea that this is how people should act. In the early days of the sixties — and because the movement was based in the south — it was possible to sustain community. It was possible to give a political voice to all those strengths that had allowed people to survive so long, without the vote and on plantations with no health care, because they had that fundamental sense of needing to care for each other if they were going to survive. That's something that students from the north learned from those that they went to help. If we can't all come up together, ain't none of us coming up. TW

Right to kill?

Let us ask ourselves honest questions. How many Americans have not assumed — with approval — that the CIA was probably trying to find a way to assassinate Castro? How many would not applaud if the CIA succeeded? ... Have we not become conditioned to the notion that we should have a secret agency of government — the CIA — with secret funds, to wield the dagger beneath the cloak against leaders we dislike? Even some of our best young liberal intellectuals can see nothing wrong in this picture except that the "operational" functions of [the] CIA should be kept separate from its intelligence evaluations! ... Where the right to kill is so universally accepted, we should not be surprised if our young President was slain.

—I.F. Stone in his *Weekly* immediately after Kennedy's assassination, as quoted in *The Nation, 11/29/93*

Marketing War

All foreign policy post-Vietnam has been in terms of Vietnam, of resolving one or another sometimes very specific, sometimes quite general questions raised by the Vietnam War. One of the stunning consequences of the Vietnam War was that most Americans were reluctant to see American troops go abroad to fight for dubious causes.

To overcome that reluctance the Reagan and Bush administrations consistently offered, as a kind of homeopathic medicine, a little dose of war to get people used to it. That's what Grenada was. Grenada tested press censorship. It was totally successful. You go in to Jones Beach, some little resort place. You overwhelm it with force. You keep the press out. And you succeed. We don't know what's going on in Grenada now, what we've done there.

Panama was another instance, the bombing of Libya another. And of course the Gulf War brought the possibility of testing out everything that the military and the Republican administrations had learned from Vietnam.

What you do is market a war. Never mind what it's for. So we saw a war being marketed on TV, in an MTV mode. Each network had its own logo for the Gulf War, its own music, its own jump cut. ...

You kept the peace movement ashamed by reminding them that they didn't support our boys in Vietnam. Here you had numbers of people of the Left saying, 'We're against the war but we support our boys.' Of course you don't want American soldiers to die, you want them to come home. But to say you support our boys but not the war is such a schizophrenic statement that it could only disable the Left.

Then you terrify the press. The press lost the Vietnam War. Not only do you censor it, but you scare them. The result was the worst reporting of any war that could be imagined.

— Marilyn Young, author of *The Vietnam Wars: 1945-1990*, interviewed by David Barsamian, *Z Magazine, 11/93*

short takes

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No Draft! No War!

by John Bach

[John Bach has the distinction of having served the second longest prison sentence for refusing to serve in Vietnam. He He was 21 years old in 1969, when his sentence began. He was released in 1972. The following is his account, written to a friend in 1970, of how he spent some of his time in the Allenwood Federal Prison Camp in Pennsylvania.]

The State of Connecticut recently sent me eight dollars as a reimbursement for clothing which was "lost" while I was in a state jail. After 13 months, forms filled out in triplicate and notarized, and a series of claims and letters, I finally received the check from the Department of Claims for the State of Connecticut. I had appraised the clothing's value at ten bucks, so the eight didn't disappoint me. Anyway I felt a bit hesitant about spending state money on myself. It was so nice and unexpected of Connecticut to reimburse me, the least I could do was to share the good fortune.

The day after the money was received, circulars were distributed: "Announcing: A Gala Celebration; the First Annual Allenwood Bastille Day Festival. July 14th, Tuesday. Before the news or maybe right after the news; between the dorms or (in case of a croquet match) behind dorm #5. Ice cream, cookies galore; limited cokes. Contests, prizes, surprises. A good time for all is guaranteed. Sponsored by the Department of Claims for the State of Connecticut."

The word did spread and interest was generated. Nobody was too sure what the hell a "Bastille Day Festival" was, and besides which circulated announcements



John Bach

originating outside the Control Center are unheard-of and strictly prohibited. The Quatorze Juillet arrived, ten bucks of ice cream, cookies, and cokes were liberated from the commissary, verbal invitations to all passers-by were given, and the goodies were opened. One quick verse of the "Marseillaise" was sung (badly, but it was Bastille Day after all). It was predominantly a C.O. [Conscientious Objector] affair — who but those "crazy fucking kids" would do something like that anyway? — but there was a good cross-section of blacks, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Italians, and even one Black Muslim whom I've gotten to know pretty well.

It was a beautiful little affair: the weather was perfect, right out in the open, everybody sharing the limited refreshments, men who didn't ordinarily get together were rapping; a good rejuvenation of community spirit among men who were being systematically divested of all communally oriented activity.

In the center of the camp, willingly under the scrutiny of the hackery, good vibrations were emanating and other guys came over to see what was going on. The event was continued long after the food gave out; a touch football game, sustained conversation — a sense of community, of togetherness, of commonality was definitely discernible and that, too, was realized on everyone's part. Those who were looking for a chance to open up found others listening to mutual problems and sharing personal strengths. Things of this sort are not supposed to happen in prisons which are run on the premise of inmate disunity, and the authorities were noticeably upset. It was a joy-giving affair and a number of us with some over-view were thrilled to see the members of various cliques, normally self-segregating, getting together. What would have been a less significant event in the street took on major proportions in an environment where men who showed any community concern faced stern repression. What a trip! And, if only for an hour or two, how effete and unimportant our imprisonment appeared. Men realized they could still be men, open and to some extent freed from the prison expletive which decreed No Brotherhood.

I was called in to the Control Center the next morning, and asked if I had "organized" the "compound meeting." I was told that it was strictly prohibited and if it happened again I would be subject to harsh disciplinary treatment.

I was once asked by a correspondent whether incarceration had given me a new perspective on freedom. I remember answering that in even the most constrictive of environments resistance is always possible, and as long as that flame remains intact the free man can never be shackled or scarred. There's more truth in that than I realized at the time. The fact is, I am a free man, and I've gained yet one

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John Bach is currently a father and a house painter in Hartford, Conn. He's a regular, if unwelcome, visitor at the U.S. Navy installation (from which nuclear submarines are launched) in Groton, Conn.

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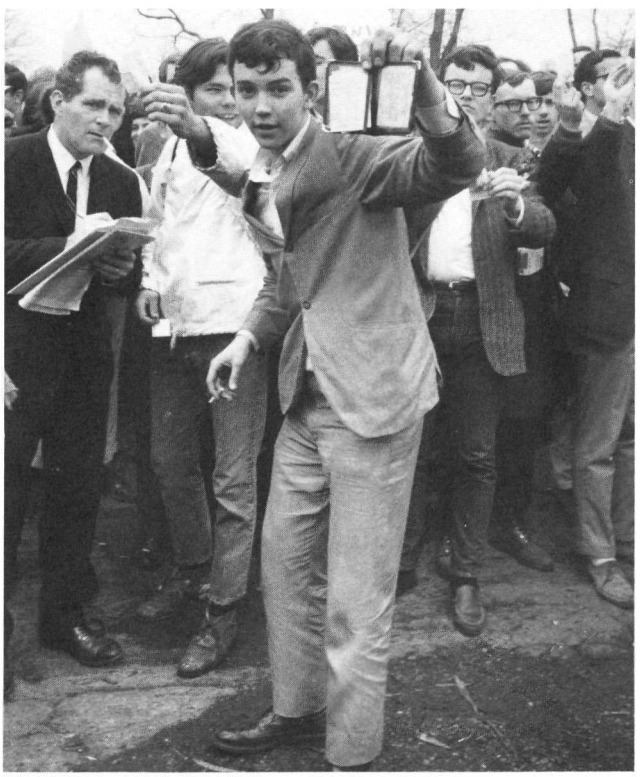
more insight into Thoreau, Gandhi, King, Nehru, and others. There are times when my joy is irrepressible.

But there is another side to the proverbial coin.

"April," wrote T.S. Eliot, "is the cruelest month." "Amen," I say. Just when you think you've got it licked, just when you've settled down into a winter's schedule, started on improving your French, doing some serious writing, teaching and seeing progress, re-reading Shakespeare — a play every two days; just when you think you got it licked, just when things seem to be cracking right along, Father Sun appears for the spring solstice and the omnipresent renaissance hammers home the fact that you're living your life up against the wall, and that only a dog would tolerate such an existence.

There's a record player here accessible to the whole population. Saturday afternoons have always been a very peculiar period of time for me. It was a time for reflection: remembrances of things past, of good times, of easy time, of stirred memories through association — music as the catalyst. Saturday was the one afternoon when a few of the C.O.'s and druggies could liberate the record room from the "Temptations-Supremes" contingent, and for a few hours groove to folk music and hard rock: the music with which we identify, the music which encompasses, music through which we commune. It's all there: Dylan, Baez, Stones, Beatles, Joplin, etc., more than enough to provide a long afternoon's digression with a good deal of pleasant variety.

Talk would be sporadic, not much conversation, most communication would be limited to the seconds between cuts and in between record changes. A familiar record of three years ago would bring with it as many different and colorful memories as there were listeners in the room. A time for shared happiness among the four to ten brothers who took part in the weekly ritual. For me, and I'm sure for the others, the music evoked memories of the times most enjoyable; times when we were the happiest; times of almost wild mental freedom. I think that's the way associative memory is formed:



A draft card burning in Central Park on April 15, 1967.
AP/Wide World Photos

the event will put a stamp on the accompanying music. Most of us had hitchhiked — a whole cerebrum of experience and associative memory. Only the most poignant remembrances surfaced. So we would talk, laugh, share. But there was, at the same time, indisputably, a specter present.

At times the music continued, undisturbed by lengthy silences; a tonal atmosphere permeated the room and was recognized by each. We all sat — on chairs, tables, the floor — almost all looking down at his shoes, an inscrutable frown or grin on each face. Music brought memories, memories of what we were now deprived of. The beautiful associations were turned back upon us. Each was fully conscious of the infinite absences (wives, girlfriends, horizons). There was no self-pity, no bitterness about being in prison, just a pervasive feeling of what was being missed.

Examples: for me parts of Dylan brought memories of a warm bed and an exceptional woman at Sara Lawrence. Some Beatles paint late night pictures of doing papers in Wesleyan; The Grateful Dead stirs memories of my Haight Ashbury trek; the throbbing beat of the Stones is an inner implosion of myself in all directions.

One Saturday afternoon there were only two of us present. We played a cut which I had heard live in Haight Ashbury, and during the next recording my mind flashed back to some beautiful rapping sessions Chris and I conducted while stoned. The other guy left the room for a moment to get some more cigarettes. I settled back, closed my eyes, and memories flashed by. I became very aware of a change that broke over me like a slow, cold wave. I was alone. I found a pack of Camels under a table and I smoked four in rapid succession. They got me quite high; I was bound into the music and memories; I could hear every separate instrument in spite of the frenzied pace at which they were played. Haight Ashbury came back; Susan came back; Chris came back; the European vagabondage came back. Prison came back. The expected train of thought came: "Two years, Oh, Jesus Christ, two more years — all that time." TW

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Black power and church reparations

by Paul Washington

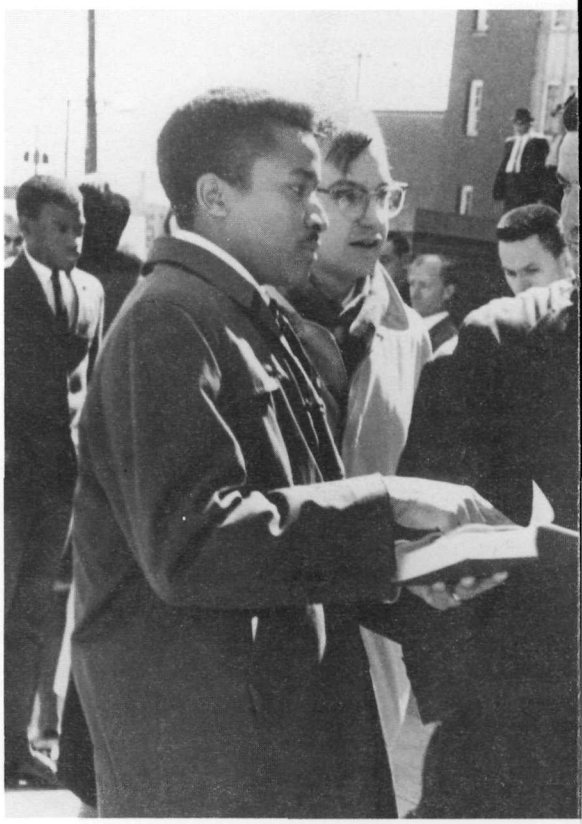
The next phase of the Black Power movement was inaugurated early in 1969, when James Forman, a civil rights veteran of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, walked down the aisle of New York City's Riverside Church during a Sunday service to demand a payment of "reparations" to black Americans. The case for reparations had been made in the document called "The Black Manifesto," which used the language of socialist revolution ("revolution which will be an armed confrontation and long years of sustained guerilla warfare inside this country") but presented what amounted to a modest proposal for reform based on the undeniable fact that exploited black Americans needed capital: "for the establishment of cooperative businesses ... a Southern Land Bank ... publishing and printing industries ... a research skills center.

"We the black people assembled in Detroit, Michigan for the National Black Economic Development Conference are fully aware that we have been forced to come together because racist white America has exploited our resources, our minds, our bodies, our labor. For centuries we have been forced to live as colonized people inside the United States, victimized by the most vicious racist system in the world. We have helped to build the most industrial country in the world."

Both the Manifesto, with its frightening rhetoric, and Forman's dramatic challenge to white church-going America had tremendous shock value. The media was more than ready to publicize this campaign for as long as members of the Black Economic Development Conference (BEDC) could keep walking down church aisles, forcing white church people to struggle with their consciences. Was this extortion, plain and simple, or was it a prophetic call to move beyond charity to a just sharing of resources with those who had been shut out of the system for so long? I heard it as prophecy.

Surely something was owed to a people who had been enslaved, set free, yet never given the "40 acres and a mule" they had been promised as their stake in the economy. Instead they had been further exploited under all the many forms of racial discrimination to this day. Now was the time to pay what was owed to those whose labor had first been stolen from them and then systematically undervalued for generations. The debt should be paid with no strings attached, in order to enable black control of economic and social institutions in the black community. If the church could not understand the moral basis of this claim for reparations, it seemed clear to me it would once more be rejecting the prophets in its midst. ...

On May 1st, James Forman had gone to the Episcopal Church Center in New



Students attempting to integrate a Methodist church in Ja policy prohibits segregation.

"We are demanding of the white Christian churches and Jewish synagogues which are part and parcel of the system of capitalism, that they begin to pay reparations to black people in this country. We are demanding $500,000,000 from the Christian white churches and the Jewish synagogues. This total comes to 15 dollars per nigger."

— The Black Manifesto, *issued, April, 1969*

Paul Washington is an Episcopal priest, participant in the freedom struggle and was host of the 1973 ordination of women at the Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia. An expanded version of this article will be included in his book, *"Other Sheep I Have": The autobiography of Fr. Paul M. Washington* which will be released by Temple University in May, 1994.

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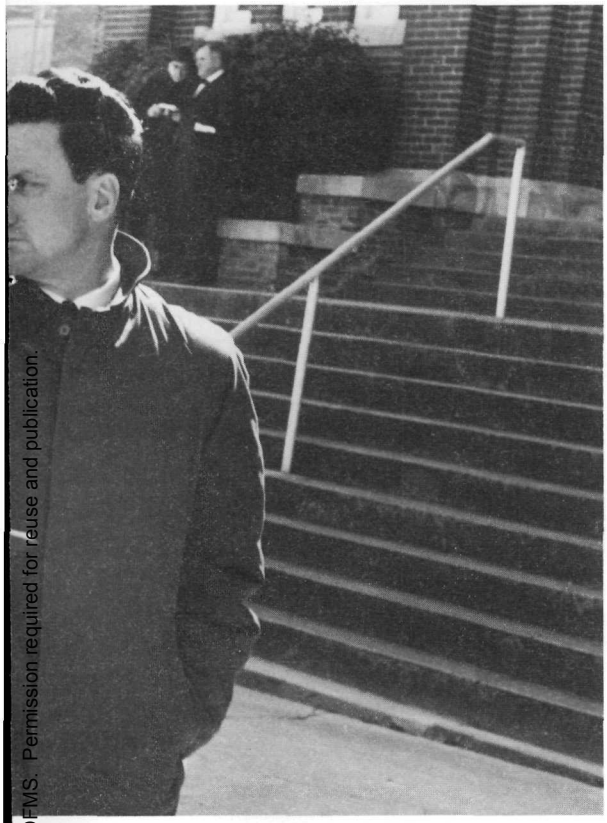

ıckson, Miss. in 1966 point out to an usher that Methodist

Jim West

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York City to present the Manifesto's demands. On May 13th he wrote to Presiding Bishop John Hines demanding 60 million dollars, plus 60 percent of the church's profit on assets each year, along with an accounting of the total assets of the Episcopal Church in all its dioceses. John Booty, in *The Episcopal Church in Crisis,* writes about the siege atmosphere that developed among church leaders as "plans were made, in cooperation with civic officials, for dealing with the possibility of unfriendly occupations of churches and church offices." [Booty, p. 61] By contrast, Bishop DeWitt suggested a positive response to the demands: Why not mortgage the Episcopal Church Center itself to raise a significant amount of money for the purpose? And as for the demonstrations, disruptions, and occupations of sacred places, why not value them as modern day examples of the prophetic acts we so cherish in the Biblical tradition? The bishop's enthusiasm is evident in his description of this movement years later:

"And then came the Black Manifesto, and its demand for reparations for generations of injustice done to Black people by Whites. It was a bold, imaginative effort. And bold and imaginative was the local spokesperson for the Black Manifesto, Muhammed Kenyatta. I will never forget when he intruded into a communion service at Holy Trinity, Rittenhouse Square. After interrupting the service and speaking to the demands of the Manifesto, he strode to the altar and picked up the alms basin. He flung the money on the floor of the sanctuary, dramatizing the sacrilege of a religious offering to God which belied and denied the weighty matters of the Law of God, such as racial justice. That was religious poetry acted out, worthy of a Jeremiah." [*Witness,* July, 1984, p.7.] Perhaps I don't need to add that the Rev. Cuthbert Pratt, Rector of Holy Trinity, did not appreciate the poetry. ...

Presiding Bishop John Hines called a special convention of the Episcopal Church for August 31-Sept. 5, 1969, in Notre Dame, Indiana. The convention was to deal with more than just the issues being raised by BEDC. At the 1967 General Convention in Seattle it was decided that more frequent meetings were needed "in this age of ceaseless change." It was the late 60s. A war was going on overseas, there were racial rebellions in the cities, and issues of justice were being raised within the church by racial minorities and by women.

As an elected deputy to General Convention from the Diocese of Pennsylvania I was in Seattle in 1967, where I was deeply impressed by the leadership of John Hines, who had gone out into the streets and neighborhoods of the cities which had exploded, in order to listen to the people there describe their own hopes and fears. The General Convention Special Program (GCSP), which was authorized in 1967 to give grants to community organizations to assist them in achieving some degree of political and economic power, had my full support. It had the flavor of a new age in which each person would know that he/she was a child of God and entitled to the good things of God.

Yet, when the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church issued its "Response to the Manifesto" on May 21, 1969, indicating that it would simply continue the work of GCSP, I believed that was not enough. I went to Notre Dame as a deputy, committed to assist Kenyatta in his demand for recognition of BEDC by the church and the payment of reparations to that body.

Matters quickly came to a head at the Sunday night opening plenary session when Kenyatta seized the microphone from the chairman of the Committee on Clergy Deployment as he was making a committee report. A tussle ensued, involving the Presiding Bishop, who tried to take the microphone back.

Now was the time to pay what was owed to those whose labor had first been stolen from them and then systematically undervalued for generations.

I was late for this plenary session, having been in a meeting of the black caucus of the convention. We were discussing the refusal of the chairs of the two houses of convention to place a report

dealing with the reparations issue early enough on the agenda to allow it a full hearing. A small group of us, including Barbara Harris and the Rev. Jesse Anderson, Jr., entered the top level of the stadium together.

Looking down to the stage below, we saw Kenyatta taking the microphone away from the Presiding Bishop. We immediately descended to the floor level alongside the stage. Never before and perhaps never again in the history of the church will we see a presiding bishop tussling with a dashiki-clad black man in a plenary session of a general convention!

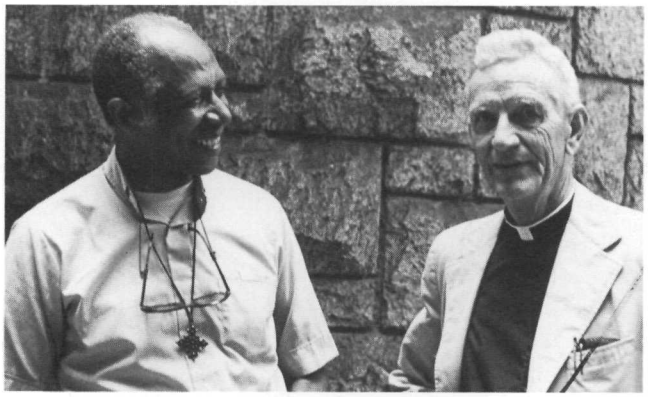
Jesse Anderson, Sr., ascended to the platform and addressed Bishop Hines. He said that Washington was a deputy to this convention and he asked for permission for me to speak. I was totally unprepared to speak in the midst of this confusion — nay, chaos — and I turned to young Jesse Anderson and asked him in desperation: "What must I say?" He quickly replied: "Call all black people to leave this convention."

Meanwhile, Bishop Hines was putting the question to the joint houses of the Convention there assembled: "Shall we allow Fr. Washington to speak?" After a quick show of hands, he immediately ruled that the answer was Yes, and I had the floor.

Never before in all my life had I been called upon to muster up the authority of voice, the power of spirit, and the stature (in that moment I grew from 5'9", 155 lbs., to 7', 290 lbs.) to move people to an action which no one had time to cerebralize. If they had, they would have thought about how blacks had waited a lifetime in the church to be deputies to General Convention, and now here was a Fr. Washington commending them to leave the place for which they had longed!

I can remember only saying : "White people cannot set the agenda for this church. Black people must set the agenda for this church and for this nation. And since you refuse to deal with our agenda, I have no choice but to call upon all blacks to leave this convention."

With that said, I stormed from the platform and started climbing tier by tier to the top level of the stadium to the exit. This was the loneliest and the longest walk of my life.



Paul Washington and Bob Dewitt, advocates of church reparations to African Americans.

Barbara Harris was at my left, the two Jesse Andersons and a few others followed, but I was pleadingly asking myself, "Will the blacks follow? Lord, will they follow?" If they did not, the name of Paul Washington would have gone down in disgrace. He dared to presume to lead and found no followers! But young Jesse Anderson and his father were looking to the right and to the left and commending: "You all come, come! Get up, come!" It was a dramatic, moving moment. Enough so that some felt impelled to move out with us.

Not only did enough blacks follow, but some whites also. We had precipitated a crisis, enough of a crisis to cause Bishop Hines and the Rev. John Coburn, chairman of the House of Deputies, to meet immediately after that joint session and decide to place our issue on the agenda the very next morning.

In an open hearing on Monday, the convention discussed the recommendations of a committee chaired by John Coburn which said that BEDC should channel any requests for money from the Episcopal Church through the GCSP, which had been established for that very purpose. That seemed reasonable enough to some, but it did not meet the approval of the Union of Black Clergy and Laity in the Episcopal Church (UBCL) or other supporters of BEDC. After all, BEDC was not coming with requests but with demands for reparations, and in an amount that would be beyond the capacity of GCSP.

UBCL spokesperson, the Rev. Joseph Pelham, asked that $200,000 be given immediately to BEDC and that a process of dialogue be established leading to making further church resources available, and that this be done in a way that did not reduce the church's responsibility to fully fund GCSP.

The $200,000 would be for administrative and devel-

The final action of the special convention on this matter was to vote the $200,000, not as reparations but as seed money. The story that appeared in the Chicago Tribune on Thursday morning had the sub-heading "Church Unit Votes Reparations." It appeared that Thoreau was right when he said that "a moral minority can precipitate a revolution."

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opment expenses of BEDC nationally, — seed money, in effect.

Discussion from the floor revealed strong support on the part of some, including a white lay delegate who said he acknowledged the debt and was making a personal pledge of $1,000.

Opposition came from those like Bishop Stuart Wetmore of New York, who said, "Jim Forman is seeking our guilt money. ...We should not play the game of trying to buy him off." Others expressed confusion about BEDC. Was it a reliable organization? Was it violent, as the prologue to the Black Manifesto seemed to indicate? (Kenyatta had said that people could write their own prologue using biblical texts to replace James Forman's words.) What would the people back home make of the delegates' actions here in Notre Dame? How could they understand what was going on here?

The final action of the special convention on this matter was to vote the $200,000, not as reparations but as seed money. The money would not even go directly to BEDC but would be channeled through the National Committee of Black Churchmen, a group with recognizable and respected members from various Christian denominations.

In spite of all this maneuvering, the story that appeared in the Chicago Tribune on Thursday morning had the subheading "Church Unit Votes Reparations." It appeared that Thoreau was right when he said that "a moral minority can precipitate a revolution." For the Episcopal Church to have voted to respond even to the tune of $200,000 because of a moral imperative it was forced to confront by a miniscule Union of Black Clergy and Laity did seem revolutionary to some.

The session of convention held on Tuesday evening was the most remarkable of all. It was a time of debate on BEDC and related issues when Black convention delegates announced our intention to remain silent. Joseph Pelham said: "We have made our positions quite clear. This is your debate. We will sit and listen and watch very carefully." The result was a session during which white delegates experienced a relationship with black church members never known before. At the close, I had been selected to rise and speak a final word on behalf of the black delegates.

I told the white people in that hall that in all love and gentleness we had offered them an opportunity to rise up as men of God, but that they had been afraid to love, afraid of freedom, afraid to be beautiful. I told them that I pitied them. In their dealings with me it was as if they had tried to squeeze me a little bit too hard and I had slipped through their hands.

They still had a chance for greatness, I said. If they took it I knew it would mean they would go home to be crucified, but in doing that they could follow in the steps of Jesus.

After Notre Dame there was backlash in the church. Even the appearance of the church yielding to the reparations demand caused some to leave the church and others to cut their giving to the church's national programs. John Booty explains the motives of the critics: "Some of those reacting against Notre Dame revealed strong racial prejudice. Others were reacting to what they saw as rampant liberalism." [Booty, pp. 61-2] But neither liberals nor conservatives were pleased with the outcome. The demand for reparations had been neither accepted nor clearly rejected. The desire in the hearts of many to take seriously the commands of the Bible as framed in the Prayer Book's call for restitution was frustrated on the one hand by fear and racist attitudes and on the other by the limitations of the instrument that had been offered to enable restitution for acknowledged injuries and wrongs. TW

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Revolutionary art

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

It has become a cliché to speak of the period we call the "Sixties" as a time of revolution, but the visual artworld, certainly, was in turmoil. Artists were searching for new ways to connect their work to contemporary issues.

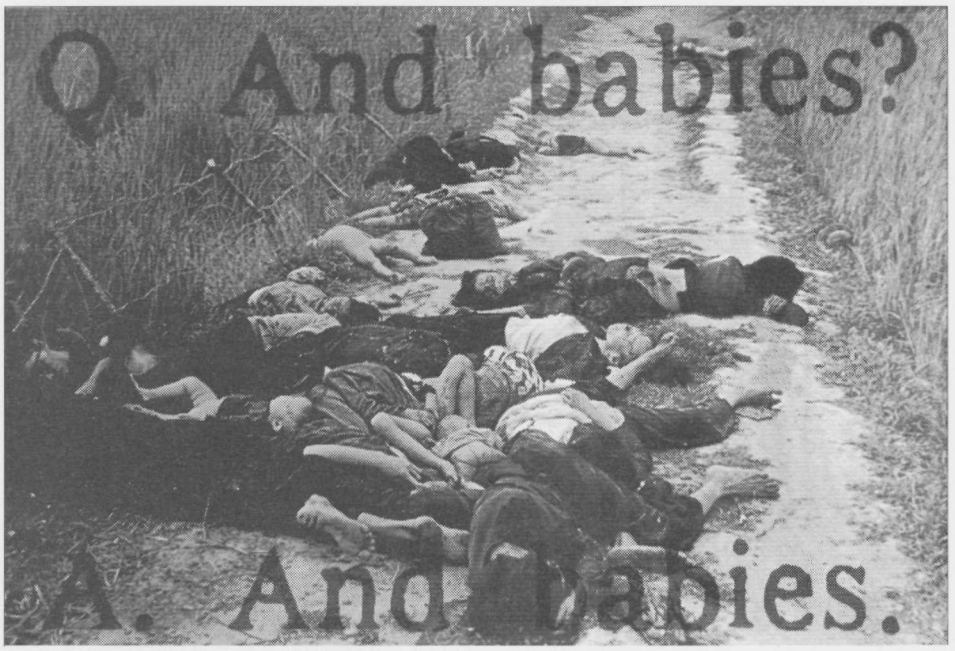
In retrospect, two seemingly opposite approaches to artmaking have become particularly emblematic of the sixties' struggles. One strove to bring mainstream culture into the museums; the other strove to move art out of the museums into the arena of everyday life.

Andy Warhol was perhaps the best known of the artists who chose the first approach. His "Pop Art" Brillo box sculptures and Campbell's soup can paintings became as ubiquitous in the halls of culture as the original products were on the supermarket shelves. What had begun in 1962 as a deadpan comment on the state of contemporary painting became a critique of consumerism on all levels.

Warhol's commentary on the political and social milieu of the decade became even more blunt when he applied his matter-of-fact, repetitive style to images of electric chairs, car wrecks and the JFK assassination. "Pop art's indifference to humanity seemed most shocking when it dealt with the human figure," observed art historian Irving Sandler in *American Art of the 1960s*, "It was perverse enough when it focused on objects; worse, on commodities ... but unforgivable when it equated man with a soup can."

In contrast, some activist artists, not satisified with exhibiting on the sheltered walls of galleries and museums, began collaborating to bring their images to a wider public. In 1969, one group came together as the Art Workers' Coalition. Much of their activity centered around confronting the powerful museums, galleries, critics, art magazines and collectors that they perceived as getting in the way — "intervening," in Hilton Kramer's words in the *New York Times*, "between the production of a work of art and its meaningful consumption." Perhaps their most successful circumvention of this regulated system of distribution took place through the efforts of their poster committee. Frazer Dougherty, Jon Hendricks and Irving Petlin combined an army photograph of the 1968 My Lai massacre (taken by R.I. Haeberle for *Life*), with words taken from an interview about the carnage by Mike Wallace with a Vietnam veteran — the question "And babies?" — hovering in red at the top. The soldier's reply, "And babies," underscores the bloody image. The widely disseminated poster became a well-known icon for the anti-war movement.

Ironically, the Museum of Modern Art now holds in its collection examples of both Andy Warhol's soup cans and the Art Workers' Coalition poster: Ironic, first, because so selective an institution was forced to legitimize grand-scale images of commercial products as the high art of the decade; second, because, at the time of its issuance, the poster had been considered too blatantly political for co-sponsorship by the museum, which flatly refused to associate its name with the project. TW



Poster by the Artworkers' Coalition, 1970

Courtesy of the artists

art and society

Blaise Tobia and **Virginia Maksymowicz,** Philadelphia artists, edit the Art & Society Section of *The Witness.*

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Indianapolis '94

Still addressing sin

by Julie A. Wortman

Sparked by Arizona voters' refusal to approve a state holiday honoring Martin Luther King, the 1991 General Convention held in Phoenix was to have been an occasion for the Episcopal Church to acknowledge and address its own institutional racism. But — except for loud grumblings over allegedly "pagan" elements in a worship service led by native peoples — sex, not racial and ethnic differences, generally commanded center stage at that long, hot, controversy-ridden gathering three years ago.

Some, in fact, suspected this was not accidental. An evening plenary session on participants' racial attitudes was nearly knocked off the schedule entirely because of what were identified as logistical problems. And, although a "racism audit" of bishops, deputies, delegates to the triennial meeting of Episcopal Church Women and others indicated that most were very willing to fight white racism, the audit also revealed that significant numbers were flatly reluctant to acknowledge racism's presence in, or importance to, the Episcopal Church.

Still, several strong anti-racism resolutions were passed in 1991. Based on a theological statement developed by the church's fledgling three-year-old national Commission on Racism that called white institutional racism one of society's "idols," deputies and bishops condemned the practice of racism as a sin. Another resolution urged greater racial diversity in the membership of church bodies and the creation of diocesan anti-racism commissions or committees. A third asked the church to make combatting institutional racism an Episcopal Church priority for at least the next nine years.

Unlike the church's programmatic, grant-making response to the demands for racial justice and empowerment in the late 1960s, the focus in Phoenix was institutional reform and confessional repentance, a shift responsive to reactionary claims that social-justice concerns are too political and "issues-oriented" for God-fearing folk to take seriously.

"Our work is not a program," stresses Richard Aguilar, the Commission on Racism's co-chair. "Racism is ultimately a spirituality issue. It is an alienation that inhibits us from being God's people."

Emmett Jarett, president of the Episcopal Urban Caucus, a group formed in 1980 to address the needs of city people and parishes, agrees. "The life of prayer and working for justice is one life," he says. "We want to get away from the typical liberal attitude that we shouldn't mention Jesus — Jesus is in the midst of the social-justice struggle."

The Caucus will be using its 1994 Assembly in Charlotte, N.C., this February to develop an "Anti-Racist Spirituality," which it plans to publish in time for the 1994 convention. A featured speaker will be English "community theologian" Kenneth Leech. The group is also working on defining racism in a way that includes, in addition to African Americans, Hispanics, Asians and native peoples.

As for what type of anti-racism legislation to expect in Indianapolis, Aguilar expects a lot of collaboration between groups focusing on such matters as environmental stewardship, economic justice, women, and cities as a result of networking efforts begun last summer.

"Passage of a resolution can give you space to operate," says Henry Atkins, Episcopal Chaplain at New Jersey's Rutgers University and another member of the national racism commission. "If we hadn't passed a resolution in Phoenix urging dioceses to form their own anti-racism commissions, the diocesan consultations our commission did this past triennium would not have happened."

Since Phoenix, the Commission on Racism has consulted with more than 80 of the 99 domestic dioceses on how they can begin their anti-racism efforts.

Still, only about 50 dioceses have gotten much beyond the initial organizational stage, says Sarah McCrory, the commission's other co-chair. Based on a survey of newspapers published in 57 dioceses, she has the impression that "about 20 are doing something, 20 are piddling around and 10 to 15 don't believe [racism] is an issue." McCrory, who characterizes herself as "a typical white southern lady," says her own home diocese of Upper South Carolina is doing very little to address institutional racism because there, as in many

Indianapolis '94?

Every three years (or triennium) the Epsicopal Church's bishops and elected lay and ordained diocesan representatives (called deputies) convene in "General Convention" to address the vital matters before it, from ailing church finances to strategies for economic justice. The next General Convention will be held this year in Indianapolis, Ind., from August 24 until September 2.

The commissions and committees (called interim bodies) appointed to implement the decisions made at the 1991 General Convention (held in Phoenix, Ariz.), and the church's elected Executive Council (which acts on matters that come before the national church between General Conventions), will report on their work and offer resolutions that stem from that work for action. Bishops, dioceses and diocesan deputies may also present resolutions for consideration.

As currently structured, the General Convention meets in two separate legislative bodies, the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops. As with the U.S. Congress, resolutions must pass in both houses in the same form before becoming an official action of the church.

As with any such meeting, numerous groups and persons throng the corridors and vigil at the edges of the debate in each house, agitating for support of their positions, views and concerns. Special panels and presentations are sometimes made to joint sessions of deputies and bishops as a means of sharing information or provoking thought and discussion.

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dioceses across the church, "not many people have a consciousness of institutional white racism."

Atkins says another stumbling block is that most diocesan leaders lack the tools needed for addressing racism effectively.

"Most bishops really want to address the issue, but most dioceses do not have people with the analysis of what needs to be done. Social-analysis types are thought of as fringe types in most places, so they are not part of the planning of anti-racism strategies. There is also an unfortunate estrangement between the church and groups that are engaged in the struggle — like the NAACP, for example."

But Atkins and others do see positive results from the anti-racism "training" work some dioceses, notably Massachusetts and Los Angeles, have begun.

"Anti-racism training has three stages," Atkins explains. "First, the training helps people expand their awareness so that they understand that we are talking about more than individual prejudice and bias and that it is not true that all we need to do is clean up our individual acts. Then comes the stage of moving to concrete action, whether it is paying attention to the music in worship, the artwork on the walls or spending your money on minority contractors. The third stage is evaluating how well you've done."

Most everyone seems to agree that if anti-racism efforts are to succeed, the focus has to be on congregational attitudes. The national racism commission's Aguilar points to his own experience serving as a parish priest in the southwest border community of Brownsville, Tex., in 1988. He arrived in town to find that there were only two institutions in Brownsville that were not bi-lingual and bi-cultural — an Episcopal Church and a Presbyterian congregation located across the street from it.

"White church members refuse to accept the reality that in this society we are not all white," Aguilar says. "If we don't address what separates us, we're not being faithful — we're not being one in Christ, we're being broken."

Some thoughts on racism as the church approaches General Convention

by Diane M. Porter

"DO YOU WANT TO CHANGE? DO YOU REALLY WANT TO CHANGE?"

Those words of Dean David Collins have played over and over in my head as if a tiny compact disc had been implanted in a memory cell during the 1991 General Convention in Phoenix. He issued that challenge to the joint session of bishops and deputies during the report back on the racism audit that almost didn't happen.

As a society we want quick, instant, painless, effortless solutions to long-term problems — witness the quick-weight-loss diet craze. An instant drink or a magical tea taken three times daily for two weeks and whamo! — all the years of fat are instantly gone. The same is exactly true of the way we want to work on racism — we want to eliminate years of conditioned learned behaviors in an instant — the you've-got-20-minutes-on-the-agenda-for-this-racism-thing—and-don't-go-over-it-because-we-have-more-important-things-to-cover-OK? syndrome. Or, the we-had-a-multi-cultural-experience-last-week-and-it-was-wonderful syndrome.

But just the same way as those instantly lost pounds creep back on, sometimes in amounts greater than before, without long-term conditioning and retraining, those instant multi-cultural experiences quickly fade in real-life settings.

"DO YOU WANT TO CHANGE?" In the Episcopal Church the answer is obviously "Yes," especially if it can be effortless. Yes, we want to change, but it's like our every Monday-morning diet, without a real commitment to change, we will continue to work at racism in fits and starts. Dieting requires giving up some of the very things that got us into the condition that we are in and those are often our most favorite foods — and anti-racism work means a serious commitment to giving up some favorite things, mostly privilege and power.



Diane M. Porter

We as a church are confused between working around multi-cultural development issues and working on anti-racism. I am often told that we don't need a racism commission or committee because we are working on multi-culturalism. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Appreciating the diversity that exists within our church is a noble goal, but it is also another manifestation of the racism within our institutional life because as long as those in power only treat the surface problems of acceptance, the root causes of racism remain — and that root is deep.

Many in our church live in a state of denial about racism. When I receive a letter asking, "Show me racism or give me a concrete example of racism," I know that deep denial abounds. I am unwilling to believe that in 1993 someone needs to be shown an example of racism.

Our church is also still essentially looking at racism as a black-and-white issue, leaving our Asian, Native American and Hispanic brothers and sisters invisible — and more troubling yet, our church wants people of color to solve the problem or at least to make the problem go away.

"DO YOU WANT TO CHANGE?" Still, there is some good news in all of this. We would expect the Episcopal Urban Caucus to focus on racism, but their uniting with the church's Peace and Justice Network is a hopeful sign of widening the circle of people committed to change. The Presiding Bishop has been unwavering in his personal

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support and in holding up the theme throughout this triennium. His voice will be strengthened when the bishops' pastoral teaching on racism is issued. Several dioceses from coast to coast have taken the challenge seriously and have devoted serious time and attention to working through this issue. The Province I synod (New England) spent an entire weekend on "Unlearning Racism." And the United Thank Offering has sought out assistance in exploring racism, as has the Episcopal Church Women.

But perhaps for me the most hopeful sign is one single letter. I am in correspondence with a priest in the deep south who after writing a damning letter has sent two follow-ups, opening a dialogue — and I sincerely believe that this man wants to change. Maybe like the biblical housewife, I have found my lost coin.

DO WE WANT TO CHANGE? I think some do. Until I became serious about dieting I didn't know how good I could feel and this church won't know how good it can be until it rids itself of institutional racism.

DO WE WANT TO CHANGE? Yes, but let's make the new challenge for the coming triennium, "ARE WE WILLING TO DO WHAT IT TAKES TO CHANGE!"

— Diane Porter is senior executive for program and executive of Advocacy, Witness and Justice Ministries at the Episcopal Church's national headquarters in New York.

Victoria Matthews elected Canada's first woman bishop



Matthews at a press conference with Terence Finlay, Bishop of Toronto.
Anglican Journal/Ron Cole

Victoria Matthews, 39, was elected suffragan bishop of Toronto on Nov. 19, 1993, making her the first woman bishop in the Anglican Church of Canada and the Anglican Communion's fifth woman bishop.

Matthews was ordained to the priesthood in 1980 and has been serving All Soul's Church in north Toronto for the past six years.

Vital Signs

Fasting in El Salvador

by Henry Atkins

In November my wife, Treadwell, and I travelled to El Salvador, where our daughter, Hannah (a second-year seminarian), was fasting with a group protesting the renewed activity of death squads in El Salvador.

From Nov. 1 to 23, the group fasted in *La Iglesia San Antonio* in the Department of Chalatenango. They included farmers, housewives, ex-*comandantes* of the *Farabundo Marti* National Liberation Front (FMLN), Roman Catholic priests, a member of the National Legislature, and various solidarity workers from Latin America, the U.S. and Europe.

Elections are scheduled to take place in El Salvador in March, 1994, and the renewed death-squad activity appears to be, in part, an attempt to create an environment of fear which will keep the poor from registering to vote.

In the last week of October there were four killings in five days. Two of the victims, Francisco Velis and Heleno Castro Guevara, were leaders of the FMLN, now a legal political party in El Salvador. Velis had recently been chosen to run for the National Legislature in the upcoming elections. He was shot on a main street in San Salvador as he took his daughter to a day care center. Guevara was found in his pickup truck on a rural highway, shot to death. A married couple who were former guerrilla soldiers were also among those killed. The woman had been breast-feeding her baby.

On Nov. 15, we drove into San Salvador as thousands of Salvadorans were coming into the city to protest the renewed death-squad activity. Many of the people who were on the fast in Chalatenango made the hard two-hour drive to the Saviour of the World Plaza.

The next day, Treadwell and I returned with our daughter to the church in Chalatenango. That night was the anniversary of the assassination of the Jesuit priests and their housekeepers. Jon Cortina, S.J., one of the hunger strikers and a priest with a long history of ministry among the poor in Chalatenango, spoke of the need to speak the truth, saying that God loves truth, but that to speak truth in El Salvador is dangerous.

I spoke that night of the ongoing need for a theology of solidarity. When people go on hunger strikes to protest death in El Salvador, we are called to join in whatever way is possible for us. To be in solidarity with the poor means that we see the world as our parish.

The hunger strikers were overjoyed at news that some people in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington D.C. and New York City were engaging in solidarity activities. "We are not alone," they said.

On Tuesday, Nov, 23, a U.N. proposal for investigation of the death squads was accepted by the ARENA government, and the fast ended.

— Henry L. Atkins, Jr., is Episcopal Chaplain to Rutgers University.

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Ecu Takes: Racism

United Church of Christ

Madison T. Shockley II, pastor of the Congregational Church of Christian Fellowship, United Church of Christ (UCC), in Los Angeles, and a member of the UCC's Commission for Racial Justice, offers this perspective on how his denomination is addressing institutional white racism:

The Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ is a major part of our denomination and a major focus of ministry. The Commission was established in the 1960s during the civil rights movement to address and combat racism both within the church and in society at large. It is most known for Ben Chavis, who was assistant executive director while he was in prison, then was executive director from 1985 until this year, when he became executive director of the NAACP.

Our General Synod last summer passed a resolution calling for the UCC to become a multi-racial, multi-cultural church, laying claim on embracing and increasing the diversity of the church — which statistically is not very diverse. It's probably 85 percent Anglo and 15 percent "other" — and that's generous.

The resolution represents a commitment of resources to the development of additional representation of African-American, Latino, Asian and Native American communities, both in congregations and leadership development.

The other main thrust of the Commission has been addressing environmental racism — a term coined by Ben Chavis. We continue to hold conferences on the patterns of the location of toxic waste dumps in communities of people of color. A study published a few years ago showed that there's an even higher correlation between toxic waste dumping and race than between race and poverty.

Apathy and moral fatigue are always the obstacles to progress in these areas. There is a moral fatigue in the struggle against racism in society at large — people are sort of tired of hearing about it. Our church is a mainstream church and reflects society at large.

But I feel optimistic about making progress on racial justice within the church, and that our church will continue to advocate for racial justice in the society at large.

American and Southern Baptists

Ken Sehested, Executive Director of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, offers this view of his denomination's anti-racism commitments:

My congregation is dually aligned with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and the American Baptist Convention (ABC). The ABC represents the northern cousins who split in 1845 over the issue of whether missionaries could have slaves.

Both the Southern Baptists and the American Baptists have an extraordinary number of people of color aligned in congregations. There are four or five thousand African-American congregations aligned with the Southern Baptist Convention.

The SBC has operated on the homogenous growth principle, which, in effect, is the blessing of racism as a principle for church growth development. It's the principle that "like attracts like." They go into neighborhoods, creating Hispanic or African-American or Chinese-Mandarin congregations, using their natural inclination to band together as minorities in a dominant white culture.

None of them have been integrated into the leadership of the denomination. In the SBC there is still a deep paternalism at work. There is a very weak formal polity and a very potent old boys' network.

I worked on a project this year in which we discovered that after the bombing of the 16th Street Church in Birmingham, Ala., in 1963, a resolution was brought to extend sympathy to the congregation, and for the Executive Committee to encourage churches to contribute to a fund to rebuild the church. This very modest resolution was voted down and a substitute resolution was passed, that basically said "racial conflict is bad." Our conference was held in Birmingham this year, and the current pastor of 16th Street was the conference preacher. We had a signature campaign, and collected $5,000 to turn over to him.

The reactions to our campaign showed that many people have a profound misunderstanding of the notion of repentance. There is an attempt to say that any rehearsing of that history is bad for us, that recalling it is going to do more harm than good.

The American Baptist churches have done a much better job of integrating people of color into leadership. There have been some pretty strong affirmative action goals over the last 12 years.

More than half of the presidents of the American Baptist Churches have been people of color. A significant number of ranking positions in the denomination are filled by people of color.

In American Baptist life there was a sufficient cross-racial constituency of folk willing to take the risk of having "strangers," so to speak, come into leadership positions in the congregation. There were sufficient numbers who said, we're going to have to elect people of color into positions of leadership even if they don't have high visibility, even if they haven't come up through the pecking order. There has been a very courageous attempt to leap over structural boundaries.

I do sense that the devastation that hit Los Angeles and prompted smaller rebellions around the country acted as a wake-up call.

Last year the Baptist World Alliance created a Special Commission of Baptists Against Racism. The reaction was very powerful among people of color here and around the world. It hit a nerve that was sore and raw.

Two liberal splinter groups from the Southern Baptists have both approved statements confessing complicity with racism.

What happened in Los Angeles stirred the embers of Baptist life and I'm hopeful it will move us forward at least a little bit.

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Witness to murder

by Gloria House Manana

We are in a procession evoking the Middle Ages: a pageantry of opulent vestments and banners, redolent incense, abundant candles, appropriately majestic hymns — ritual rooted in an ancient faith that if one touches the holy image, one touches Spirit. It is the installation of Jonathan's icon. With the others I wait my turn to approach, happy that the church has recognized the significance of his sacrifice.

Close now to the painting, I contemplate Jonathan of the one-dimensional flatness prescribed by iconographic conventions, and pictures full of Alabama sunlight flood my memory: Jonathan, turning in to the freedom school yard, broad smile of camaraderie towards us; a slender, fast-moving figure, graceful, sophisticated; focused, determined energy; children accompanying him through the Selma housing project, their voices singing freedom songs; his car racing along hot Alabama blacktops.

Jonathan Daniels was one of that army of hundreds who, moved by a sense of personal responsibility, left universities and comfortable, safe environments in the north and south to join the freedom movement. Jon's life and death are icons of an era and of the choices made by freedom workers of his generation.

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In 1965, Selma was still a center of movement activity. The brutality of the Montgomery march, the murder of Viola Luizzo, and the countless incidents of injustice and physical assault had not succeeded in killing the people's spirit. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) was organizing voters for the Democratic Party, and the Students Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), whose Alabama office was in Selma, had begun to develop independent political parties in several nearby counties. Though it had been a century since slavery, Selma was still starkly segregated — two towns in effect, hot, slow, unattractive. Nevertheless, movement culture was thriving: enthusiastic attendance at mass meetings, powerful, church-rocking music, and the children — magnificent in their role as bright, spunky muses of revolution.

I had come south with a group of students from the Bay Area to set up a freedom school for Selma children. We found a house to rent on St. Ann Street, bordering the housing project. Brown's Chapel, the site of most civil rights meetings and mobilization, was nearby. I met Jonathan at Alice West's home in the housing project, where movement activists gathered to relax.

Jonathan was delighted to have a fellow Episcopalian with whom he could begin to integrate the local Episcopal church. He suggested that we take several of the children with us on Sundays, and this we did. However, the parishioners remained hostile, refusing to receive the sacraments with us or after us. They were a pathetic lot, priest and congregation, holding on to the past. I think they might have regretted painfully their rejection of Jonathan when they heard just a few weeks later that he had been murdered. They would never have an opportunity to extend the love he deserved as one of their most courageous sons.

Jonathan and I also became involved with the SNCC project in Lowndes County, twenty miles from Selma, at the invitation of Stokely Carmichael (now Kwame Ture, a former chairperson of SNCC, and presently head of the All African People's Revolutionary Party, a socialist organization). He had taken us to meet the families and to attend the Sunday mass meetings in this county, where African-Americans were 90 percent of the population, but owned only five percent of the land, and where the white elite was notoriously vicious. (Interestingly, Lowndes was one of the Black Belt counties that W.E.B. DuBois studied at the turn of the century. Very little had changed in the long interim between DuBois' work and SNCC's.)

Soon I was teaching in the freedom school in the mornings, and working with the SNCC staff in Lowndes in the afternoons and on weekends. Jonathan was with us frequently, and a friendship developed among us. Toward the end of the summer, the Lowndes freedom organization planned to picket a grocery store in Hayneville, the county seat. Jonathan participated in this demonstration, along with about 30 of us, including SNCC workers, local teenagers, and a Catholic priest from Chicago, Father Richard Morrisroe. After a few minutes of picketing, we were arrested, herded onto a garbage truck and transported to the county jail. This was a small, two-story structure, the ground floor flooded with filthy water which we had to wade through to get to the cells. The men were put into upstairs cells, while the three women, Ruby Sales, Joyce Bailey and I, were locked in a cell on the first floor. We found the sink crusted with dirt, the faucet not working,the toilet stopped up. The stench was overwhelming. Here we spent two weeks, singing freedom songs so loudly that the men could hear us upstairs and join in. Enduring these circumstances, we felt strangely vindicated when we heard that there was

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Gloria House Manana is a contributing editor to *The Witness* who now lives in South Africa.

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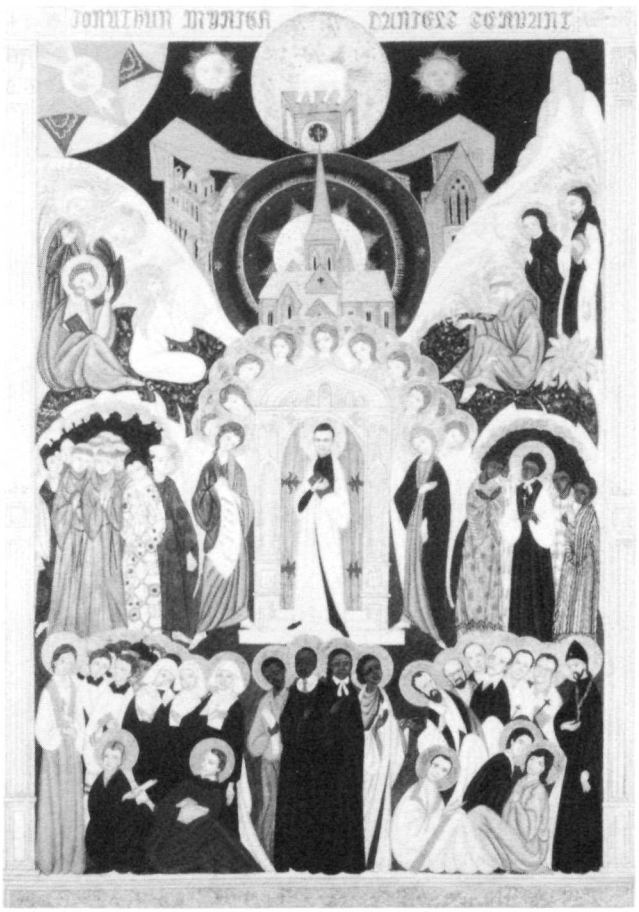
a major rebellion occurring in Watts, Los Angeles, the first of the urban uprisings that would sweep the country during the sixties.

One day a guard came to tell us we were being released. This surprised us, as we had not been informed by the SNCC office that our bail had been paid, or that arrangements had been made to pick us up. We were more than reluctant to leave, fearing what might await us outside, but the jailers forced us away at gunpoint.

Some of the youngsters in our group suggested that we head for the nearby store to buy cold drinks and snacks, a well-received idea given the bacon rind, beans and dry biscuits we had been offered daily in the jail. As we turned onto the main Hayneville road toward the store, we heard gunfire. We were horrified to realize that the shots were coming in our direction. The teenagers scattered quickly, knowing their way around the county better than the rest of us. We others fell to the ground, not knowing what else to do. Jonathan, who was closest to the gunman, was murdered right there under our eyes. Father Morrisroe was shot in the back, wounded so critically that it was years before he walked again.

In those moments of terror, we thought we all would be killed. When the gunfire stopped, Ruby Sales, Jimmy Rogers (a SNCC staff member) and I ran up and down that road trying to get help for Father Morrisroe. People would not come out of their homes and shops to help. It seemed a very long time before an ambulance arrived and Ruby and I dropped, exhausted, into the SNCC car that had come for us.

Several of us travelled to Keene, N. H. for Jonathan's funeral. Then, still in shock, I returned to Selma. The summer was over, and I was due in Berkeley to resume my job as a teaching assistant in the French Department and continue my graduate studies. I packed and flew back to California, but could not stay. My heart was now with the Lowndes, Selma and SNCC communities and the work there. I apologized to Professor Calame, an Algerian, then Chair of the French Department, who said his own experience of the Algerian revolution helped him understand what I was doing, and I was back in Alabama within a week. Silas Norman, then head of Alabama SNCC, hired me as a SNCC field secretary, and I remained in Lowndes County for two years.



Icon of Jonathon Daniels by Alexander Gassel
courtesy of Episcopal Divinity School

The man who killed Jonathan and caused Morrisroe such prolonged pain was never punished. At his trial we learned that he had been deputized before the shootings, and was carrying out a plan to kill the two whites in our group, for whites who dared to align themselves with the freedom movement posed threats to the illusions, fears and privileges of racist southerners. Our expulsion from jail had been the first step of the murderous set-up, concerning which the local white community had been alerted.

Almost 30 years have passed since our stay in Hayneville Jail and the trauma of seeing Jon lying dead and Father Morrisroe moaning in pain a few feet away from us on a curiously deserted main road in Lowndes County. No one turns back to a life of indifference to human struggle after experiences like these — and there were so many such experiences for freedom workers. At the end of SNCC staff meetings, we used to form a circle and sing the freedom songs, the most moving of which was this affirmation of struggle in spite of loss:

We have walked through the valley of death
We had to walk all by ourselves
But we'll never turn back
No, we'll never turn back
Until we've all been freed
And we have equality.
We have hung our heads and cried
Cried for those who, like us, have died
Died for you and died for me
Died for the cause of equality.
But we'll never turn back
No, we'll never turn back
Until we've all been freed
And we have equality.

TW

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Sixties' culture and mysticism

by Ken Leech

The sixties were not a kaleidoscopic misadventure. We owe them the renewal of social conscience over such issues as nuclear weapons and racism, the ecology, feminism, and especially the mystical revival, the new concern with consciousness, as well as some more ambivalent developments — the Jesus movement and the resurgence of the occult.

What we witnessed, often obscured beneath the widespread interest in psychedelic drugs, was a new spiritual quest which had been, for the most part, forced into unorthodox channels and which, with some exceptions, bypassed the mainstream churches.

That quest emerged from the ruins of a decayed Christianity and a vulgar materialistic culture. For a time it was sidetracked into drugs - as one would expect in a society where drug use was endemic - but by 1968 we were seeing a shift away from drugs to a concern with inner exploration, with mysticism, with the occult, with personal and political liberation. Many young people were looking afresh at eastern spiritual traditions. Spirituality seemed to be on the increase everywhere —except perhaps inside the churches.

Of course, mistakes were made in the sixties. One of them was that sections of the church succumbed to the cult of "relevance" in spite of the warnings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

No one saw the dangers of "relevance" as a criterion, or of the neglect of ascetical discipline, prayer and worship, more clearly than Bonhoeffer did. Much sixties religion turned its back on transcendence — just at the point at which many outside the church were thirsting for mystery. As it simplified its liturgies and became "relevant", the hippies turned to kaftans, bells and incense and read *The Cloud of Unknowing.*

For all their naiveté, the hippies of the late sixties had begun to see through the vulgarity and sham of the affluent society. We did not hear their message, and we got Thatcherism, the most crude postwar version of the worship of Mammon. It was, and is, like its American equivalents a climate in which fundamentalisms of all kinds are likely to flourish, for the private religions are part of capitalism's success story. But it is a climate which is alien to true spiritual values, one in which those who seek to pursue both the path of contemplation (which occupied the spiritual seekers of the sixties) and the path of social justice (which occupied many Christians in the same period) will find themselves increasingly swimming against the tide. TW



Haight-Ashbury Elaine Mayes

Kenneth Leech is an Anglican socialist, priest and widely published author. Photographer Elaine Mayes works in N.Y.C.

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Church people in the struggle

by Joe Agne

Church People in the Struggle: The National Council of Churches and the Black Freedom Movement, 1950 - 1970, James F. Findlay, Jr., Oxford University Press, 1993. 255 pp.

Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" in 1963, the same year that the National Council of Churches (NCC) established its Commission on Religion and Race. One urged religious leaders to risk controversy to be faithful and the other provided a vehicle to do so.

Findlay recounts the role of the NCC and its member denominations in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Mississippi Summer, the Mississippi Delta Ministry, and church response to the Black Manifesto issued in 1969.

He is frank to acknowledge he is writing about denominations in which European Americans dominate. Extensive use of NCC archives and interviews with active participants bring fresh insights to these struggles. (Although the book would have been strengthened by interviews with other persons active in the era who could offer an assessment of the NCC role, such as black church activists who were not active in the NCC and civil rights workers in secular organizations.)

There is ample data here on the church's collusion with the U.S. government even while the church engaged in the Civil Rights struggle.

In a startling revelation Findlay documents that the General Secretary of the NCC, at the request of J. Edgar Hoover's office, provided the FBI a list of all participants in orientation sessions which preceded Mississippi summer. Included were names and addresses of students, SNCC [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee] and CORE [Congress on Racial Equality] staff, local African-American citizens of Mississippi, and other participants, including NCC staff, thereby placing all their lives in jeopardy.

This book probes what some want kept secret. Robert Spike, executive director of the NCC Commission on Religion and Race until January, 1966, was murdered on October 17, 1966. There is considerable evidence of the federal government's role in Spike's death, yet local police suggested that his death was related to his bisexuality. Their charged assailant was released on a technicality.

The murderer of Robert Spike has never been legally determined and to date significant investigation into his death has been successfully chilled by homophobia. Consequently, the life and work of Robert Spike has been smeared. The expansive telling of his courageous ministry is truly a gift.

James Findlay suggests the NCC's elitist leadership, out of touch with local followers, was the reason the churches' coalition with movement groups could not endure. He misses additional possibilities.

The liberal church was no less racist, just differently racist, than the structures it sought to change. Conservative racism seeks to control white institutions. Liberal racism seeks to control colorful institutions. Black Power insisted that white leaders become followers or at least colleagues. White leaders abandoned the anti-racism struggle and used their learnings to develop European-American dominated movements related to disarmament, students, peace, justice for women, ecology, etc.

Moreover, it was not "followers" that church leaders were unable to deliver to the movement. Many local people were more involved than national church leaders. Rather, it was (and is) a raw economic and cultural power in the established protestant church that could not be delivered. This power is not always evident, but African-American leaders felt betrayed when it was not forthcoming. They held European-American activists responsible for what they never had the power to deliver, even if they thought they could.

But significant change does happen when the church joins its strength with activist movement groups. James Findlay provides a valuable reflection on the making and breaking of a justice coalition 30 years ago. Knowing the stories of those on whose shoulders we can stand will help develop new coalitions for a new time. His book counters those who keep erasing the lives of faithful people of color and anti-racist European-Americans from the available historical accounts, leaving us to imagine there are no sturdy shoulders around. Indeed there are. TW



Joe Agne is a staff member of the NCC's prophetic justice unit and staffpersont for the racial justice working group at the National Council of Churches.

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And it's 1-2-3- what are we fighting for?

by Marianne Arbogast

"We were the generation that saw the four children killed in the church in Birmingham," Richard Feldman, 43, says. "I knew two of the three civil rights workers killed in Mississippi in the summer of 1964. We watched as the civil rights movement turned into rebellion in Watts, Detroit, and Harlem, and eventually turned into government murder — when Mark Clark and Bobby Clark of the Chicago Black Panthers party were killed in their sleep.

"We had the sense that it was critical to make choices, that we couldn't be on the sidelines."

Feldman arrived at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor in 1967. He was quickly drawn to the radical politics of Students for a Democratic Society. He campagined for Eugene McCarthy and went to the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago.

Revolution felt within reach.

"The sense of internationalism was very significant," Feldman says. "We were attuned to revolutions around the world."

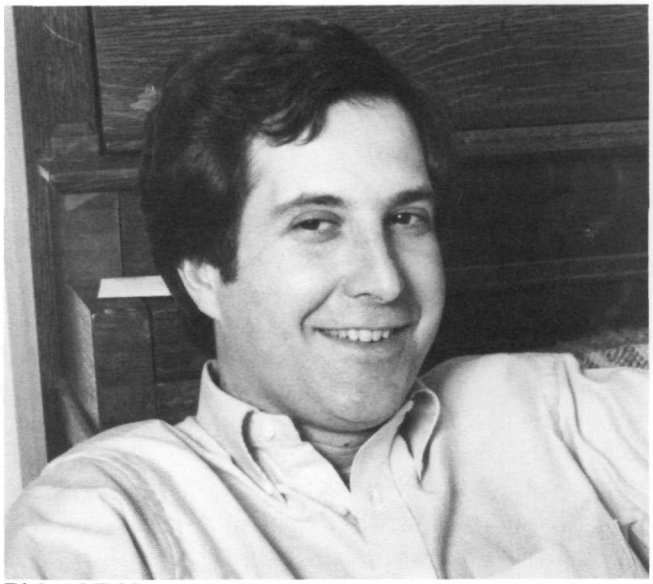
Feldman shared a small Ann Arbor house with 13 other students.

"Some people were there on Tuesday, some on Wednesday, some on Thursday ... Everyone was involved in some kind of politics or music or political theatre. School became less and less important; politics was all-important.

"We spent most of our time planning demonstrations, going to demonstrations, or bailing people out of jail."

He recalls flooding the steps of university buildings with catsup (to look like blood) when Dupont, a napalm manufacturer, sent recruiters to the campus; taking over and trashing a ROTC building; and continually seeking to engage other students in conversation.

"We spent most of our time planning demonstrations, going to demonstrations, or bailing people out of jail."



Richard Feldman Dwight Cendrowski

"We spent a great deal of time having discussions, trying to educate ourselves about racism, reading Franz Fanon. We tried to give support to each other, as we thought about what the future of our lives would be like. We were breaking with thinking that what was important was middle-class security, getting a job."

Often this meant breaking personal ties as well.

"To define ourselves as revolutionaries, we believed we had to reject our entire past," Feldman says. "Many rejected their family and history and relations with relatives — except when we needed bail money."

For a time, Feldman believed he had to renounce his Jewish identity in order to be in solidarity with Palestinians.

His own parents were proud of his commitments, yet frightened for his safety and his future. When he announced to them that he was going to Cuba, both told him it would kill the other. He changed his plans and stayed in Ann Arbor. Several months later, his father came to court when Feldman was sentenced for civil resistance actions. It was the last time Feldman saw him.

"He died 25 days later," Feldman says. "I'm not sure what the relationship of all my activity was to his death."

Feldman graduated early with a degree in political philosophy, with the support of radical professors who awarded him some 60 credits for independent study.

He moved with friends to Detroit "to do real revolutionary work. "Detroit had the important tradition of the Black Power movement, the labor movement, and a lot of community organizing."

Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor at *The Witness*. Photographer Dwight Cendrowski lives in Ann Arbor, Mich.

In River Rouge, they published a newspaper called *Down the River,* distributing it in high schools, parks, and Burger Kings. They took films on racism and Vietnam to schools and community centers.

Contact with white working-class citizens led Feldman to modify his social and political analysis.

"I clearly had a romantic view of workers in revolution and politics," he says. "I learned how deep the culture of racism was in eight- and ten-year-old kids who were talking about 'spear-chuckers.' "

In 1971, Feldman took a job at a Ford truck plant, with plans for radical organizing. He put out a newsletter and helped lead walkouts over health and safety conditions. But after several years, he found himself facing a vocational crisis.

"I was painting underbodies, with paint dripping in my eyes, and thought it was a great sacrifice for the revolution," he said. "But I realized the information in our newsletter would be something the very corrupt plant chairman would be talking about six months later. I thought, if I don't have the opportunity to be part of a movement, if all I'm going to be is a reformer, then I might as well go to law school and give up the struggle."

Feldman considers himself fortunate at that time to have met Grace and Jimmy Boggs, leaders of NOAR (the National Organization for an American Revolution). He saw them offering "very principled politics. In the sixties we were only interested in building a protest movement, but if we were going to rebuild society, work was important, family was important, community was important.

"In the auto plant, people were making $15,000 and didn't care about a revolution. I saw that talking about socialism wasn't enough, that we needed a vision of where to go."

Feldman wrote for NOAR, and traveled to cities across the country to organize leadership around NOAR principles.

Feldman remained at the Ford plant and recently served as their union representative for three years.

In 1987, he wrote a book called *The End of the Line: Autoworkers and the American Dream,* a series of interview with auto workers which raise some of the questions he feels are crucial.

"What are our hopes and dreams for our kids? How can you raise children to have self-esteem without access to a credit card and the shopping mall? How can we build economies without relying on the global economy?"

The questions are personally vital to Feldman, who married Janice Fialka, a social worker , in 1979, and is the father of two children.

Feldman sees hope in the birth of organizations like SOSAD [Save Our Sons and Daughters], which he calls "the first challenge in the city to the culture of capitalism and materialism.

"They saw that stopping the violence had to be joined with the struggle against kids believing they needed $150 tennis shoes, or jackets with fur, or gold chains."

Feldman has worked with teens, helping plan the "Detroit Summer" project that has engaged young people in neighborhood projects for the past two years.

"I believe this generation has to be given the opportunity to define the issues and the struggle" for today, Feldman says. "I think it's going to be around rebuilding the cities."

Detroit Summer participants "had wonderful political discussions in the evenings," he says. "A question that's coming up is, what's the equivalent of getting arrested or going down south to fight the Jim Crow laws? We can't set the agenda for them; it has to emerge from involvement."

But Feldman imagines scenarios like the takeover of an abandoned city plant, to create jobs and serve the community.

"People don't believe the myths anymore — that if their kids go to school they will get good jobs, that the corporations have to come back home, that we have to build big hotels downtown. There's no agenda out there except the agenda we create.

"I think it's quite possible that in the next year or two we'll see pilot projects, initially funded by the cities — for example, abandoned factories turned into greenhouses to produce food for the local market, or small factories to provide materials like glass and lumber to rehabilitate homes."

"I think we're on a threshold, that we can create a movement that can make changes that will provide a future in the cities," Feldman says. TW

Welcome to The Witness!

The Witness addresses different themes each month, and includes art, poetry, book reviews and profiles. For 75 years *The Witness* has published articles addressing theological concerns as well as critiquing social issues from a faith perspective. The magazine is owned by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company but is an independent journal with an ecumenical readership.

If you are interested in subscribing, please send a check for $20 to *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Boulevard, Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226-1868.

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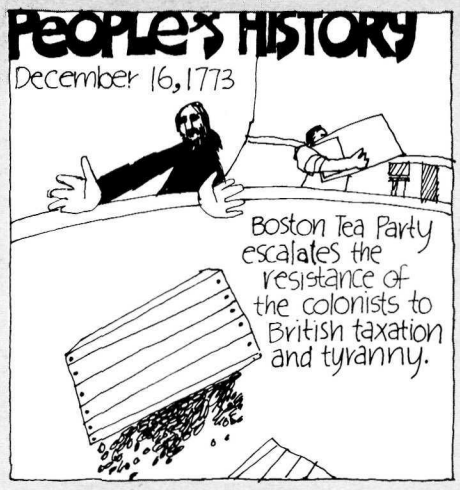
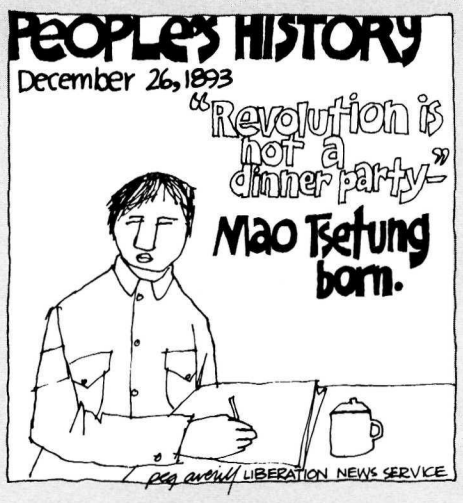
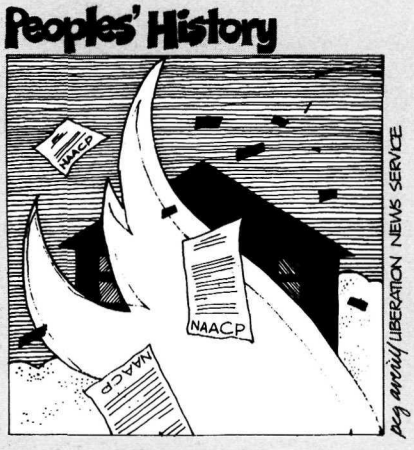




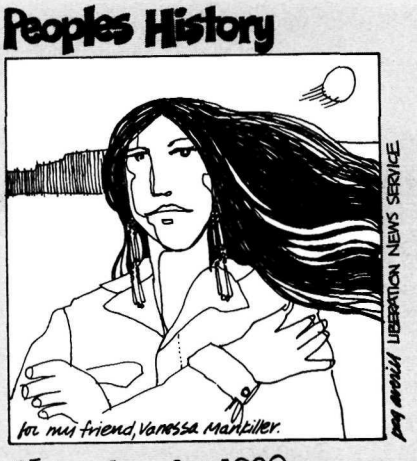




December 25, 1951
Harry T. Moore, president of the Florida NAACP, and Harriet Moore murdered when their home is firebombed on Christmas.



This material comes from a variety of sources including the Wisconsin People's History calendar, the Massachusetts People's History calendar, the War Registers League and Guardian calendars and lists compiled by Liberation News Service.



November 20, 1969
Indians of All Tribes occupy Alcatraz Island for preservation of Indian culture; stay 19 months.

March issue:

The shifting left

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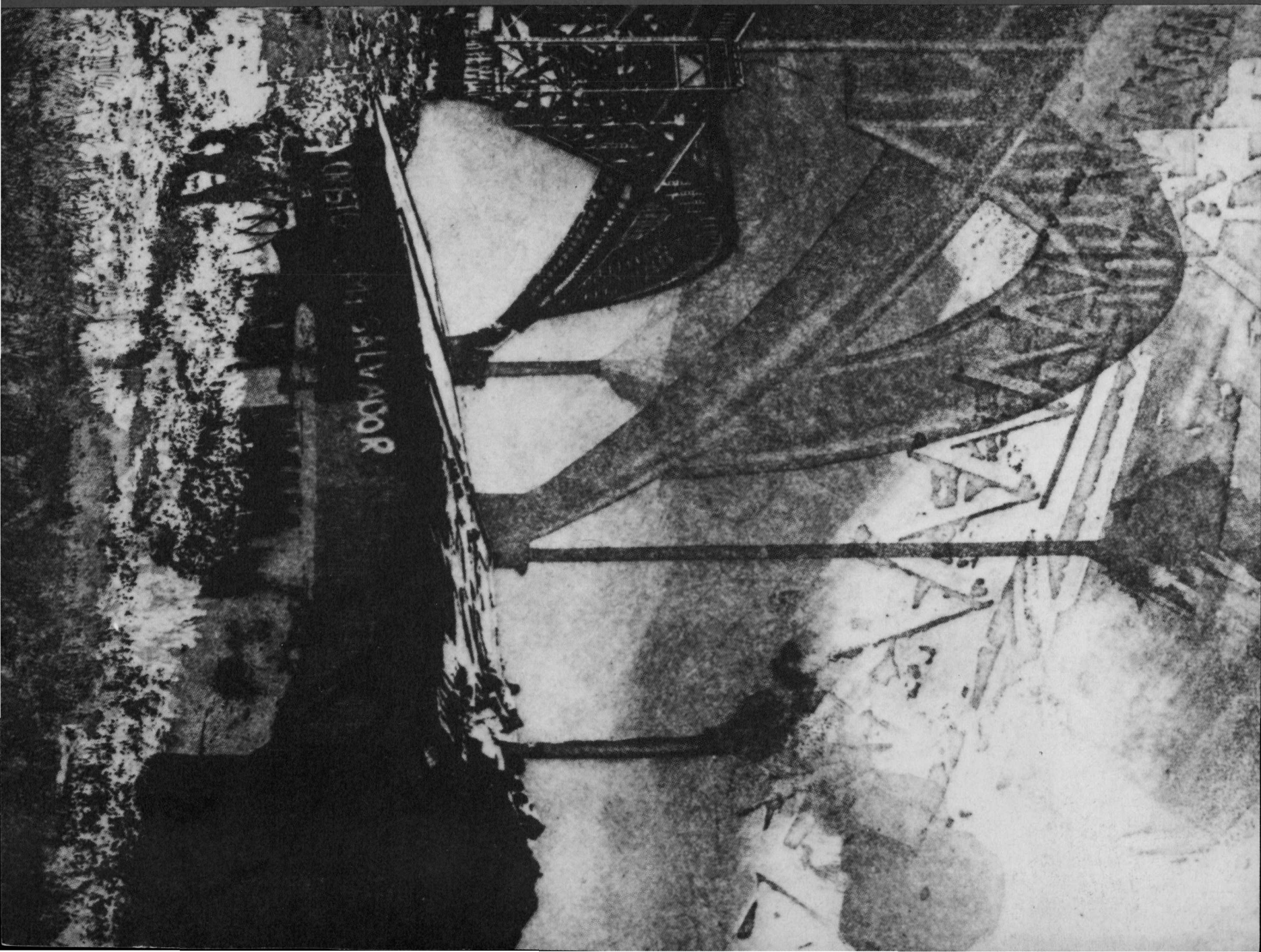
The Witness

Volume 77 • Number 3 • March 1994

The left



The Sixties

I VERY MUCH ENJOYED your sixties issue — almost as much as I enjoyed the letters responding to your subscription solicitation. My spiritual life began in the sixties when I began taking psychedelic drugs. Until that time I hadn't a clue. It was also where I got my first notions of communal possibilities, and came to a useful understanding of peace and justice.

I can vividly recall going into any of a number of mainline denominational churches and the reaction that I got from the clergy who quickly and correctly assessed I was not a pledging-unit candidate. I did discover that Anglicans had a very polite way of giving the bums rush. They had no time for foolish questions about God, Jesus, Buddha, Mohammed, or the Maharishi Yogi. Any one of your vitriolic responders could have been the guardians of those doors. Well, time has passed and, fortunately for me, the Amazing Grace of our Lord does not depend on such as those; and somehow I have been restored to sanity, productivity, and good health.

Keep up the good work. You are as a voice crying in the wilderness.

Quinton A. Kruse
Santa Rosa, CA

Keeping watch

I WAS FEELING COMPLETELY UNDONE about the massacre on the Long Island Railroad, on which I was a commuter for many years, when I read "Short Takes" about creative nonviolence in your December issue.

Talk about light shining through in the darkness! It seems to me that the stories of nonviolent actions over the decades are strong symbols of the Holy and human spirit bubbling up in the midst of bleak times.

One need only read Gene Sharp's "The Politics of Nonviolent Action" to realize the extent to which this kind of action has broken social barriers, dissolved dictatorships, paralyzed invaders and changed social and economic conditions.

Pray we continue to find new ways to meet the challenges before us today.

Pat Roberts
Lawrenceville, NJ

I LIKED HOLLY BRIDGES ELLIOTT'S article on the eucharist a very great deal indeed. The truth of the matter is that some of us, for whatever reasons, have not held much truck with Anglo-Catholic eucharistic practice just because it did not seem to be about Bill Teska's "subversive" view. That was, of course, full of prejudice and unfair, but such simple-minded stuff has long made the Episcopal way go round. So it was a special pleasure to be set right in spite of myself.

On the other hand I have shared the same conviction without any particular political ideology attached. It just seems the "rulers and authorities and the cosmic powers" are about power and the eucharist, whether or not one waves one's hands like an Orthodox priest, is about powerlessness, or something like that.

Douglas Evett
Ann Arbor, MI

I WISH TO COMMENT ON THE WORD "outside" in the January letter from "unsigned" regarding the Church and salvation.

With me at Sunday Mass are Arians, Nestorians, Patripassians, Docetists and countless others hurled into the outer darkness years ago. An Ultramontanist deacon proclaims the gospel. A sometime Pantheist, former Deist, priest delivers a good sermon sprinkled with Modernist errors and a conclusion anathematized by Trent. My observations cease before the steady gaze of an usher who lets the basket hesitate, then droop, weighed down by my crumpled dollar. He, by the way, is a Gnostic.

None of us got directions on where "outside" is. Nor about what all goes on there.

Thanks for a great magazine.

Unsigned

IN RESPONSE TO JULIE WORTMAN'S article on coming out: I believe gay persons come out mainly because they crave approval (especially from church people) of a lifestyle about which they themselves feel guilt and shame. Coming out is a manipulative technique which forces others to say what the gay person wants to hear: "We love you, regardless of your sexual preferences." It is manipulative in that it forces non-gays into saying things they may not mean in order to avoid being judged as homophobic and un-Christian. It forces non-gays to find ways to prove to gays that their homosexuality doesn't matter. Suddenly what wasn't relevant before, now hovers over the friendship, always the dominant reality. What was perhaps genuine friendship is now compromised with performance and effort.

It is fine to applaud the courage of gays who risk rejection in their search for openness and honesty in relationships. But the person who speaks against homosexual behavior in his desire to be honest and open with others is not applauded, although such persons also run the risk of rejection for their opinions.

People should be valued for their friendliness, their moral character, their job performance, their gifts and talents, not for whom they like to have sex with. One's sexual preferences are between oneself and God. Since Episcopalians are utterly confused as to what God's opinion is in this matter, we should not be pressured into forming and expressing opinions on the subject by gay friends who come out.

Michael Davis
Sanford, FL

"ON BEING OUT THERE" in the December issue did a good job of focussing on the dilemma millions of gay and lesbian persons face in an institution that encourages dissembling and hiding. As a gay priest who recently left a parish after 14 years as its rector, I am acutely aware that a dominant message to me was, "We will continue to support you as our rector as long as you continue to hide who you are sexually."

In December 1991 I had a frank discussion with the vestry. I told them that out of respect for them, for myself and for my partner I would no longer live a double life, and my partner and I would no longer keep our life strictly outside the parish. Two months later the officers asked me to resign.

For years I had walked the tightrope of being out to some, closeted to others. For years I had rationalized that it really wasn't

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helpful to "force" others to deal with my sexuality. For years I had believed that I was being sensitive to people who shouldn't have to deal with my sexuality and that I was avoiding making myself an unnecessary focus in the parish.

Today I am in a position I never expected to find myself in, nearing 50 and without a job. But I would not go back. Being in the closet is indeed spiritual suicide. What it avoids is not only "hurting" others or focussing attention on oneself. More important, what the closet avoids is a transforming encounter with the liberating Gospel of Jesus Christ. It robs the whole church of what the church exists to celebrate and to proclaim.

Recently I was called to a new position. Then the offer was withdrawn when a fundamentalist managed to stir up fear of the consequences of having an open homosexual heading the organization. Still, I am clearer than ever that change will come only when we are willing to risk. I can be sympathetic with those who stay in the closet for fear of losing their jobs; but I hope we can become honest enough to admit that this is the reason we stay closeted, rather than believing that the closet is serving some greater good.

S. James Steen
Washington, D.C.

I CONGRATULATE YOU for the excellent December issue of *The Witness.* It has been one of the best. Keep up the good work.

Herbert Arrunategui
Staff Officer for Hispanic Ministry
The Episcopal Church Center
New York, NY

Communion of saints

I EXTEND A HEARTFELT THANK YOU to you for dedicating the November issue to the spiritual significance of death and ancestry. I am happy my artwork is a part of that reality. As I've read through the pages of the magazine I've been enlightened and informed of the diverse cultural perspectives on this subject.

Carolyn Warfield
Indianapolis, IN

Classifieds

Opportunities

EPISCOPAL URBAN INTERN PROGRAM (Diocese of Los Angeles): Work in social service ministry, live in Christian community, share in spiritual formation (for adults 21-30). Apply now for the 1994-95 year. Contact: The Rev. Gary Commins, 260 N. Locust St., Inglewood, CA 90301 (310)674-7700.

RHODE ISLAND *WITNESS* READERS: The Episcopal Church of the Messiah, Olneyville Square, Providence, seeks to build an inclusive witnessing community in and with the inner city. Join us! Sunday worship: 10:30 a.m. 401-351-2144.

Fundraising

TWENTY-THREE OF 31 PERSONS listed on the masthead did not contribute financially to *The Witness* in 1993. On this, I sided with the majority.

Ralph D. Cushing
Grosse Pointe, MI

[See the addendum on page 31. Those who made contributions in mid-December are listed there. In addition, seven of the 23 you mention made their contribution to *The Witness* by giving multiple gift subscriptions.]

Witness praise

AS A LONG TIME SUPPORTER of *Christianity and Crisis* I look forward to receiving *The Witness*. Missed others' perception and interpretation of the day through a broad faith position.

Birger T. Johnson
State House of Representatives
Augusta, ME

I USED TO SUBSCRIBE in the early 60s under previous management.

Please find that part of your being a Christian that expresses you are Easter People — forgiven sinners and tell us about it; even the "joy" of being crucified now!

Robert G. Browning, Jr.
Ft. Myers, FL

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Witness criticism

I THINK THAT "RADICAL LEFT" is far too mild a description for your publication — "heretical left" would be more appropriate, or perhaps "lunatic fringe." I would not, under any circumstances support your work with a subscription.

E. James Quinn
San Diego, CA

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Since 1917

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'Something like the church'

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Given the economic situation, it would seem to be a propitious moment for the left, the progressive movement, to come forward with some concrete proposals. Yet the left seems to be either bogged down in internecine warfare or in a reactive mode. It's not proactive.

What people call the "left" (the peace and justice movements, whatever they are) has expanded a lot over the years. They tend to be very localized. On particular issues they focus and achieve things.

But there's not much of a broader vision, or of institutional structure. The left can't coalesce around unions because the unions are essentially gone. To the extent that there's any formal structure, it's usually something like the church.

— Noam Chomsky, *The Prosperous Few and the Restless Many,* Odonian Press, 1993

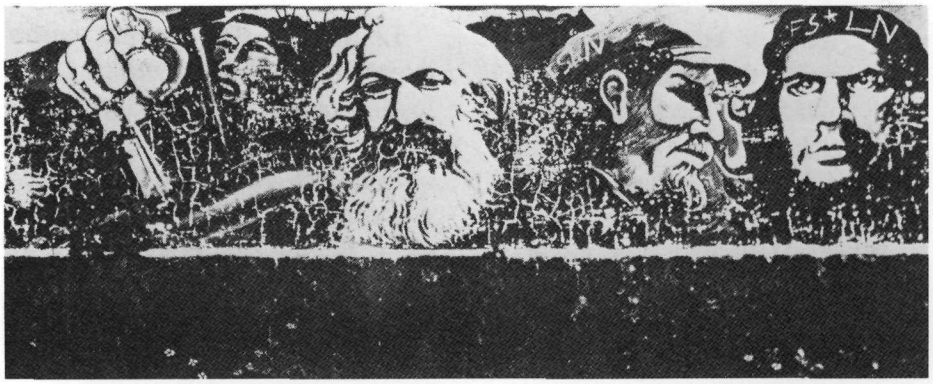
The left has lost its bearings. Reactionaries are screaming that the socialist dream has collapsed with the failure of the Soviet bloc.

Analysts for *Christian Century* are saying it's time for those of us in the church who embraced socialism to apologize and to acknowledge that the invisible hand of capitalism is in control and rightly so. Max L. Stackhouse and Dennis P. McCann suggest that corporate America is exemplary in having "leaped cultural and social boundaries and broken down the walls that divide people. It has found a home in countries far from its roots." Of course, they add, "businesses need all the spiritual and moral guidance they can get."

It is exactly the analysis Stackhouse and McCann want us to apologize for that could help them understand the nature of the fallen powers and principalities which seek above all else their own survival and profit. Moral guidance, under such circumstances, is only welcome when it offers sufficient public relations value to benefit the bottom line.

Norman Rush, in *The Nation,* has pronounced socialism's death. He writes, "It really is over for socialism. I don't take any pleasure in it, but for a long time, my attitude toward socialism has been something like Houdini's toward spiritualism. He wanted the afterlife to be real and he wanted mediums to be what they said they were. But the more he probed and tested, the more disenchanted he became ... I feel close to him."

Rush notes that "Guerrilla socialism in Latin America is aggressively de-Marxifying itself" and that for young people "Socialism is rapidly receding into the category of anciently powerful social concepts now needing a lot of contextualizing."He adds that while most of the "moral infrastructure of modern capitalist society" — like unions, credit unions, child-labor laws, the right to conscientious objection — are the work of socialists, for "those intending to confront the contradictions of capitalism unhandicapped, there will be a novel requisite: Forget socialism, now. It's going to be very postmodern in the terrain where socialists used to browse."



***Felicia Santizo Brigade:"Insurrection at the Barricades ,"* a Nicaraguan mural destroyed in 1988.**

Maybe so. Maybe not.

Personally I'm glad to see big, state-owned-and-operated societies go by the board because they are no less corrupt, though perhaps less competent, than multinationals.

But the dream of socialism is entirely contrary to that of capitalism. The dream of socialism is equality — equal access, equal income. That's a dream Christians share. The analysis Marxism offers removes the gloss of goodwill in corporate America, exposing instead its drive to exploit. This is an analysis we can't afford to dismiss. It's the antidote to the

continued on page 28

editor's note

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness.*

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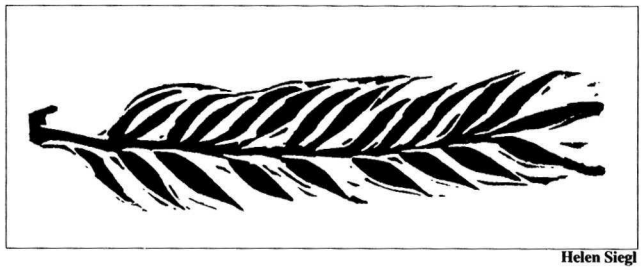
Left without Marx

by Erika Meyer

I turned 30 a few months back; I was three days old the day JFK was shot. Although I have vivid memories of the sixties, I came of age in the 1980s. When I started college in 1981, the two sides of the fashion coin for the white middle-class college student were preppy or punk. Drugs were out (but not alcohol) and we danced to songs of despair with a beat. "There is no love in this world anymore," we chanted on the dance floor. One of the most popular party tunes in 1981, "Rock Lobster," can only be described as meaningless and silly. Significantly, it was performed by a band with a name antithetical to any sense of idealism: the B-52's.

This was in marked contrast to the world of the church that I had grown up in. As a teenager in Detroit I was part of a church community whose members pooled their incomes, lived communally and bought and rehabbed apartment buildings as a housing ministry. I knew religious folk traveling to El Salvador and Nicaragua, and I saw friends arrested for symbolic trespass at nuclear weapons facilities. As far as I was concerned this is what Christians did; faith meant witnessing against the powers and principalities.

This is the church I left behind for college in the early eighties. It was in college that I found the secular left. This meant politics with no God. I didn't have to deal with scripture, or sin, or Jesus — any of those things which I didn't quite understand but which made me uneasy. I could hold onto a familiar-sounding critique of the world minus any religious baggage. This suited me just fine. It was one thing to be politically active, there was a certain bravado in that, but to be religious too would have been social suicide!



Helen Siegl

For several years I worked in and around leftist politics: on the Harold Washington mayoral campaign in Chicago, on Central America and labor committees, in the youth section of the Democratic Socialists of America. Feminism also made a big splash during this time. But there was something missing in my life; that something was church people. I missed the quality of the relationships and commitments that I had witnessed as a teenager in the church; people laying down their lives for one another, being accountable to one another, in a way that I did not see on the left.

Does grace have a role to play in the conversion of systems as well as people?

I also was not sure that politics could truly inspire people the way that religion could; at least I had to admit that I did not feel very inspired by my own activism. I wanted, or needed, a sense of the holy, to believe that God's activity was not reducible to what we humans did or did not manage to accomplish. It would take me several more years to understand that I might locate some of that holiness in the stuff of my own life.

So began a bumpy ride back into the church. Along the way there was a formative excursion into the recovery movement. So many of my friends have participated in Twelve-Step groups that I suspect that these support groups have influenced the way we look at activism.

By way of illustration, I have a friend who remembers wanting to be a missionary since she was a little girl. In college she studied liberation theology and traveled overseas to prepare herself. This same friend stunned me one day with the revelation of her addiction to alcohol. Her involvement in AA postponed her plans. After several years of hard work on her sobriety, she made different choices about how she was going to be a missionary. She picked a community to join which offered communal support and a daily prayer life over one with a more activist reputation but less support for its volunteers.

As for myself, "the steps" were the occasion of my introduction to grace. I had heard the word all my life, but it wasn't until one night sitting around a table at a local YMCA, that I experienced, in an almost physical way, a feeling of profound acceptance. In a flash, I said to myself. "Oh, so this is grace." This was a missing piece for me, not only in the secular left but in much of what I remember about the activist church as well.

What is the relationship of my deeply personal experience of grace and the call to witness against the powers and principalities of this world? Does grace have a role to play in the conversion of systems as well as people? I don't believe we can sustain works of goodwill in the world without it. TW

Erika Meyer is a contributing editor to *The Witness* and a seminarian at Church Divinity School of the Pacific.

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To Cipriano, in the Wind

by Philip Levine



Where did your words go,
Cipriano, spoken to me 38 years
ago in the back of Peerless Cleaners,
where raised on a little wooden platform
you bowed to the hissing press
and under the glaring bulb the scars
across your shoulders — "a gift
of my country" — gleamed like old wood.
"*Dignidad*," you said into my boy's
wide eyes, "without is no riches."
And Ferrente, the dapper Sicilian
coatmaker, laughed. What could
a pants presser know of dignity?
That was the winter of '41, it
would take my brother off to war,
where you had come from, it would
bring great snowfalls, graying
in the streets, and the news of death
racing through the halls of my school.
I was growing. Soon I would be
your height, and you'd tell me
eye to eye, "Some day the world
is ours, some day you will see."
And your eyes burned in your fine
white face until I thought you
would burn. That was the winter
of '41, Bataan would fall
to the Japanese and Sam Baghosian
would make the long march
with bayonet wounds in both legs,
and somehow in spite of burning acids
splashed across his chest and the acids
of his own anger rising toward his heart
he would return to us and eat
the stale bread of victory. Cipriano,
do you remember what followed
the worst snow? It rained all night
and in the dawn the streets gleamed,
and within a week wild phlox leaped
in the open fields. I told you
our word for it, "Spring," and you said,
"Spring, spring, it always come after."
Soon the Germans rolled east
into Russia and my cousins died. I
walked alone in the warm spring winds
of evening and said, "Dignity." I said
your words, Cipriano, into the winds.
I said, "Someday this will all be ours."
Come back, Cipriano Mera, step
out of the wind and dressed in the robe of your pain tell me again
that this
world will be ours. Enter my dreams
or my life, Cipriano, come back
out of the wind.

— *from* One for the Rose *by Philip Levine, Atheneum, N.Y., 1981*

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Fifty years on the left

by Grace Lee Boggs

What role can/should human values and conscious choice play in how we make our livings? Must we accept and adapt to rapidly developing high technology which makes people expendable and a global economy which pits us in competition with superexploited workers all over the world? Or can/should we create a more community-based, human-scale economy which is more susceptible to human control? What is a good job? Is it a job with a large corporation where you make or hope to make a lot of money? Or is it one which, even though it pays less, helps to strengthen our families and communities and enhances the way we live with one another and in nature?

When Jimmy and I became movement activists more than 50 years ago no one we knew was asking questions like these. Conventional wisdom viewed the marriage between industry and science as an unmitigated blessing, making possible the material abundance which would eventually eliminate hunger and homelessness along with rural backwardness and superstitions. The capitalist claim, which most Americans accepted, was that the benefits of economic expansion would eventually trickle down to the workers. On the other hand, radicals insisted, as Karl Marx put it so eloquently, that under capitalism "the advantages of modern industry are usurped and monopolized by a constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital," while the great majority suffer "misery, oppression, slavery, degradation and exploitation." But industrial expansion, Marx said, also creates the basis for a new society because, along with the degradation, "grows the revolt of the working class, a class always increasing in numbers and disciplined, united, organized by the very mechanism of the process of capitalist production itself."

The Great Depression and the organization of the CIO in the 1930s brought these words to life, giving radicals the confidence that as industry continued to expand, the growing militancy of the always increasing working class would lead to the overthrow of capitalism and its replacement by socialism. We were pretty vague about what socialism would look like in the United States. But in general we envisaged it as a society which would be more just, more cooperative and less competitive because there would be a more equitable distribution of the abundance made possible by industrialization.

In the 1930s, we were pretty vague about what socialism would look like in the United States. But we envisaged it as a society which would be more just, more cooperative and less competitive because there would be a more equitable distribution of the abundance made possible by industrialization.

Meanwhile radicals were in the forefront of struggles for freedom, justice and equality. In 1931 the nine "Scottsboro Boys" accused of raping two white women in Alabama would have been legally or illegally lynched like thousands before them, had it not been for the national and international demonstrations organized by the Communist-led ILD (International Labor Defense). Communists, Trotskyites and Musteites played a pivotal role in organizing the CIO in the 1930s.

The first serious challenge to the prevailing faith in value-free science came in the wake of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. "Physicists have known sin," confessed J.Robert Oppenheimer, the director at Los Alamos. "When we split the atom we changed everything but the human mind," Einstein warned, adding that if he had his life to live over again he would have been a plumber. But few radicals paid any heed to this warning. Before World War II the great majority of Americans had lacked the elementary necessities of food, clothing and shelter. Therefore it seemed only right that after the war the newly organized unions should use their clout to wrest from corporations a more equitable share of the profits of expanding production.

Being "left" meant challenging unions to be more militant in their economic demands on corporations. It did not mean explaining that a higher standard of living for American workers was coming from U.S. domination of the world market, war production and advanced technology which would eventually displace workers. Nor did it mean challenging workers to reflect on the social, moral and environmental costs of pursuing an ever-higher standard of living.

The 1950s was a decade of expanding consumerism during which American workers became increasingly individual-

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James Boggs rises to make a point at the Grassroots Leadership Conference, November, 1963. (A photo of Grace Boggs — then Grace Lee — hangs on the wall at the far right.)

istic and materialistic. The GI Bill of Rights enabled millions of working-class Americans to go to college and become technicians and administrators. So people began to define individual upward mobility as the main purpose of education. Pursuing an ever-higher standard of living meant more jobs producing new appliances, new cars and new homes in the suburbs for technicians, managers and unionized workers who were beginning to see themselves as middle-class. So Americans began identifying American freedom and the purpose of America with the opportunity to acquire more things.

The Cold War against the Soviet Union created millions of jobs in defense plants. So the great majority of workers went their merry and not-so-merry way, ignoring the fact that unions had become an integral part of the military-industrial-university complex, red-baiting and purging the radicals who had helped organize the labor movement. The more Americans demonized the Soviet Union for its materialism, militarism, bureaucracy and "end justifies the means" philosophy, the more materialistic and militaristic we ourselves became, accepting as normal and natural the way that our own government was systematically feeding us disinformation and piling up nuclear weapons to kill millions of Soviet citizens and poison our planet ("better dead than red"). Only a few people, mainly in the anti-nuclear movement, had the courage to speak up.

The 1950s was a decade of expanding consumerism during which American workers became increasingly individualistic and materialistic.

Fortunately, beginning in 1955 with the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the moral descent of our country was checked by, first, the civil rights movement and, then, the anti-Vietnam-War movement. The struggle against racism here at home and peasant resistance to the U.S. hi-tech war machine in Southeast Asia forced Americans in all walks of life to struggle with one another over what it means to be a human being. Young whites, accusing their parents and teachers of tolerating racism and supporting the napalming of Vietnamese women and children because of their preoccupation with material comforts and their worship of science and technology, explored simpler, more cooperative ways of living. "We have met the enemy — and he is us," said Pogo.

"Our material power has outrun our

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spiritual power. We have guided missiles and misguided men," said Martin Luther King Jr. and urged the organizing of "self-transforming and structure-transforming" activities for young people to address the plight of "our dying cities."

Since the early 1970s a significant minority of Americans has been doing the patient theoretical and practical work necessary to create a new paradigm for fundamental social change in this country, a paradigm which combines internal and external transformation, fuses ethics with economics, strengthens families and communities, and protects the earth. Ecofeminist writers like Starhawk have exposed the historical origins of the rationalist philosophy which made possible the rise of modern science and industry. Our objective value-free approach to reality, our belief that only the quantifiable is real, our acceptance of a rigid separation between the body and the spirit, we have learned, was the creation of a male professional elite whose power was established through witchhunts which drove the intuitive knowledge and healing culture of women underground.

E.F.Schumacher challenged technological determinism or the theory that rapidly advancing people-displacing technology is inevitable. If we decide that we want a more human-scale society, he said, we can develop intermediate technologies which eliminate backbreaking labor but preserve skills and community. The New Alchemy Institute, founded by John and Nancy Todd, uses life sciences like biology to create new ethical and ecological ways to generate energy, construct dwellings and grow food, e.g. integrating gardening with fish farms.

In the last few years people in small towns and urban neighborhoods abandoned by multinational corporations all across the country have learned through painful experiences that we cannot depend upon outside corporations for reindustrialization. So grassroots organizations are taking a new look at the reservoir of human potential in our communities and struggling to create processes which involve the entire community in planning local economic development.

Up to now labor organizations have shown no interest in this still embryonic movement to rebuild and respirit our communities and cities from the ground up. Unions played at best a peripheral role in the civil rights and anti-Vietnam-War movements because the leadership was reluctant to confront the racism of rank-and-file white workers. These "hardhats" helped put Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan and George Bush in the White House. Seduced by promises of "lower taxes and less government" (code words for cutting welfare and other social programs which these workers saw as subsidizing blacks), they did not realize that Reagan's "magic of the marketplace" was a cover-up for the ruthlessness with which multinational corporations would eliminate millions of jobs through high tech and export overseas during the 1980s. They did not anticipate that by the end of the decade most of the gains in wealth and income would have gone to the top one percent of the population (millionaires jumped from 374,000 in 1980 to 1.3 million in 1988), while the income of the average family declined.

Fortunately, beginning in 1955 with the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the moral descent of our country was checked by, first, the civil rights movement and, then, the anti-Vietnam-War movement.

In the 1970s and early 1980s high tech and export of jobs overseas had mainly hit the unskilled and unorganized, especially young people in the inner city who had once been able to drop out of school and get a job in the factory making enough money to get married and raise a family. People were told that if they stayed in school there would be plenty of jobs in the service and information industries. However, by the early 1990s, corporations like IBM, Xerox, and Kodak had begun laying off technicians and management personnel by the tens of thousands. Between 1979 and 1992 4.4 million employees of Fortune 500 companies received pink slips, at a rate of about 340,000 a year.

That is why the mood in this country was not celebratory when Soviet Communism collapsed and the Cold War came to an end. By 1990 the post-World War II American Dream of unlimited prosperity had been replaced by the nightmare of spreading layoffs, crime, drugs, violence, homelessness, family breakdown and a $4 trillion national debt — all of which people sense are connected, although they are not sure how. Behind the bitter opposition of labor to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is the deepest distrust of U.S. capitalism since the Great Depression. Clinton won the Congressional battle for approval of NAFTA, but he has not convinced American workers that an increasingly hi-tech global economy which pits them against low-wage, overworked workers in Third World countries is in their interests or that producing for a growing world market will necessarily mean more jobs. (Between 1979 and 1992 output increased 35 percent while manufacturing jobs declined by 15 percent).

Labor's anti-NAFTA campaign went beyond purely economic issues to include concern for the environment and alliances with independent unions and community organizations in Mexico. NAFTA, said AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, is "an agreement that steers the

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power to shape society away from communities of people and toward the untender mercies of the unregulated marketplace." The debate over NAFTA, he said, is about "the basic rights of men and women to stand on their own two feet and control their own political and economic destinies." It is about "whether the American people are going to retain their ability to shape change and to have a say in creating the world of tomorrow."

Kirkland's statement is only the tip of the iceberg. All over the country ordinary Americans are raising new questions about what kind of an economy will work for people. Inner city residents as well as university graduates are wondering why we can't start our own businesses and create our own jobs, now that we can no longer depend upon GM or Ford to provide them for us. Middle managers who have been laid off after years of working for IBM *et al.* are wondering whether it was a mistake in the first place to commit a lifetime to corporations who have no loyalty to this country, let alone to a city, community or individual.

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Early on in our development as movement activists and theoreticians, Jimmy and I rejected the leftist paradigm as too economist and too determinist. An African American born and raised in the South and an auto worker for 28 years, Jimmy knew that poor whites and white workers threatened with layoffs are more likely to vent their frustration on blacks than on their oppressors. So he was very wary of the radical romanticization of the militancy of the oppressed. The African-American culture which he drew on for his politics was that which gave birth to the civil-rights movement in the South: extended families, close-knit communities, making a way out of no way, and the refusal down through the dark past of slavery, Jim Crow and capitalist exploitation to allow the inhumanity of your oppressors to undermine your own humanity.

Over the years we have tried to project ideas and practical actions which challenge those with real grievances to rise above a victim mentality, to see themselves as citizens rather than subjects, to change themselves as they are changing reality. That is why we have emphasized the fundamental distinction between rebellion, which is usually a spontaneous reaction or protest by the oppressed, and revolution, which advances human beings to a higher level of creativity, consciousness and self-consciousness, and political and social responsibility.

For example, in 1960 the Women Strike for Peace movement against the bomb and the civil rights movement were both gaining momentum. But Women Strike for Peace leaders hesitated to raise civil-rights issues for fear of alienating their white middle-class constituency, while most blacks saw the bomb as a "white issue." So we formed the Independent Negro Committee To Ban The Bomb And Racism, challenging both groups to stretch their humanity.

Jimmy originated the concept of black political power in 1963. However, because he recognized how easily black power could become just a way to replace white faces with black ones, he was always emphasizing how black power could/should revolutionize America for the benefit of all the people.



Jimmy and Grace Boggs in 1991, two years before his death.

By the early 1970s crime in the black community was spreading because the 1967-68 rebellions had legitimized looting as a badge of militancy and blackness. So we put out a statement, entitled "Crime Among Our People," calling upon revolutionary leadership to make a clear distinction between criminal acts and political acts and repudiate anti-social behavior against *any* people, regardless of race, class or gender. To show that we "Value People More Than Things," we proposed that community people pledge with one another not to buy stolen or "hot" goods.

In 1988, as members of the Detroit

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coalition which came together to defeat the mayor's proposal to create jobs through casino gambling, we emphasized the need to create alternatives. "Our concern," we said, "is with how our city has been disintegrating socially, economically, politically, morally and ethically. We are convinced that we cannot depend upon one industry or any large corporation to provide us with jobs. It is now up to us — the citizens of Detroit — to put our hearts, our imaginations, our minds and our hands together to create a vision and project concrete programs for developing the kinds of local enterprises that will provide meaningful jobs and income for all citizens."

The best way for our children to learn is through a curriculum centered around community-building and the ecology of our communities. The absence of opportunities to be useful and productive is one of the main causes of youth violence.

In 1992 we initiated Detroit Summer, a multicultural, intergenerational program/movement bringing youth volunteers in from across the country to work with local youth volunteers and community people on community-building projects: creating community parks out of vacant lots, planting community gardens, rehabbing houses, painting community murals, marching against crackhouses. During Detroit Summer 1994 we hope to sow the seeds of a local economy by organizing a bazaar where neighborhood residents can exchange goods and services [Detroit Summer; 4605 Cass Ave.; Detroit MI 48201; (313) 832 2904]. "Just as in the early 60s," Jimmy wrote two months before his death, "SNCC youth spearheaded a new direction in the struggle for civil rights in the South, so young people today can inspire Detroiters to pioneer in building the city of the 21st Century — as we pioneered in the struggle for the dignity of labor in the 1930s and for black political power in the 1960s and 1970s."

It is an exciting time but it is also a dangerous time because over the years so many layers of Americans have been able to resolve their grievances on an economic basis without stretching their humanity. Workers were not stretched to deal with questions of race, nuclear war and ecology; blacks to deal with questions of gender and anti-social behavior. Now we face a crisis even deeper than that of the Great Depression because our families, communities and schools are in shambles. Worldwide, largely because of our addiction to consumerism, we face environmental catastrophe in the form of global warming, deterioration of our forests and arable soil and extinction of species. Because of huge deficits at the national, state and local levels, we must depend upon people power, not government programs. Meanwhile millions of immigrants, mostly people of color, are coming to this country in pursuit of the American Dream. So right-wing groups which encourage us to deal with economic crisis by demonizing other groups flourish because over the years we have been allowed to evade the challenge of respecting diversity.

But it is also an exciting time because we now face both the necessity and the opportunity to build a movement to create new dreams for the 21st century. To rise to this challenge, we need to free ourselves of old ideas and old paradigms and create new ones. Blacks need to recognize that the time has come to move beyond civil rights; e.g., as long as we view crime and violence as civil-rights issues, we are still making excuses and evading the challenge of organizing the kinds of struggles that will meet the basic economic and human needs of everyone, especially our young people. In the last 20 years this evasion has taken a heavy toll in lives lost to drugs and violence. We cannot afford another year, another month, another hour of excuses.

Today's issues are interconnected. Race, class and gender groups need to go beyond identity struggles to grapple with the question of how we all make our livings. The issue of jobs cannot be separated from that of our relationship with the earth and our social relationships which were deteriorating while we were making what we thought were good livings. Nor can we allow the legitimate concern for jobs to blind us to the reality that global economic war can only end, like the Cold War, with no winners.

The crisis in our schools has to be linked to the crisis in our communities and in our environment. The best way for our children to learn is through a curriculum centered around community-building and the ecology of our communities. The absence of opportunities to be useful and productive is a main cause of youth violence.

Radicals need to stop depending on the struggles of Third World peoples. Maybe the most important contribution we can make to Third World struggles is the creation of working examples of community-based economic development here at home.

All over the country ordinary people are grappling with new questions of economics, ecology, education and how to live in harmony with one another. The place where all these issues come together is in our communities. The time has come to put our buckets down in our communities and begin rebuilding our economy *and* our social ties from the ground up. TW

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Pulling together an agenda

an interview with Manning Marable

Manning Marable, a contributing editor to The Witness, *is an unapologetic socialist who spends much of his time trying to support the fledgling efforts of many groups trying to increase public access to "the levers of power." He is director of the African-American Studies Institute at Columbia University.* The Witness *reached him recently by telephone (no easy feat during black history month).*

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann: There's been a flurry of writing about socialism in the last six months. *Christian Century* had an article that you may have seen saying that Christians on the left should apologize for ever having embraced socialism.

Manning Marable: Wow!

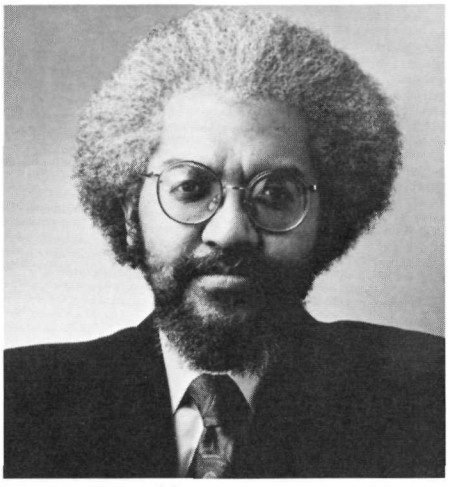
J.W-K.: And *The Nation* just did an article that said that socialism is dead and we have to move on. Do you have a definition of socialism?

M.M.: To me, the essence of socialism is the quest for human equality and social justice. At the root is the idea that there should not be arbitrary or oppressive hierarchies which divide human beings, and that everyone should have a social context for development which presumes the inherent equality of all people. That presumes a new social contract between people and the state.

J.W-K.: So is the quest for equality dead?

M.M.: It can't be. It's immoral and indefensible to have a society as wealthy as ours where 37 million people lack any form of medical care. Or where there are two to three million Americans who are either homeless or near-homeless. New York has 90 thousand homeless people. Six out of 10 black children under the age of six are not immunized in New York City. There's something inherently wrong when you have a society where the prison population has more than doubled since 1985, so that prisons become a way of warehousing surplus labor.

Now socialism is an approach which places humanity at the very center of our collective endeavors. That's why I still am a socialist. We need a new social contract which is democratic — we need the right not to go hungry; the right to affordable shelter; the right to free public education — and not just K through 12, but free or low-cost college education.



Manning Marable Courtesy of Columbia University

J.W-K.: Does this mean we're looking toward a corporate state where there's corporate ownership and corporate management?

M.M.: Oh, no. No, no. The methods with which advocates of socialism have attempted to intervene institutionally for this egalitarian social contract have been not just flawed, but oftentimes grievously wrong.

J.W-K.: Say a little about that.

M.M.: Well, in terms of authoritarian or totalitarian methods of socialism, these have advocated a social contract where the state and its prerogatives take precedence over humanity. Where that has happened, where people have advocated the idea of a vanguard party or a state over and above the wishes of the people, there have been terrible crimes against humanity. But, by the same token, the crimes of Stalinism or Maoism find parallels in authoritarian and dictatorial capitalism — from Nazi Germany to Chile after Allende's overthrow.

J.W-K.: If not dead, is a socialist spirit alive and well in the United States?

M.M.: No, it's not. As in the 1950s, we in the 1990s have — from the media, the universities and political centers — high hosannas to capitalism.

The fatal flaw in their apologetics is that capitalism is like poker. Somebody wins and many people lose. It's inherent in the structure that people accumulate capital at the expense of others' labor through exploitation.

It is a deliberate process. So it's not surprising that blacks throughout the 20th century had unemployment rates at about two to two-and-a-half times the level of whites. Or that women received something like one-third less of the income they should earn for a comparable job that men do. Or that black families earn only 55 percent of the median income of the typical white family. These are features of capitalism in America.

Socialism is not going to, by itself, transform these class and gender and racial realities. We have to approach this question in a three-tiered way: immediate demands, short-term coalitions and long-term vision.

There are immediate problems of daily life which exist especially in our central

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Artist **Eleanor Mill** is syndicated from Hartford, Conn.

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cities, everything from police brutality to hospitals closing. People who are inspired by socialism mobilize people to defend human rights and to defend the ideals of social justice around day-to-day issues.

In terms of short-term alliances, I'm a democratic socialist, but I'm also a multicultural democrat. I believe deeply in a vision of democracy which is pluralistic, ethnically and culturally. I believe in a democracy which actively deconstructs the idea of race, because race is based on a lie — the idea that some human beings are superior to others. Democratic socialists have a role to play in bridging racial and ethnic divisions.

And then, finally, the long-term vision. You are not going to have an end to racial inequality in the context of capitalism as it exists today.

The idea of race emerged in the context of the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the expansion of capitalism and colonialism across the globe from Europe. The idea of whiteness as a racial social construction emerges in the 17th and 18th centuries out of the expansion of capitalism, the forced migration of millions of African laborers to the Western Hemisphere and the elimination of millions of Native American people on this continent. So ideas of racial supremacy and capitalist production are so intertwined that to demolish the concept of racism one has to seriously look at the dynamics of capitalism which give racism life and form. What racism ultimately is, at a day-to-day level, is a tax, a hidden, invisible tax on the productivity, the aspirations, the talents, the energies of people of color.

Now I don't have any illusions about some socialist system which has previously existed addressing problems in this country in any kind of comprehensive way. The big mistake that socialists made in the 20th century was the presumption that there will be one model of social development and transformation, whether it's the Soviet Union, China, Vietnam or Cuba.

J.W-K.: So are we struggling by trial and error?



Eleanor Mill

M.M.: No, the key is really listening to the people's voice. People in the community understand what is wrong with this society.They understand the homelessness, the violence, the drugs, the prostitution and the cops who do nothing about it. They see the dynamics of oppression and the consequences of exploitation. The problem is that people don't know what to do.

I didn't become a socialist because I read Karl Marx's *Das Kapital.* I became a socialist because I was deeply active in the Episcopal Youth Movement as the leader of our youth group at St. Margaret's in Dayton, Ohio. What brought me to socialism was this idea that it was morally and ethically indefensible to have a society as wealthy as ours where there were so many people in pain.

J.W-K.: For awhile we had a sense that we knew where we were going because we could look at other societies like Cuba or Nicaragua. We could look to the unions and to the civil-rights movement. How do we recognize our allies now?

M.M.: I would argue that now our allies would be located largely around the problematics of the cities. To me, the future of left politics will not be class-based, in a narrow sense, or race-based; it will be based largely in a redefinition of community in the context of the urban centers of this country.

A huge percentage of people in the United States live in metropolitan areas. What brings them together? What gives them a sense of common purpose? Most people today, unlike in Karl Marx's day, do not spend most of their time at work. They spend most of their time at home. What brings them together in their neighborhoods or communities? The environment, public transportation, health-care delivery systems, public schools, education. So living-space issues are increasing in significance and providing a framework for an alternative social vision, an alternative social contract between the people and the state.

The future of left politics will not be class-based, in a narrow sense, or race-based; it will be based largely in a redefinition of community in the context of the urban centers of this country.

J.W-K.: In the past, the left imagined that all social change was going to come through the workforce.

M.M.: That's right; and now I'm envisioning that the critical cutting edge in the 21st century

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will be the urban living space.

I focus on the cities because, ultimately, that's where the contradictions are clearest and most pressing, and because no one — not Clinton, not anybody in Congress —can articulate two words, "urban policy."

We just had the largest racial conflagration in American history a year-and-a-half ago in Los Angeles and no one has said anything about this in terms of a domestic urban development agenda in Congress. It didn't go anywhere. We didn't get a summer jobs bill last year or anything. And people wonder why the cities are ablaze?

J.W-K.: What you're saying is pretty radical within socialist thought. At least, my experience of folks in the DSA [Democratic Socialists of America] in Detroit has been that if you tried to organize around a community in the city, they would tell you that was petty *bourgeois* — the revolution was going to come from the laborers. I heard somebody say populist struggles have a lot of spark, but always lose and are not going to bring the revolution. What you're talking about sounds like populism to me.

M.M.: Well, it's true that the contradiction that occurs at the point of production is critical. But I am saying that we have to broaden our definition of the character of the struggles. Like environmental racism — two-thirds of all toxic dumps in the United States are within about a 20-mile radius of black or Latino communities across the country. These are issues of legitimate struggle which will redefine the social contract in this country, and ultimately, that's what democratic socialism should be about.

J.W-K.: Is there a role for unions?

M.M.: Oh, yes, even though unions now represent less than 15 percent of the U.S. population, the role of the organized working class is still very important.

But we have to approach the question of the role of unions — and I know you're in Detroit — not as prefiguring or determining all other labor issues. The danger in this is a kind of class reductionism.

J.W-K.: Is it important for us to continue to identify ourselves as socialists? A lot of what you're describing is biblical ...

M.M.: Well, you know what? The older I become, the more I realize that there is a happy convergence between my sense of ethics and and my political vision. The strength of a Martin King and a Walter Rodney in the Caribbean, or W. E. B. Dubois, or Fannie Lou Hamer, is this unity between a moral vision and a political vision. I believe very deeply that people of a faith perspective within the faith community will provide the type of leadership that is absolutely essential in redefining the democratic social contract in this country.

I don't have a fetish about the word "socialism." People don't have to use a word or a label to be a part of the solution.

What has to be done over the next 10 to 20 years is to fight to reverse the impact of Reaganism — the economic austerity, the absence of an urban policy, environmental racism and sexism.

In the long run we have to look at the inherent inequality of our economic order. For democracy to function all people must have true opportunity and access to the levers of power and privilege, to decision-making. So, I continue to use the term democratic socialism, not because I think it's a cure-all, but because, in part, it helps to explain the nature of the social vision I have and the moral imperative I feel. TW

Electoral strategy

The essential socialist project is about equality — efforts promoting the empowerment of working people and other oppressed sectors of society, and the redistribution of power from the few to the many.

And that's no liberalism.

If "equality" and "empowerment" are what socialists should seek — not the "equal opportunities" under capitalism and "greater social fairness" sought by liberals — then we must rethink our interventions within the electoral arena.

My own inside-outside approach is:

*We must work for and support progressive and liberal Democrats, strengthening the party's liberal wing but making clear distinctions between their politics and ours.

* We must support nonsectarian, popular third-party efforts, such as the pending formation of the Vermont Progressive Party.

* We must aggressively work toward structural reforms within the electoral system. These would include fair ballot access for third parties and independent candidates; permitting candidates to have "cross endorsements" or "fusion" between small third parties and the major capitalist parties, as advocated by the New Party; proportional representation in local races and ultimately in Federal elections; and, most importantly, public financing of elections.

* We must do much more to expand the potential electoral base of the left by engaging in voter education and registration campaigns. Part of the success of the Rainbow Coalition in 1984 and 1988 came from registering hundreds of thousands of new voters, most of whom were African-Americans, Latinos, students, working people and the poor.

—M.M., excerpted from "A New American Socialism," The Progressive, *February, 1993.*

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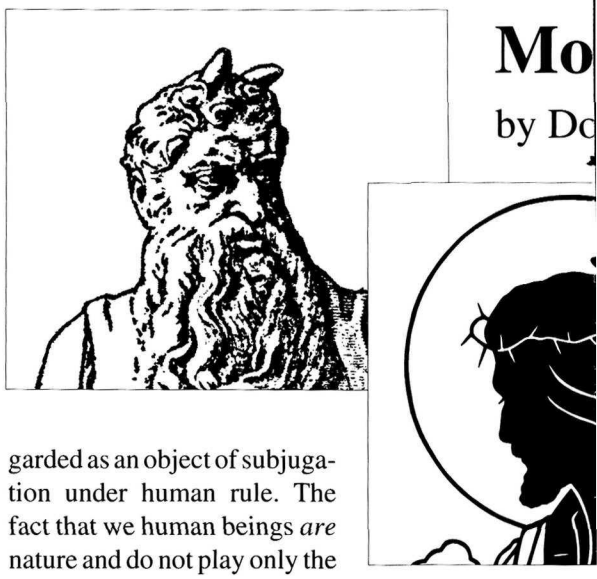
An elderly Jewish woman friend in the United States said: "Look: Moses on Sinai, Jesus of Nazareth, and Karl Marx from Trier. There are three Jewish attempts to humanize humanity. Rather futile, it seems to me." This sarcasm came to my mind again when I read the sentence on a building wall in the former East Germany: "Marx is dead and Jesus lives!"

My elderly friend had combined the three Jews from world history because they all formulated the conditions for a more just society at definite historical turning points: Moses, in the transition from a nomadic to agricultural society, designated human rights in the form of the Ten Commandments; Jesus of Nazareth, living under the despotism and militarism of the Roman Empire, proclaimed a nonviolent ethic, the Sermon on the Mount; and Karl Marx, under industrial capitalism, gave the old hopes of people a new form in scientific socialism. Are all three dead? Moses, who deciphered "You shall not murder" as the message of the mysterious God? Jesus, with his absurd idea not to prepare to kill or bomb away one's enemies but to love them? And Karl Marx, who wanted to overturn "all conditions in which people are degraded, abandoned or held in contempt?"

A Christian journal in the United States recently asked me in an interview: "Some read present events in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union as a triumph of democracy in the best sense. Others see it as a triumph of capitalism and individualism in the worst sense. How do you understand this turnabout?" With this either-or I could do nothing. I had to condescend to take up an idea that I had avoided for a long time, the idea of "democratic capitalism," about which Christian thinkers in the States speak in beautiful openness. This idea seems clearer to me than the idea of the "social market economy," preferred among us, where I never know exactly how far the adjective social really extends with rents, land prices, unemployment, medical care, and many other questions.

I think these two elements, democracy and capitalism, have won against the bureaucratically centralized coercive organization. The state-socialist attempt at building a solidarity society has failed — and not only in Europe.

The reasons for the failure of socialism can be identified in many places: a concentration of political power without opposition, a bureaucracy that left people without rights and apathetic, the command economy without individual incentives, corruption without any democratic controls by the media, extreme militarism, which even today — in Russia — still commissions and serves itself. The abolition of private property in the means of production in no way removed the naturally growing interests and inequalities but multiplied them in other forms of the domination of people over people. State-socialist education led to qualities like adaptation, cringing before bosses, and cynicism toward one's own critical convictions. A determinism from the philosophy of history, which asserted the destruction of capitalism and the victory of socialism as scientific predictions, was not disturbed by any sense of reality; it contributed decisively to the dogmatization of specific intellectual positions. A falsely understood materialism did not see human corporeality and our membership in nature. Instead, nature was regarded as an object of subjugation under human rule. The fact that we human beings *are* nature and do not play only the role of exploiter in relation to the natural foundations of life was overlooked in the eastern and western intellectual systems of industrialism.



That the capitalist way brings hunger, misery, and increasing indebtedness for the peoples of the third world has been evident for a long time and, since the debt crisis, can no longer be denied even by the most obstinate defenders of democratic capitalist development. In the last seven years the poor countries have transferred more money to the rich lands than they have received in developmental aid. The question resulting from the analysis of the third world is whether there is any kind of hope any more for the poor under the absolute monarchy of capitalism. Must they play the role of raw material suppliers and cheap work slaves forever? Must they give away their lands for military bases and toxic waste dumps, and their children to prostitution?

The democratic element that makes capitalism tolerable, profitable, and — within limits — legally secure at the center fails along the periphery. The most barbaric military dictatorships were supported for decades by the superpowers when they only guaranteed privileges, power, markets, and tax advantages for

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Dorothee Sölle is a contributing editor to *The Witness.* These reflections, which she offers from her own context in Germany, are based on a section of her new book, *On Earth As In Heaven,* Westminster/John Knox Press, Louisville, Ky., 1993. Moses is a rubber-stamp image from Alice in Rubberland, Los Angeles, Calif. and Jesus by artist **Dan Paulos** of Albuquerque, N.M.

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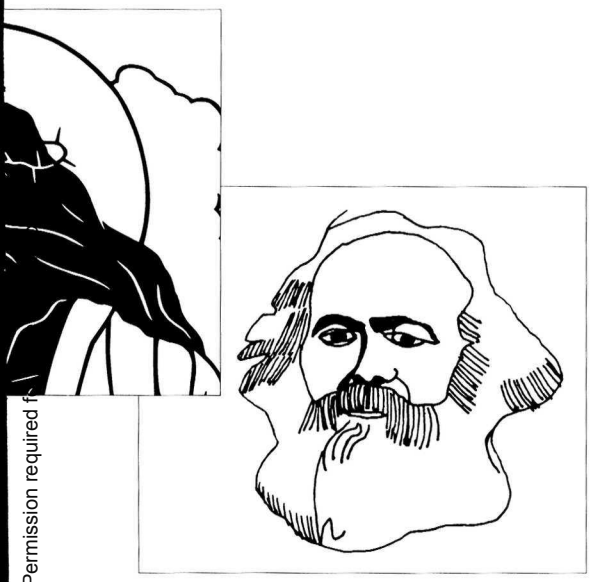
ses, Jesus and Marx

rothee Sölle



capital. None of this has been changed by the fetish of free elections. It is part of the nature of democratic capitalism that on the plane of world trade relations, it needs democratic masks not at all or only as an occasional disguise.

Capitalism has won its battle with state socialism and turned out to be more stable and life-enhancing. But the poor — a third here in the West and three-quarters of the whole human family — have lost. Still there will be another victim of free enterprise: our mother the earth.

The North's model of civilization cannot be generalized; it is not even true for the North. A world with three billion autos, 400 million tons of meat, 40 million megawatts of electrical capacity, and 12 billion tons of oil per year is not possible on this planet. Thus the promise of capitalism that everyone can share in the wealth and prosperity cannot be redeemed socially and is also ecologically totally hopeless, without a future. Does capitalism not have the same relation to nature as state socialism? It treats nature like women, like savages, like objects that have to be investigated and penetrated so they can be controlled and exploited. Capitalism does not have any notion of beauty other than commercialization.

Capitalism can be criticized not only because of the exploitation that it inflicts on the majority but also on account of its destruction of human desires. "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matt.6:19-21). The ability to desire, to dream, and to yearn is part of human nature. We do not know another person when we do not know her or his vision.

The supposed death of socialism means that capitalism confirms itself as the only possible basis for human existence. The earth has become a colony of capitalism. In all preindustrial societies the individual was not defined exclusively as *homo oeconomicus*. He and she were beings who also engaged in singing, praying, and playing, creating myths and giving meaning, things now regarded as superfluous, not purposefully rational. Economic instrumental reason clips the wings of the bird so it can no longer fly. A central project of capitalism is to clip the wings of the bird so that the bird reinterprets its desires.

People fall into the traps of working and consuming and ignore the limitations of nature and the limitations of material needs. In a kind of production mania — without limits, without a sabbath, and without a consciousness of death — the material world-culture that appears without alternative is accepted as the only possible culture. That we submit to this false authority is the spiritual death in which we live.

State socialism is dead, but socialism as a utopia of solidarity is still urgently needed. The state socialism already democratized by Lenin and made into an instrument of terror by Stalin has no chance anymore. However, the poor of the earth have not disappeared, and the problems that need another social order founded on solidarity have not been solved and are not solvable by the enlightened self-interest on which capitalism rests ethically.

If we allow the dream that the hungry will be satisfied to be prohibited, then we have separated ourselves from God, or in any case from the God of the Bible. Capitalism does not forbid this dream, because that is not a modern method, but sees to it that we forget the dream. When that does not work, because of troublesome obstructionists like Isaiah and Jesus, another method is introduced: the dream is made ridiculous. Acceptance of utopias is disappearing; the dream of daily bread for all is not on the agenda of the postmodern consciousness. The thousand children who die of hunger every day in Brazil alone have no news value. Perhaps the mild cynicism of our culture is the best deterrent against this ability to believe and imagine, this loving and acting that seeks more in life than we already have. Nevertheless, this deterrent will not function for everyone and certainly not forever. There is something ineradicable about faith, hope, and love. One may criticize the anthropology of previous socialism for being too optimistic. However, the cynical anthropology of existing capitalism is unbearable for the spiritually gifted. Present reality is not everything! A transcendence stirs within us that cannot be satisfied. Even an economically stable capitalism will not succeed in smothering this stirring. For God wants to believe in us, to hope in us, and to become one with us in love. TW

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On a Highway East of Selma, Alabama, July 1965

by Gregory Orr

As the sheriff remarked: I had no business being there. He was right, but for the wrong reasons. Among that odd crew of volunteers from the North, I was by far the most inept and least effective. I couldn't have inspired or assisted a woodchuck to vote.

In fact, when the sheriff's buddies nabbed me on the highway east of Selma, I'd just been released from ten days of jail in Mississippi. I was fed up and terrified; I was actually fleeing north and glad to go.

*

In Jackson, they'd been ready for the demonstration. After the peaceful arrests, after the news cameras recorded us being quietly ushered onto trucks, the doors were closed and we headed for the county fairgrounds.

Once we passed its gates, it was a different story: the truck doors opened on a crowd of state troopers waiting to greet us with their nightsticks out. Smiles beneath mirrored sunglasses and blue riot helmets; smiles above badges taped so numbers didn't show.

For the next twenty minutes, they clubbed us, and it kept up at intervals, more or less at random, all that afternoon and into the evening.

Next morning we woke to new guards who did not need to conceal their names or faces. A little later, the FBI arrived to ask if anyone had specific complaints about how they'd been treated and by whom.

But late that first night, as we sat bolt upright in rows on the concrete floor of the cattle barn waiting for mattresses to arrive, one last precise event: a guard stopped in front of the ten-year-old black kid next to me. He pulled a "FREEDOM NOW" pin from the kid's shirt, made him put it in his mouth, then ordered him to swallow.

*

That stakeout at dusk on route 80 east of Selma was intended for someone else, some imaginary organizer rumored to be headed toward their dismal, Godforsaken town. Why did they stop me?

The New York plates, perhaps, and that little bit of stupidity: the straw hat I wore, a souvenir of Mississippi.

Siren-wail from an unmarked car behind me — why should I think they were cops? I hesitated, then pulled to the shoulder. The two who jumped out waved pistols, but wore no uniforms or badges. By then, my doors were locked, my windows rolled. Absurd sound of a pistol barrel rapping the glass three inches from my face: "Get out, you son of a bitch, or we'll blow your head off."

When they found pamphlets on the back seat they were sure they'd got the right guy. The fat one started poking my stomach with his gun, saying, "Boy we're gonna dump you in the swamp."

*

It was a long ride through the dark, a ride full of believable threats, before they arrived at that hamlet with its cinderblock jail.

He was very glad to see it, that adolescent I was twenty years ago. For eight days he cowered in his solitary cell, stinking of dirt and fear. He's cowering there still, waiting for me to come back and release him by turning his terror into art. But consciously or not, he made his choice and he's caught in history.

And if I reach back now, it's only to hug him and tell him to be brave, to remember that black kid who sat beside him in the Mississippi darkness. And to remember that silence shared by guards and prisoners alike as they watched in disbelief the darkness deepening around the small shape in his mouth, the taste of metal, the feel of the pin against his tongue.

It's too dark for it to matter what's printed on the pin; it's too dark for anything but the brute fact that someone wants him to choke to death on its hard shape.

And still he refuses to swallow.

*— from **New and Selected Poems,** Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Conn., 1973. Gregory Orr grew up in the rural Hudson valley and is now a professor of English at the University of Virginia. Orr has held fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Fulbright Program, and the National Endowment for the Arts.*

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Plowshares action

"This is the real world. DEFCOM Charlie. Exercises canceled." So word of a plowshares action travelled around the Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in Goldsboro, North Carolina, at 4:15 a.m. December 7, 1993. The disarmament work was at first seen by airmen and security personnel of the base as some part of the War Games in which they were involved in those early hours. "But you don't understand," one of the airmen said. "These people are hammering on the planes. This is the real world!"

Philip Berrigan, John Dear, S.J., Lynn Fredriksson and Bruce Friedrich, calling themselves the Pax Christi — Spirit of Life Plowshares, hammered on an F15 Eagle — a bomber used against Iraq which costs $40 million to produce and $6,000 worth of fuel for every hour in the air. All four were arrested and are being held in the Robeson County Detention Center in Lumberton, N.C. awaiting a grand jury indictment.

***Year One*, December 1993**

A word from jail

The challenge before us, as I reflect on it in jail, is to offer the possibilities of nonviolence to humanity. As Bonhoeffer said, we are called to speak the truth and say our prayers. The rest is in God's hands.

Whatever work we are involved in — in churches, soup kitchens, shelters, hospitals or schools — all our efforts can become opportunities to proclaim peace and renounce war. If we pursue the holy spirit of peace, our nonviolent actions can have spiritual ripple effects beyond our imaginings. With that faith, we can go forward to experiment with the gospel right where are.

—John Dear, a Jesuit priest in jail for being part of the Pax Christi Plowshares, faces ten years in prison. His book, *Seeds of Nonviolence,* is available from Fortkamp.

Coalfield justice

"A tremendous victory has been won for the United Mine Workers of America, their families and communities," says Jim Sessions, of the Religious Leaders for Coalfield Justice.

The seven-month strike of the UMWA against the companies of the Bituminous Coal Operators Association ended on December 14, when rank-and-file miners voted overwhelmingly to accept the settlement negotiated between the union and the BCOA. In seven states, 17,700 miners returned to work under an agreement that provides for an end to double-breasting in the coal industry, greater job security, a better health plan, increased wages, an improved pension plan and company and union bonuses.

Sessions cited contributions by the religious community, among them: visits to the coalfields and picketlines; meetings with CEOs; the engagement of the Church of England and U.S. church leaders with Lord Hanson in London, owner of Peabody; full-page newspaper ads calling for a peaceful and just settlement without the provocation of replacement workers; withstanding the well-financed and sophisticated communications blitz against miners' support; public occasions on which religious leaders called for peaceful and just resolution to the dispute.

Kick ass

"I think you need to protest. That's part of the fun. Instead of sitting around and moaning and bitching and complaining, just say it out loud. You'll feel better." Miyeung Lee, who works at the East By Area Local Development Corporation, is a member of Korean American Sisters in Solidarity or "KICK ASS" — a Korean American women's drumming ensemble with a political perspective. Their music is as rowdy as their name. If the drumming doesn't shatter your eardrums, it definitely shatters the stereotype of Asian women as quiet and reticent.

Talking to the members of Kick ASS, it's easy to get the feeling that their goals are modest, even simplistic. They don't pretend to be involved in some project that is about the change the world, and yet they use their art and culture to support their political work [they all have political jobs] in ways that other activists might envy.

"Women don't have these grandiose ideas about what the social changes ought to be. We're so sick and tired of that kind of b.s. What we wanted to do was to really connect everything that we do with ourselves and with our lives."

The Kick ASS women have used Korean drumming to learn about their own cultural heritage. "I think in order to successfully involve yourself in community politics, you need a strong sense of self," said Eungie Joo.

"There's something about drumming," adds Helen Kim, "that gets to the core of you."

The kind of music they play is called *mingoon*. It is traditionally a people's music created by Korean peasants. Activists have revitalized *mingoon* to express the "joy, sadness and frustration that we as Korean Americans feel here as one of the minority populations," Lee said.

Ikuko Sato
***Third Force*, August, 1993**

Witness for Peace celebrates ten years

Starting in defense of the Nicaraguans, Witness for Peace developed a politics of accompaniment in October, 1983. Citizens from the U.S. visited for two weeks at a time, touring war-torn areas and speaking with *campesinos* and government officials. Witness for Peace is now active in Guatemala and El Salvador as well. Columbia may be added to the list.

Witness for Peace Newsletter
2201 P. St. NW, Room 109,
Washington D.C., 20037

Short takes

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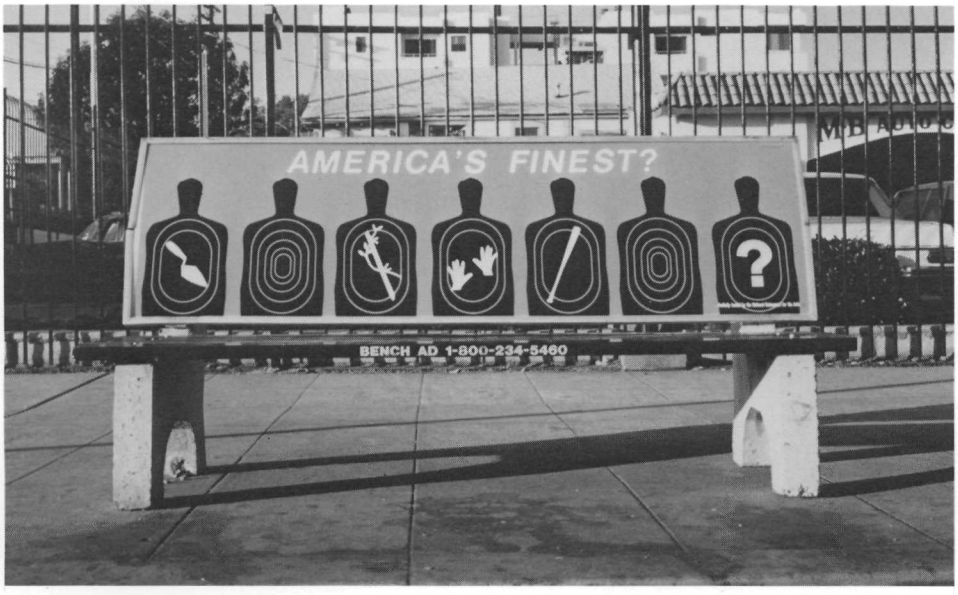
America's finest?

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

Just over a decade ago, one million people marched through the streets of New York City in a massive protest against the world's buildup of nuclear weapons. At every turn, there seemed to be yet another group organizing around a peace or social justice issue. Today, in comparison, progressive coalitions are disbanding and alternative news publications are filing for bankrupcy. A kind of complacency seems to have settled over the political landscape — especially of the left.

Unfortunately, the disappearance from our mass consciousness of many of the burning topics of the 1980s is more a result of an image projected by the U.S. news media than it is a reflection of the reality of global events. There are still enough nuclear weapons deployed to destroy the earth many times over; the political violence south of our borders continues; poverty and homelessness continue unabated in the U.S. But these issues are presented only sporadically, and little substantive analysis is done to reveal their histories, underlying foundations and linkages.



"America's Finest?" **1990, Deborah Small, Elizabeth Sisco, Scott Kessler and Louis Hock**

Also receiving minimal news coverage are the continuing efforts and achievements of groups that work to correct societal problems. In this sort of political environment it requires great perseverance, or luck, for such a group to attract the media's attention, and a very special kind of savvy to get beyond a soundbite.

One group of artists in California that has done extraordinarily well despite these realities is a group made up of David Avalos, Louis Hock and Elizabeth Sisco, with the participation of Scott Kessler, Carla Kirkwood and Deborah Small. They have been working together for more than six years, with a consistent focus on the problems in and around their home of San Diego. Through the skillful garnering of media attention, they are able to use their art to keep important issues of ecomomic justice, racism and violence alive in the public arena.

In 1988, for example, San Diego was experiencing a peak of civic self-congratulation because of the approaching Super Bowl. That week, the group's posters appeared on the backs of one hundred city buses; instead of carrying the ubiquitous local promotional motto, "America's Finest City," these posters proclaimed "America's Finest Tourist Plantation." The message was intensified by visual images describing the plight of undocumented workers, many of whom provide the foundation for San Diego's vacation-based economy. Individual reactions gave way to a public debate that spread across television, radio and newsprint.

One year later, the group installed a billboard criticizing San Diego's political stalemate in deciding whether or not to name its new convention center after Martin Luther King Jr. Another public uproar ensued. In 1992, a series of billboards, with the letters "NHI," criticized the San Diego police for allegedly using the term "No Humans Involved" in connection with the homicides, during a four-year period, of 45 women, many of them prostitutes. In a related work, 25 "ads" appeared on bus stop benches throughout the city in the midst of mounting community concern over a number of police shootings of unarmed citizens. The benches depicted silhouetted figures brandishing cement trowels, garden stakes

art and society

Blaise Tobia and **Virginia Maksymowicz,** Philadelphia artists, edit the Art & Society Section of *The Witness.*

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***"Welcome to America's Finest a.) city; b.) tourist plantation; c.) Convention Center,"* 1989, Deborah Small, Elizabeth Sisco, Louis Hock and David Avalos**

and baseball bats —the "weapons" that were being carried by the victims when they were shot.

The intensity of the pros and cons surrounding all of these projects has been further fueled by the artists' use of public grant money to address such controversial issues. Their most recent project, "*Arte-Reembolso*/ Art Rebate," pushed this debate even further. Rather than spend National Endowment for the Arts funds to produce another billboard, the group decided to use the money *itself* as the artwork — to call into question both the nature of government arts funding and the identity of what both politicians and the media love to call "the American taxpayer." Sisco, Hock and Avalos handed out 450 ten-dollar bills, each one signed by the three artists, to undocumented immigrants who are also workers and taxpayers. As a new controversy developed — with at least one local congressman demanding that the N.E.A. conduct an audit of the grant — the artists have been able to make their point effectively: that immigrants pay substantially more in taxes than they receive in government benefits, despite the "common wisdom" to the contrary.

They have been working together for more than six years, with a consistent focus on the problems in and around San Diego.

This group of artists have discovered that the ground rules for political activity and media notice have changed in the past half-decade. They have astutely played this new game, however, and in the process have produced a form of art that loudly and consistently engaging social justice concerns. TW

Indianapolis '94

Restructuring the church for justice

by Ed Rodman

Last summer a national symposium called "Shaping Our Future" held in St. Louis, Mo., raised a call for restructuring the Episcopal Church. Many who participated, including the organizers, appeared to be motivated by a basic dissatisfaction with the church's current national leadership and its so-called liberal, "issues-oriented" agenda. The meeting was dominated by white, mostly ordained, men who fretted a lot about declining membership and the need to make disciples but spoke little about working for justice. In that context, proposals to downsize and diminish the national church's size and role and to proclaim the local congregation (preferably as huge and autonomous as possible) as the most important unit of the church seemed to promote a reactionary parochialism.

Still, the call for restructuring is not coming from just one discontented quarter of the church. Caught up in the economic, social, political, ecological and cultural disarray in this nation and world, concerned Episcopalians everywhere seem to be looking for clarity about the church's mission and the best means of realizing it. At the same time, the Episcopal Church's presiding bishop, Edmond L. Browning, and the church's Executive Council have already moved to downsize and reorganize the church's national operations to reflect the fact that dioceses are not sending the national church as much money as they used to, whether because of dissatisfaction with services, disagreement with stands taken, or economic problems at home.



Ed Rodman

As the baptized, what's our enterprise, and what sort of organizational structure will help us achieve it? Ed Rodman, canon missioner in the Diocese of Massachusetts, longtime Episcopal Urban Caucus activist and former member of the Standing Commission on Church Structure, offers here an answer worth holding before the church in Indianapolis this August.

Our task in the church is to become dedicated to a spiritual vision and a rule of life which lifts up both the meaning and practice of working for a world in which: justice is the normative goal, leading to a redistribution of the world's resources and holding accountable the greedy; equity is the normative goal of interpersonal and intra-group relations; sustainability is the primary criteria for evaluating any economic or social system which would claim our participation and provide our means of survival; and any system, program, process, community or movement for achieving these goals is accessible to all.

Given this mission, it should be possible to establish appropriate tasks for each level of the church. First, at the local level, we should be developing congregations that have as their primary focus the building-up of community and the providing of alternatives to an individualistically consumer-oriented, lifestyle. The needs of people within a community should be the first priority and the means of meeting these needs should be developed ecumenically. This type of local collaboration is already underway in most major urban areas. If this trend can be built upon and formalized, it will go a long way toward positioning communities of faith to collectively assume their fair share of the increasingly stressed social safety net. It will also create the circumstances in which social advocacy is rooted in the real experience of people and not in theoretical or ideological preferences. Such congregationally-based community building will also require a major retraining of both clergy and laity for the skills and functions needed and will necessarily require a re-examination of ministry with an emphasis on function, rather than title or ordination.

Second, the deanery or regional level within the diocese should be understood to be the place where alternatives to economic disparity (whether between communities or congregations) are explored and developed, such as through implementation of the church's economic justice program. To authentically develop community-based enterprises which materially affect the conditions of a neighborhood or city, a broader base than the neighborhood congregation is required. In many of our dioceses this level of the church has yet to fully discover its function, much less its mission, and to recast it in this light at the same time that the mission of local congregations is being rethought, would open up many new possibilities.

Third, the diocese must be understood to be the primary unit for mission in the sense that it gives priority to the advocacy for just, equitable, sustainable and accessible communities at the state and/or metropolitan levels. Clearly, it is at the diocesan level that the vision of the church's overall mission, as well as specific priorities and goals, must find expression and where re-training, re-deployment, etc., must take place. This is

Vital Signs

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also the appropriate level for accountability and from here evaluation and redirection must emanate. In some ways the diocese has the least changing to do in terms of its function, but some diocesan realignments may be required so that major metropolitan areas are coherently organized and resources and goals are not confused by too diverse a geographic constituency.

Fourth, the provincial level of the church (regional groupings of dioceses) should become the place where victories are celebrated, encouragement is given and the building of networks is a functional priority up, down and across the system. Examples of this would include anti-racism programs and other serious interventions to address the divisive problems of sexuality, class consciousness, ethnic division and church maintenance. If this level of the church were to assume the responsibility for addressing this matrix of concerns, it would take the pressure off the diocese and local church, both of which are too easily polarized and hurt by attempting to resolve these questions unilaterally. It also provides a context for more effective programs to be developed and better resources gathered for response to crises, whether natural disasters or massive economic dislocation.

Finally, the national church should focus on building networks necessary to carry out the major struggles for social justice at the national level of our society, such as in the arenas of health care, military and foreign policy, foreign relations and economic choices. The national level would also be the place were models that prove successful at other levels of the church are shared and promoted. Seeing the national church as a maintainer of networks and communicator of successful strategies as opposed to a full-service, program-delivery system may be the best way to re-envision its function at a more modest and less costly level. It would also permit the provincial level of the church to emerge as the logical place to address regional priorities and concerns, a place closer to the people than any national program could ever be.

Armed with such a vision and focus, the division of labor becomes more realistic and the painful choices for the use of diminishing resources, both human and financial, can be more rationally made and advocated for by the people who do the work and are committed to the mission. In this way we get out of a survival mentality and have a hope of returning to a "movement" psychology where the church is built on the sweat and blood of its witnesses, rather than its potentates. This is liberation theology at work and not a cynical and reactionary exercise in organizational downsizing.

Ed Rodman explores the topic of church restructuring in a longer paper also called "Restructuring the Church for Justice," which he recently delivered to the local Episcopal Urban Caucus in Washington, D.C., and the Province I bishops.

Counting Down to Indianapolis

by Louie Crew

General Convention is much too large and egregiously undemocratic.

I propose that we reduce the domestic representation in the House of Deputies from 792 to 500 (given the prospect of autonomy for almost all Latin American dioceses in the near future, I have chosen in this paper to address only the 99 domestic dioceses). A body of 792+ persons simply cannot do business effectively in the short period assigned every three years. This reduction (37 percent) would keep us large enough to be representative.

I further propose that we restructure General Convention to represent communicants of the Episcopal Church proportionally. To effect this change, we would also need to amend Article I., Section 5. of the Constitution, so that if a vote by orders is required, the affirmative vote of a majority of all of the Deputies present and voting shall suffice to carry any question.

General Convention was shaped by many of the same persons who shaped the U.S. Congress; but unlike the House of Representatives, the House of Deputies has fixed rather than proportional representation, with four lay and four clergy deputies from each diocese. Yet communicants of the Episcopal Church are not distributed proportionally throughout all dioceses. This discrepancy results in grave injustice.

Currently a deputy represents under 300 communicants if the deputy comes from Northern Michigan, Eau Claire, North Dakota or Western Kansas — our four smallest dioceses; yet a deputy represents over 20 times that many if the deputy comes from Massachusetts, Texas, Long Island, Virginia, Los Angeles, Pennsylvania, or Connecticut — our seven largest dioceses — from which each deputy represents over 6,000 communicants.

Systemic racism

The current House of Deputies discriminates against minority clergy by systematically underrepresenting those provinces where minority clergy live. Most minority clergy who have registered with the Clergy Deployment Office (CDO) live in dioceses that will increase their percentage of the House of Deputies under proportional representation: 54 percent of Native American clergy, 62 percent of Asian and Pacific Island Clergy, 74 percent of Hispanic Clergy, and 85 percent of all black clergy would be affected. Place of residence is available for all black clergy, not just for those registered with the CDO: According to the *Directory of Black Clergy in the Episcopal Church 1992*, 87 percent live in provinces now underrepresented.

Four states with populations over 10 million — California, New York, Texas and Florida — also have Hispanic populations of over 10 percent.

With proportional deputations, the dioceses in these four states will have 30.4 percent of all deputies, versus the 22.4 percent they now have — dramatically increasing the chances to elect

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How Reapportionment Might Affect the 99 Domestic Dioceses

Note: I have several goals:
a) Reduce the total number of deputies from 792 to 500 (down 37 percent).
b) Keep an equal number of lay/clergy deputies in each diocese.
c) Keep a minimum of two deputies from each diocese, regardless of size.
d) Having met a-c, distribute all other deputies proportionally.

Using the 1990 reports for communicants, after I assigned the minimum of two deputies for each of the smallest dioceses, to the other dioceses I assigned one deputy per 7,023 communicants, rounding to an integer, which I then doubled, to assure an equal number of lay and clergy from each diocese. The resulting apportionment of deputies was as follows:

16 deputies: Massachusetts, Texas, Long Island, Virginia and Los Angeles
14 deputies: Pennsylvania and Connecticut
12 deputies: New York and New Jersey
10 deputies: Michigan, Atlanta, Chicago, North Carolina, Southwest Florida and Maryland
8 deputies: Newark, Southeast Florida, Ohio, Central Florida, Washington, Dallas, Southern Virginia
6 deputies: Colorado, Olympia, California, Alabama, Rhode Island, West Texas, Minnesota, Arizona, Florida, Upper South Carolina, Southern Ohio and South Carolina
4 deputies: Albany, Mississippi, Central New York, San Diego, Oregon, Western New York, Central Gulf Coast, Pittsburgh, Oklahoma, Western Massachusetts, Fort Worth, Louisiana, Central Pennsylvania, Bethlehem, Northern California, East Tennessee, El Camino Real, East Carolina, Georgia, Missouri, Kansas, Western Louisiana, Milwaukee, Rochester and Western Michigan
2 deputies (based on communicants): West Missouri, Arkansas, Western North Carolina, Maine, West Virginia, Rio Grande, Southwestern Virginia, Iowa, Tennessee, Delaware, New Hampshire, Nebraska, West Tennessee, Indianapolis, Spokane, Kentucky, San Joaquin, Northwest Texas and South Dakota
2 deputies (as minimum): Easton, Hawaii, Lexington, Fond du Lac, Northern Indiana, Vermont, Springfield, Wyoming, Northwest Pennsylvania, Montana, Alaska, Utah, Nevada, Idaho, Eastern Oregon, Quincy, Western Kansas, North Dakota, Eau Claire, Northern Michigan, Navajoland

deputies from Hispanic and other minority groups.

Systemic sexism

Sixty-seven percent of all female clergy registered with the CDO live in dioceses that will increase their percentage of deputies under proportional representation — that is, in dioceses currently underrepresented. Although the Episcopal Church began ordaining women two decades ago, five dioceses still refuse to do so: Eau Claire, Fond du Lac, Fort Worth, Quincy, and San Joaquin. Three more dioceses have never ordained women, but are now "receiving candidates," according to the national Office of Women in Mission: Albany, Georgia and Springfield. Each of these eight dioceses now enjoys unfair, disproportionately large deputations.

Female lay deputies were not seated until 1970 and only now, a quarter of a century later, approach being nearly half of the House. We have been ordaining female clergy for 20 years, but they comprise not even one-fifth of the deputies in the clergy order. Currently the number of female clergy deputies increases less than one percent per year; at this rate, ECUSA will have to wait until the year 2021 before female clergy have parity — another 27 years!

Had we instituted proportional representation for the 1994 General Convention, females would have increased their overall share of a much-reduced House, based on votes received by each deputy or alternate (this assumes that those women elected as alternates would have been elected as deputies in the dioceses entitled to larger deputations).

Systemic heterosexism

The House of Deputies discriminates against lesbian and gay people by giving disproportionate representation to dioceses which consistently vote against them. In 1991, for example, Bishops Frey and Howe proposed to canonize heterosexuality. The resolution did not mention lesbians and gays specifically, but most deputies saw through its coy rhetoric: "All members of the clergy of this church shall abstain from genital sexual relations outside Matrimony" (Resolution B-003). Warner Traynham, a deputy from Los Angeles, called the proposal "a retrograde ecclesiastical equivalent of sodomy laws. In effect it would stigmatize a certain segment of the population." Deputations from three of the four provinces overrepresented were major supporters of B-003.

Three-quarters of the provinces underrepresented in the House of Deputies gave strong support for a resolution to guarantee everyone access to the ordination process, Resolution C-032. As with B-003, Resolution C-032 did not specify lesbigay persons, but the debate made clear that the House intended to address their jeopardy, together with that of women, in seeking access to the process.

When people in the pew claim that the national church does not represent them, they are absolutely right. General Convention disproportionately enfranchises the white heterosexual males who created it.

Evangelize whom?

It is madness for the Episcopal Church to talk about wanting to grow and at the same time systematically to underrepresent groups previously excluded or ignored. Often we seem to long for the keys to the country club again, rather than the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. We rarely adopt the "highways and hedges" as Episcopal venues.

What would the Episcopal Church look like if it began to take this mission more seriously? For example, over ten million black people live in Province 4 — 27 percent of all people in Province 4. Yet only 3.2 percent of the 2,545 clergy in Province 4 are black. Thirty-five percent of all blacks in the nation live in Province 4, yet only 20.49 percent of the black Episcopal clergy do (see Fig. 1).

How long will it take white Episcopalians in Province 4 to love and welcome their varied neighbors as they love and welcome themselves? The U.S. Constitution mandates that the House of Representatives be reapportioned on the basis of population every 10 years, but it

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took centuries of litigation to establish one-person-one-vote, in *Baker vs. Carr*, which addressed representation in both houses of state legislatures. Before that decision, state governments were frequently crippled by the same kind of county-unit politics which shackle the House of Deputies. The Episcopal Church might start to welcome diversity if we gave democratic voice to the diversity already in our midst.

Repair the building

At the Symposium "Shaping Our Future," held in St. Louis in August 1993, Jon Shuler, executive director, called for a Constitutional Convention to perform surgery on the structure of the Episcopal Church. He wants a "radically simplified General Convention" meeting once every five years instead of every three. He wants provincial synods to become the "ordinary means" of church government. "Perhaps the Presiding Bishop's job, as currently defined, is unnecessary," touted the press release which Shuler used to promote his ideas.

Provincialism is rightly suspect in our national vocabulary. Shuler is dauntingly silent about structural guarantees to make provincial synods truly representative and democratic, nor has he spelled out systems to assure welcome to the millions of blacks in his own province.

I propose to restructure the House of Deputies to achieve just such a true representation:

	Proportional	**Fixed** (Current)
(min. of 2 deputies per diocese):		
Pv 1	46	56
Pv 2	64	64
Pv 3	78	104
Pv 4	104	160
Pv 5	60	112
Pv 6	24	64
Pv 7	56	96
Pv 8	68	136
	500	792

Jon Shuler's proposal would dismantle General Convention as we know it. My more modest proposal respects General Convention and restructures the House of Deputies to make it more democratic. My proposal maintains clear continuity with our past, and yet serves a future much more culturally diverse. The House of Bishops will continue to be disproportional and thus guard against any tyranny of the majority; and even the smallest of dioceses are guaranteed two deputies.

Notice that under proportional representation the "liberal" Provinces 1 and 2 would have a net gain of seven percent of the full House, whereas the "conservative" Provinces 4 and 7 would remain about the same, at 32 percent. It is not surprising that "conservatives" never mention proportional deputations when they talk about restructuring. It is clear whose power and influence they are trying to conserve.

The sheep lost...

I am concerned about the decline of membership in my beloved Episcopal Church, and I take little comfort that the same fate is happening to all mainline denominations.

In the two decades from 1970-1990 the country grew by 28.7 percent, but the Episcopal Church shrank by nearly the same amount, 23.1 percent. Yet the Episcopal Church did not shrink equally everywhere. At first glance, at the raw numbers, the hardest hit areas seem to be the so-called "liberal areas" — the Northeast (Provinces 1 and 2) and the West Coast (Province 8). The conservative South (Province 4) and Southwest (Province 7) appear to be hit the least (see Fig. 2).

Reviewing this depressing data, it is tempting to draw the conclusion that if we would all just huddle more closely together with a conservative agenda, we would see out this storm with minimal attrition.

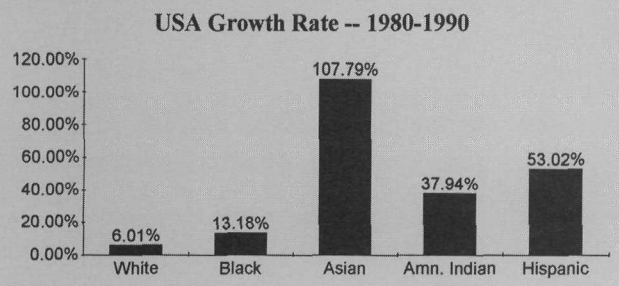

Fig. 1

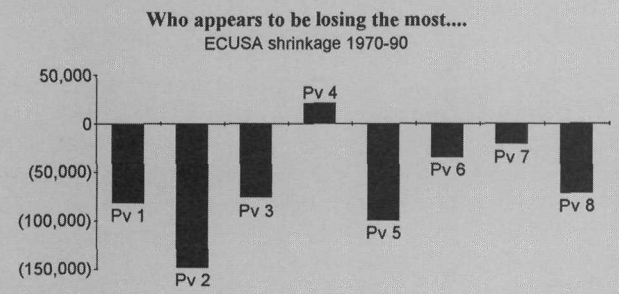

Fig. 2

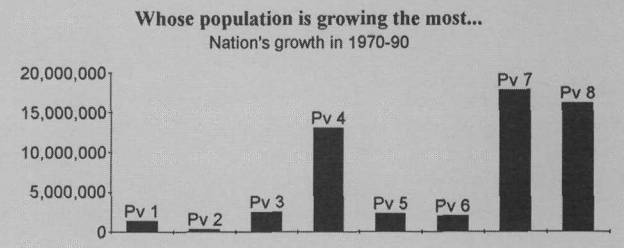

Fig. 3

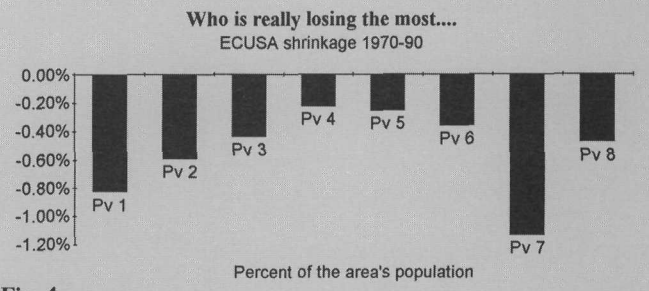

Fig. 4

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However, looked at more closely, *the data suggest that we should resist that huddle!* Just as not all provinces of the church have equally declined in membership, so the population of the nation has not grown equally (see Fig. 3).

Enter the Sunbelt! Millions have moved to the South and the Southwest during the last 20 years. How well have conservative Episcopalians fared in welcoming these migrants? Not well at all. The Southwest, which above seemed to have had the largest growth, has in fact, had the greatest decline, when population shifts are factored (see Fig. 4).

Gone, too, is the false appearance of a revival in Province 4. The South simply has not brought in its share of the people moving to it from outside.

From "No Outcasts" to "Welcome to the House"

A major irony of the "Decade of Evangelism" is that Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning has faced a steady stream of vilification for saying, "There will be no outcasts in this church of ours!" The church cannot convince outsiders of God's welcome until the church treats lovingly and justly those already inside. No one in the non-Christian world can afford to believe the thousands of lies we the Episcopal Church have bought and paid for until "The Episcopal Church Welcomes You" means more than "We won't kick you out anymore." Democratic reapportionment of the House of Deputies will dramatically improve the quality of our common life by assuring an equal chance of participation for everyone in the major governance of our lives together.

Louie Crew is the founder of Integrity and co-chair of the diocese of Newark's deputation to the 1994 General Convention. All graphs in this article were prepared by Crew based on data from numerous sources, including the U.S. Censuses for 1970, 1980 and 1990 and the "Table of Statistices of the Episcopal Church" for those years, as printed in The Episcopal Church Annuals for 1972, 1982 and 1992.

EcuTakes: Church Structure

Presbyterian Church, USA

Louise Westfall is pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Mich.

Our denomination has reflected what has happened everywhere, which is a downsizing mode due to a crisis of confidence in hierarchies and structures.

At our own General Assembly, our annual denominational meeting, in June of 1993, we moved the church from nine ministry units to three ministry units — congregational ministries, national ministries, and international ministries.

There has been downsizing in terms of numbers of employees. There used to be units like racial/ethnic concerns, women's concerns, social justice and peacemaking. These now have been subsumed under the three units.

People working on racial/ethnic issues are very concerned that by moving away from one central office there may be a diluting of focus.

I think there is a positive side to refocusing on congregations. There are a lot of lively things going on at the grassroots. But a congregational base can fall more quickly into parochialism and narrowness.

There probably will be less attention to justice issues, especially the more controversial ones. The reorganization was a sympton of denominational malaise; our membership has declined and our mission dollar has declined. There is a feeling that we need to downplay justice issues that are conflictual.

American and Southern Baptists

Ken Sehested is Executive Director of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America.

The Baptist tradition of church life flows from the dissenting and Separatist movements of 17th-century English life and, to some extent, from the radical reformation on the European continent, tagged "Anabaptist" by detractors. Both streams began as reform movements; but both eventually outdistanced their initial leaders in the degree of change demanded.

One of the key distinctives that now shows up in modern Baptist life in North America is a radical form of congregationalism. By and large, such decentralized structure is a positive element in the church's pursuit of its mission. Mission enterprises are easily contextualized; decision-making is spread among many; there is free space, allowing those without institutionalized credentials (and, thus, control) to use imagination.

The unfortunate underbelly of radical congregationalism is that it exaggerates the Western cultural tradition of individualism. Baptists have weak connectional instincts, which fosters isolationism — isolation both from contemporaries and from its historical tradition. (This accounts for the fact that there are some 29 separate Baptist bodies in the U.S., though all but a dozen are tiny regional bodies.) As one wag has noted, instead of having one Pope in Rome, we have miniature popes in every pulpit.

Despite these weakness, the Baptist governing tradition is a major asset if one thinks of the "people of God" as including more than the clerical class.

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America

Luther Wright is pastor of Truth Lutheran Church in Detroit, Mich.

In 1988 there was a merger of three Lutheran denominations into the National Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. In order to do the merger, all kinds of compromises had to be made. People all over the country are dissatisfied with the structure, and there has been all kinds of restructuring going on. I would contend that the principle of that restructuring is driven more by financial concerns, rather than by the principle that the people most affected by decisions should have the most say. For example, the national Division for Outreach used to have a person for city ministries and person for rural ministries. Now they're saying one person can do both.

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In the absence of a movement

by David Finkel

"There is scarcely any left press in the United States," writes Alexander Cockburn in the January 17, 1994 *Nation*. "There was probably more left-wing analysis in a single issue of *MAD* magazine in the mid-1950s than in the combined output of all left magazines in 1993."

Let me suggest that the left has a two-fold problem. First, we are, in "practical political" terms, powerless. Second, choking on our own powerlessness, we forget what we *have* accomplished and *can* accomplish in the real world.

What I mean is this: We cannot by our own resources and efforts shelter the homeless, overturn Clinton's cynical and criminal coddling of the Haitian generals, shut down an arms race that continues even after the ostensible enemy has disappeared, reverse the flight of manufacturing jobs from Manhattan and Detroit and South Central Los Angeles, or force through Congress a universal health care insurance program worthy of a civilized country.

Then, unable to carry out these or any of dozens of other absolutely essential programs, we attach ourselves to electoral charlatans and con men (and occasionally women) whose careers depend on their ability to convince people that voting for them will produce wondrous changes — even though we know that they have in fact neither the desire nor capacity to do anything of the sort.

In the process we tend to lose sight of what has been achieved by being genuinely radical — in our own recent history. When tens of thousands of churchgoing Americans, linked to the Central America solidarity movement through the Sanctuary struggle, told their government, "Your immigration laws and your war in Nicaragua and El Salvador are a crime against humanity, and we're going to defy them"— that was *radical,* and it was successful.

When working Teamsters spent 15 years organizing to take their union back from the mobsters and the pro-company goons who ran it and, with the election of Ron Carey, ultimately succeeded — that was *radical,* and it worked.

When African-American students at Wayne State University in Detroit and the Latinos at UCLA took over campus buildings to demand African and Latino studies programs at their universities, they were acting *radically* and effectively.

These things don't add up to "the revolution." They are, however, "revolutionary" in that they enable people to feel the power they have when they organize — the kind of power that official society seeks to convince them they don't have and should never use. It's precisely this power embodied in independent social movements that make "the left"— its analyses, its democratic values, its visions of a just world — meaningful. There simply is no substitute.

In the absence of movements on a massive scale, I have no magic formula for the left today. Each of us needs to find ways to be effectively radical where we are.

A critical project in which we can all engage is to support the Mayan Indian uprising in Chiapas, Mexico. Send letters and faxes to president Salinas in Mexico City demanding an end to repression. Tell your congressperson you want hearings convened on how the North American Free Trade Agreement is completing the destruction of peasant agriculture by turning the peasants' corn plots to beef grazing land. Let's try to make sure that every ordinary U.S. citizen — the majority — understands that the uprising in Chiapas is part of our own confrontation with the multinational corporate colossus.

Isn't that, after all, the left's job? Or do we expect Ross Perot to do it for us? TW

Let me suggest three current books — with apologies that all three are written by white men.

First: *The Year 501, The Conquest Continues,* by Noam Chomsky (Boston: South End Press, 1993). Here, as always, Chomsky pulls down the obstacles that prevent us from understanding the world with radical common sense.

Second: *The Destruction of New York,* by Bob Fitch (New York: Verso Press, 1993). Whether or not you are, or have ever been, a New Yorker, here's a book that stands in the finest American muckraker tradition and explains how a rich, variegated urban economy was systematically and deliberately destroyed to make room for a finance-insurance-real estate (FIRE) economic monoculture, with ruinous results for all of us.

Third: *Socialism From Below*, by Hal Draper (Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press International, 1992). In this brilliant collection, the lead essay, "The Two Souls of Socialism," explains the essence and revolutionary relevance of the socialist vision as clearly today as it did in 1965, when it made me an instant convert.

David Finkel is an editor of the Detroit-based magazine *Against the Current.* He'll send a free sample to any reader who requests one. Write him at *ATC*, 7012 Michigan Avenue, Detroit, Mich. 48210.

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Church and union

Ten seminarians from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley were invited to the AFL-CIO's biennial convention in San Francisco.

The convention last fall opened with a speech by President Bill Clinton which focussed on "rampant insecurity among working people," plus a rapidly growing inequality in the U.S., a $4 trillion debt, Fortune 500 companies eliminating hundreds of thousands of jobs each year and increasing health care costs.

Paul MacDonald, Labor Council President in Providence, R.I., pointed out that the temporary workforce is a major problem. "You don't put down roots in a part-time job, and it tends to pit workers against each other, vying for what work there is; it drives families apart. The breadwinner travels across the country looking for work, leaving the family behind — it's scary."

Labor Secretary Robert Reich said the Reagan-Bush Administration "had worked labor over," with a hostile Labor Relations Board and by permanent replacement of strikers. To standing applause, Reich promised change.

In the student seminar session which followed, the Religious Outreach Director of the AFL-CIO, Michael Szpak, opened with the same theme: The natural right of workers to freely associate and form unions was being grossly violated. Organized labor stood for inclusiveness and community, said Szpak, as did the churches. Together they had many common core values: every person has worth, intrinsic value, and dignity.

Szpak said collective action in the workplace allows workers to address the unequal balance of power between labor and capital — non-violently. It also provides simple association, a sense of solidarity, the ability of persons to rely on each other.

Harry Coverston, an Episcopalian seminarian, responded that the church had failed the working people when it remained silent in the face of the "dehumanizing" suppression of the PATCO strikers (air controllers). He added that the dominant church view is that if the economy is okay, the working person is okay, ignoring the fact that the working person is viewed impersonally as a commodity fed into an economic machine.

In Orlando, Fla. where he had served as a Public Defender, Coverston said, most kids he defended had two parents working, but were still not making it. They couldn't appear in court for fear of job loss. He went into law to effect change in society, but found himself ineffectual. The law only reached people's minds, he said, whereas the church can reach people's hearts, and that was needed to create change.

George Higgins, veteran labor priest and author of *Organized Labor and the Church,* told seminarians to learn the history of the labor movement. Cooperation should start at the local or regional level, he said.

The new frontier is the organization of women workers, he added. Church-related groups should concentrate heavily on women in the workplace, on the protection of their rights. Women make up almost half of all workers, but only a minuscule number are organized into unions. Also important are the immigrant workers, the lowest paid of all. Indeed, without female and immigrant workers, says Higgins, the labor movement has no future in this country.

— Gregory Bergman

(Gregory Bergman, 86, lives in Berkeley, Calif., and has written widely for Christian Century *and* The Nation.*)*

continued from page 5

illusion of the American dream.

The confusion these days is — now that capitalism has demonstrated its total disregard for labor and parts of the U.S. brink on the realities of the third world — what do we do? What is there to fight against and what do we build in the ruins?

The questions aren't unique to the U.S. In Nicaragua, people who based their lives in a theology that offered Christ as liberator are turning their eyes toward a God of the earth, a God of companionship and endurance. (See page 30.)

Whatever we explore *will* probably be post-modern, personalist, community- and earth-based.

And maybe as enlightenment thinking gives way, the structure of Marxist thought and prophecy will fade. But regardless of the name by which we know it, Christians who confront structural injustice, who come to know first-hand the character of fallen principalities will acknowledge Marx's observations about capitalist exploitation and the need for solidarity.

The best of the left activity in recent years *has* been in "something like the church."

Christians are refusing to pay war taxes, breaking the law to offer sanctuary, enduring long jail sentences for anti-nuclear work, exposing the U.S. role in training third-world torturers. They are doing so with a clear intent to confront the abuses of this capitalist empire. For the most part, these Christians have benefitted from Marxist analysis, have learned something of the mechanics of power from the liberation theologians.

Increasingly I think that socialism is not an end in itself for Christians. It is, rather, a political and economic ideology that preached a message close to the heart of the gospel. It pronounced that the rich would be brought low and the hungry would be filled with good things.

By whatever vehicle, may it be so.

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Engaging the powers

by Bill Wylie-Kellermann

Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination, Walter Wink, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992. 402 pp.

Autumn, 1993

Dear Jeanie,

I don't have much response to the projected issue [on the left] ... I thought we were moving beyond the old left-right polarity to a new, confusing, biblical radicalism that is conservative, iconoclastic, prophetic, as alienated from the left's secularism and naive self-confidence as from the right's traditionalism, ideological blindness, and intellectual dishonesty.

All the best,
Walter
Auburn Seminary, New York City

For Walter Wink the movement "beyond old polarities" has come by way of rediscovering and reappropriating the biblical insight into the "principalities and powers." *Engaging the Powers* (the final volume of his magnificent trilogy) is the exegetical, sociological, historical and perhaps, above all, spiritual fruit of three decades' work on that topic.

Wink began under the impetus and inspiration of William Stringfellow's work which he recently described as virtually "reinventing Christianity." It may indeed be that which he is carrying forward to fruition.

Among the decisive exegetical conclusions of Wink's early work was to recognize that these structures which dominate human existence have both an exterior, visible, material character *and* an invisible, interior, spiritual aspect. The two are inseparable dimensions of the same institutional constructions of power. To make this a grounding assumption in theological and political analysis is itself a challenge to the old polarities. It flies in the face of the materialist vision (more like a one-eyed blindness) to which the Christian left has so readily succumbed. But it also lays bare the spooky abstraction of the Christian right's otherworldly view. And at a moment of historical sea-change, it makes discernment a radically political charism.

Another conclusion of his early New Testament exegesis which has been fully developed in this final volume is an innocuous-appearing orthodoxy which proves theologically explosive:

The Powers are good,
The Powers are fallen,
The Powers will be redeemed. (pp.65f.)

The Powers are good (creatures of God, subject to judgement and accountable for their vocations to serve human life); they are fallen (twisted by idolatry and conformed to the domination system which enslaves human life); they will be redeemed (recalled to their created purpose by the "blood of the cross," by the transforming power of non-violence, indeed, by the vocational witness of the church). While there is a certain sequential movement here, Wink describes the insight as a "drama in three simultaneous acts" — in which God at once *upholds* a power in its vocation, *condemns* it in its systematic dehumanization, and *presses for its transformation,* the renewal of its humane vocation. As he puts it, "Conservatives stress the first, revolutionaries the second, reformers the third. The Christian is expected to hold together all three (p. 67)."

My own bias is to stress the fall — perhaps because we are, especially in American christendom, so consistently naive about the bondage of *all* institutions to the power of death. And make no mistake, Wink spends fully half this book describing and unmasking the Domination System, its methods and means, its hierarchies and history (he flirts with the temptation to locate the fall historically in the rise of an expressly androcratic, male-dominated, order). But there is something wonderfully freeing (and quite radical) about a politics which manages to hold simultaneously to each of the three dramatic movements. Our bearings are no longer kept by the ideological rigidity of either political correctness (so called) or biblical legalism. There cease to be any fixed and set presumptions about how we should engage the powers — ethics become inventive and improvisational, politics a graceful work of imagination.

The second half of *Engaging the Powers* is about that work of subversion and transformation. Suffice it to say that Walter Wink's work on the principalities has issued in a new and renewed theology of non-violence. He offers us here a practical politics rooted in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Happily, the book is getting a wide reading. I pray it will be hugely influential. I wager it will prove one of the most important books of the decade. May it help us, God help us, bring the Domination System to its knees. TW

book review

Bill Wylie-Kellermann is book editor of *The Witness* and editor of *Keeper of the Word: a Stringfellow Reader,* Eerdmans, June 1994.

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Jennifer Atlee in 1984.

Changes in Nicaragua's left

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Jenny Atlee, who has called Nicaragua home for eight years, wrote her masters' thesis on liberation theology but now is learning healing, herbs and incantations from a healer in her village. In her shift from a revolutionary theology to an earth-based one, Atlee is following the lead of her Nicaraguan neighbors.

Atlee, the daughter of an Episcopal priest in Philadelphia, says her base community in Achuapa "was guided through a crucial time" by liberation theology.

"Through the whole war there was the feeling if we can just get through this war, then we'll be free. We'll be in the promised land. We can create the new society that we want.

"Then the elections happened [in 1990 and the Sandinistas lost]. There was massive deterioration of social services and any sort of space for doing something different. Now the economy is structured against the *campesinos* and against production. People are very pessimistic about large-scale change happening."

The new situation is challenging theologically.

"People are back under Pharaoh. They're making bricks and their straw is being taken away from them.

"People in base communities are saying, 'We worked with the revolution because the aims of the revolution were compatible with our aims as Christians — in many ways there wasn't even a separation. Now, with the elections, we've seen that governments are going to come and go. We're not going to have the revolution forever, but one ally we will always have is the land. We know the land. We subsist off the land. We need to learn to care for the land so our children can live off it because the hope of going to university is not an option anymore.'

"People in base communities are saying, 'We're not going to have the revolution forever, but one ally we will always have is the land.' "

In the Bloque, where Atlee worships with her husband Tom Loudon and their five-year-old daughter Carmen, the main focus is sustainable agriculture and natural medicine.

Campesinos are discovering there's a blessing hidden in the banks' unwillingness now to advance loans;when they can afford to farm, they no longer have to use the chemical pesticides and fertilizers that the banks required. They are also eliminating slash-and-burn programs and concentrating on reforestation, water conservation, composting, variation of crops, organic pesticides and herbicides, including chili, garlic and nim.

"My concept of God is very much shifting toward the feminine and toward the earth."

Likewise, since there are no longer government health clinics and doctors, villages are reclaiming natural medicines, bringing back knowledge about the healing properties of bark and herbs. Community gardens have been established and each community is training healers.

The Marxist analysis inherent in liberation theology is still useful to people. They lean on it for their understanding of whose interests are served by the withdrawal of government services. And they rely on its analysis in trying to fight the erosion of their land base.

"In the town where we work there is a large cooperative. *Campesinos* in trouble will sell off their cattle, then sell off their land. The cooperative is saying we've got to hold onto our land. It's trying to buy land and hold it in trust until farmers can buy it back.

"The economic situation is so desper-

Witnesses, the quick and the dead

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

ate that it tempts you to say, 'Forget about what we can do for the community — I've got to feed my kids!' It's very much a temptation — it's hard times economically."

It's hard for her family to afford to stay — they are supported by donations from the U.S. — but Atlee says they will remain for at least another year.

Her commitments were formed in part by the parish her father served in Baltimore where she was born in 1962.

"It was right on the edge of the white end of town — there was a small black section on the other side of us. I made some friends in the black section. I learned about racism real quick. In fifth grade we moved to a much more upper-class and white area. I had a hard time there and got really disillusioned in the church.

"I found meaning in the church again in Mexico when I was in college. I found people in the church who were really alive. I was introduced to liberation theology and that did make sense to me."

Atlee got a political science degree from the University of Delaware, then worked with the sanctuary movement before going to Nicaragua in 1984 with Witness for Peace.

After years of living in a war zone, and after marrying her husband in 1988 in Rio Blanco, Atlee decided she needed a break. "We had been through a lot of years of incredible destruction of human life and human creativity and human effort to come back despite the trauma. It was weighing on my soul."

She and her family returned to New York so she could get a masters in theology. Her thesis was submitted to Colgate Rochester and a Baptist seminary in Managua.

Soon after the Sadinistas lost the election, she and Loudon decided to return.

"I knew I didn't want to work in theology with the base community — I feel that it is born of them. I didn't have any answers. Then I had this very powerful dream. The spirit told me I needed to learn the ways of the body because the body and the spirit are connected. So I started working with a healer in the village who was crippled — the medical system had written her off — until some Japanese volunteers cured her with acupuncture. Then they trained her.

"It's very much part of my theological journey — I got out of my head and into my body and the earth.

"My concept of God is very much shifting toward the feminine and toward the earth. My own understanding has changed so much that where I get my guidance is not in the traditional way — it's in dreams from spirits, sometimes Native American."

Atlee adds that the base communities are no longer accompanied by Catholic priests as they were during the revolution.

"Most all of us are from Christian backgrounds — we're doing church if you want to call it that. What we're coming up with is very earth-centered and very practical." TW

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Anima Christi
Margaret Thompson

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Dialogue

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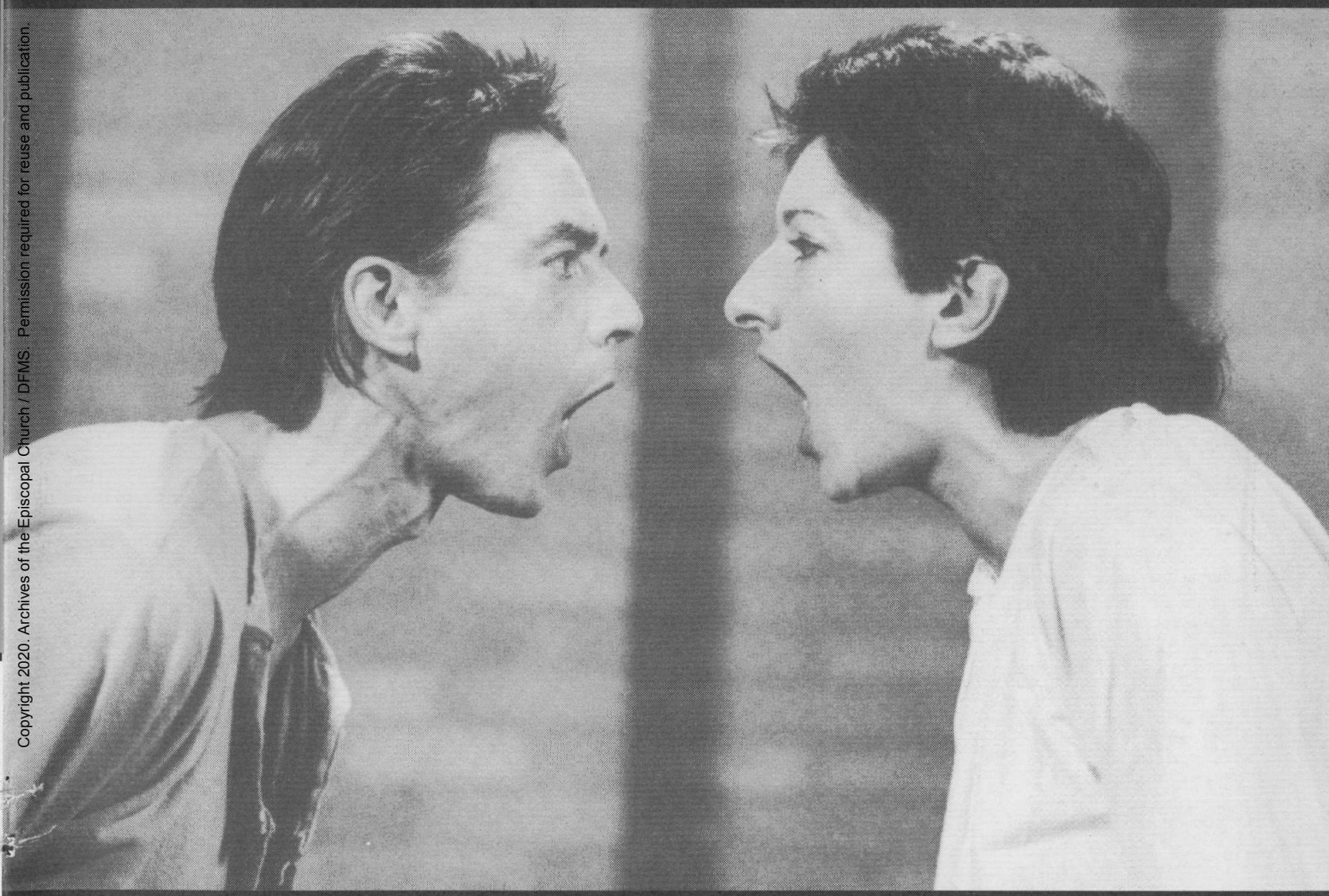
The Witness

Volume 77 • Number 4 • April 1994



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Dialogue

Conversing with adversaries

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The Sixties

I HATED YOUR LAST ISSUE of *Witness* on the sixties! I HATED the sixties. I HATED all the articles. I got so mad, reading it, that I almost put it on the floor and did a Mexican hat-dance. If I'd had Michelle Gibbs in my living room I'd have swamped her with my squirt guns. "... Most of the people in the world do not believe in individualism ..." Good grief! *Cows* don't believe in individualism. But people ain't nothing but. I guess she's one of those beanheads who still believe communism was a great idea — they just didn't put together the plumbing right.

Well, it should be obvious that my own experience of the sixties was not a favorable one. Before Kennedy got shot there was a tremendous elevation of awareness. Brave people began to do brave things. People dreamed. Folks started looking at old things, newly, there was a graciousness in the air nobody had seen for a long long while. But after he fell it turned into Bob Dylan whining through his nose. Everybody whined. Creativity must have hit an all-time low. The Complaint Department soared. The first of the really Vulgar Heroes emerged. Mick Jagger led the pack. Mean music. Spoiled kids of privilege biting the establishment's ass which they systematically ripped off. Over in Lincoln Park the kids were throwing bags of shit at the police while yelling, "Love! Love!" Hypocrisy was the order of the day.

Lord deliver me from the sixties. I am 48 and I was there, with my flower-child musician husband, and all of his friends. And their drugs. And their cheap despair. Mostly I find, today, that the people who nostalgicize the sixties were in junior high when it happened. Too young to vote for Kennedy; too young to join the Peace Corps; too young to hitch to Woodstock. Too young to pull time in Nam, too. They didn't make the sixties; they inherited its debris. Authentic movements of change are never led by mean-spirited people. And if you can point out anybody after 1965 who was not mean-spirited—other than the Beatles or the valiant American negroes, I take my hat off to you. I don't apologize for the sixties either. I just sweep it under the rug.

Now I know not a one of you agrees with me in this. But I thought this would lend some credibility to my regular praise for *The Witness.*

Dierdre Luzwick
Cambridge, WI

THE INTERVIEW WITH Michelle Gibbs was very informative. Having been a victim of the McCarthy period I sure can identify.

Today's news is chaotic, confusing and conforming which leads to control. All of the talk about free press is a cover-up of the control that is exerted on us.

I hope you can print the following item:

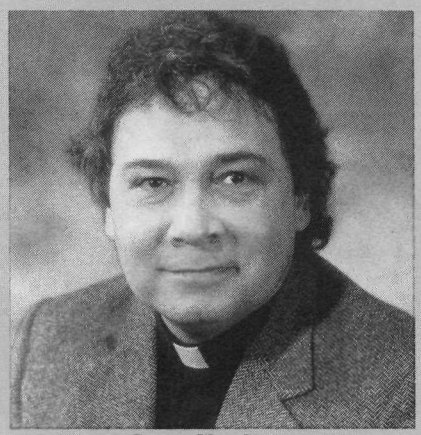
At the end of last year, Slovene leaders were in desperate haste to acquire a constitution in time for the scheduled German recognition. The communists and anti-clerical liberals informed leading Christian democrats that they would withhold the necessary majority unless the projected constitution legalized abortion. It did.

According to the archbishop of Ljubljana, there is no country in the world, with the possible exception of one African state, which has abortion written into its constitution. This did not prevent the pope from promptly recognizing the newly independent state.

—Nora Baloff, author of
Tito's Failed Policy

Rose Touralchuk
Buffalo, NY

General Convention dinner plans!



Steve Charleston

Steve Charleston, Bishop of Alaska, will address our General Convention dinner in Indianapolis!

The dinner, to be held August 26th at 6:30 p.m., will be hosted at an African-American restaurant in the area. (No hotel chicken and boiled vegetables!)

The Episcopal Church Publishing Company's awards to Christians engaged in the struggle will be made at that time.

Early registration would be appreciated. Send $30 per ticket to *The Witness* c/o Marietta Jaeger.

Witness praise

I THANK GOD for your wonderful magazine. It always refocuses my attention toward clarity and hope just when I'm slipping off again into, or toward, resignation and despondency.

Nancy Whiting
West Tisbury, MA

I HAVE FOUND *THE WITNESS* to be a stimulating and even comforting part of my reading for the past two years. As a Roman Catholic, it has allowed me to rejoice in the Episcopal Church's openness to the ordination of women, and the elevation of a few women to the office of bishop. At the same time, *The Witness* has shown that your church, like mine, still has far to go on the road to enabling and celebrating the radical freedom

The Witness welcomes letters to the editor. We are most able to accommodate letters of 200 words or less. Please send comments to *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226-1868. It is our policy to edit letters for length when necessary, but not for style.

of every human being to use fully their God-given gifts in service to all.

Barbara Enagonio
Germantown, MD

HOW CAN YOU MANAGE each issue to select and focus on a single, significant challenge and deal with it in both fascinating yet trenchant ways? It amazes me.

John H. Burt
Marquette, MI

I DO THINK *THE WITNESS* is better than anything the Methodists have done.

Marjorie Townsend
Windsor, OH

[Ed. Note: We really liked *Motive* when the Methodists were publishing it!]

Witness/Trinity video available



One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, our video series from the forum we held at Trinity School for Ministry, is now available!

The series provides, in living color, a glimpse into the hearts of two radically committed groups within the Episcopal Church who often find each other suspect regarding interpretations of scripture, issues of morality and commitment to social justice.

The series features a conversation between Bill Frey, dean of the school and former bishop of Colorado; Virginia Mollenkott, a lesbian theologian and professor in New Jersey; Mary Hays, a pastoral theology professor at Trinity; and, Chester Talton, suffragan bishop of California.

The panel discussion can be used alone or, in a class series, each of the ten-minute workshop sessions which follow can be explored. These include the authority of scripture; sexuality, feminism and faith; the Traditional Way; conversations behind the wall; and the multi-cultural challenge. Each session is marked by a serious attempt to listen to one another and to be honest.

The tape costs $79.95 plus $4 handling and is available from the Episcopal Radio & TV Foundation, Suite 230, 3379 Peachtree Rd., N.E., Atlanta, GA 30326; (404) 233-5419.

Classifieds

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Call (800) 835-3467 or write The Rev. James C. McReynolds, The Teleios Foundation, P.O. Box 7213, Shrewsbury, NJ 07702.

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ACTRESS AND WRITER Kietry Zychal is available for an educational and comical one-woman show called "This is not a Sermon." Her fee is negotiable, although she adds she'd appreciate dinner and a place to stay for the night. Call 212-388-2727.

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When ads mark anniversaries of deaths, ordinations, or acts of conscience, photos — even at half column-width — can be included.

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Cover: *AAA-AAA*, 1978, by Marina Abramovic and Ulay.

Back cover: *Aging Star* by Dierdre Luzwick. Luzwick, a Wisconsin artist has two books: *Endangered Species*, Harper Collins, 1992 and *Surrealist Bible*, Jonathon David Publishers, 1976.

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Breaking the silence

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Da
Datta: *what have we given?*
My friend, blood shaking my heart
The awful daring of a moment's surrender
Which an age of prudence can never retract
By this, and this only, we have existed
Which is not to be found in our obituaries
— *T.S.Eliot,* The Wasteland

I learned that silence is probably the most brutal way to fight when I was in grade school. Someone suggested that we should all refuse to talk to Anne Hayes and we did. Suddenly, awkward in her St. Hilda's uniform, she ran sobbing from class to the bathroom.

I've watched that dynamic take its toll in other situations. Roger Smith, former chair of General Motors, with a flick of the wrist shut off the microphone at the 1981 stockholders meeting, silencing the voice of a woman whose house and community were being destroyed by the corporation. News editors, judges, priests, political allies, parents separated by divorce can reject the claims of the other.

To ignore, to silence, to avert your eyes, to deny the credibility of an opponent, to shun. It's a seething kind of death.

The most radical thing one can do in the face of silencing power is speak. Speak through graffiti. Speak through demonstrations. Speak through face to face confrontations. Speak a word of compassion. Put a question.

Somehow the word "dialogue" is hardly up to the concept of conversing with adversaries. It sounds polite and, as several of the writers in this issue note, such conversation can only work if it's passionate.

Consequently it's rarely polite.

Piercing the silence may require calling out through the decorum of a stockholders' meeting or challenging a sermon right in the sanctuary. It may mean pushing open the door so that those most excluded can be seen by those who control the debate. It may mean arranging to see someone you used to call friend or neighbor.

Crying out through the silence barrier hurtles our humanity into something cold. But it gives our adversaries a choice — to pass by in contempt or to respond.

The initial cry, I believe, is the essence of nonviolent action.

Those things that we imagine to be our power — our credentials, our respectability, our citizenship — can't make the fight. It is, instead, our humanity — naked, undefended — that must be confident enough to invite the response.

When *The Witness* went to Trinity School for Ministry last fall many people expressed doubts. They wanted to know why we would dignify Trinity's campus with our presence. They imagined we wanted reconciliation and would sell out our values to achieve it. Some asked if we were on the slippery slope.

But Virginia Mollenkott understood. "You can't form a bridge between opposing interpretive communities with ideologies," she said. "The bridge is our humanity."

At Trinity, students were disturbed because Mollenkott believes that she honors God in her lesbian relationship, but they were moved to hear that she and her lover sang fundamentalist hymns as Mollenkott's mother died.

You give your adversary a gift when you call out. You acknowledge that you can see them. You surrender some power by letting them share the stage with you.

But in my experience there's little that's more satisfying than standing face to face with an adversary. Holding internally to what you believe to be true and listening with your whole body, you wait. Part of the passion of the moment is the incongruity, the dilemma that's before you both. Here you both are — quite possibly both good people — yet you disagree. The rupture may be irrevocably great. You will test that.

The excitement is in wondering how in the mind of God there is room for this discord between children of God. Somehow God is in this.

When I cry out, I intend to present my case with righteousness, leaving an opening for my adversary's mind to change. But in making the case, my adversary may expose a flaw in my thinking.

The encounter is eschatalogical, inviting the judgement of God.

Whether now or later, something will die. Either my belief or yours — if nothing else, the self-righteous attitudes with which we hold them.

Standing in such a moment, one can feel the affirmations of Paul. "Neither heights nor depths... "

Even here, in this moment, God is present inviting us to see what is sacred in this adversary.

The director of *In The Name of The Father* described the violence in Ireland as dialogue gone awry. Violence, he suggests, is thwarted dialogue.

continued on page 29

editor's note

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

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Placing the question

by Ched Myers

There are many reasons why we have such a difficult time engaging in dialogue in the church. But it is surely in part due to the fact that Christian liturgical, confessional and theological discourse has for so long been so thoroughly declarative. Declarative discourse has its place, of course, but its absolute character is not often hospitable to dialogue.

This is particularly true among prophetic-minded Christians today. We have made strident criticism a way of life. Yet look at how fragmented we are! It is a great irony that we who question the "great" orthodoxies of establishment Christianity so often end up constructing "little" orthodoxies to replace them. By relentlessly applying litmus tests to each other, we end up succumbing to the grand sectarian legacy of the North American Left — defining ourselves according to our differences with those closest to us.

Almost two decades ago Canadian theologian Douglass John Hall wrote:

On the brink of overt nihilism in our public life, and neurotically clinging to the positive in our private existences, we fear an open confrontation with the contradiction between our optimistic expectations and our increasingly depressing experiences. ... There can therefore be no more responsible theology than one which tries to provide a climate in which men and women in this society may feel able to expose themselves to that contradictory state. ... We have concentrated on being an answering theology. ... now we must concentrate on providing a place to which to refer the questions.

I wonder if, in our search for a more dialogical discourse, it is possible for people of strong conviction to learn to speak *more interrogatively* and *less declaratively?*

We find encouragement from two traditions, one ancient and one modern. In Mark's gospel, more than three-quarters of the pericopes are composed around questions to, by or about Jesus. Jesus is presented not as a sage who explains life's mysteries or has the answer to every social dilemma, but as the great interlocutor of reality. Why?

The contemporary pedagogy of "conscientization" popularized by Paulo Freire suggests an answer. "The educator's role is to propose problems about the codified existential situation in order to help the learners arrive at a more and more critical view of their reality," wrote Freire. In other words, empowerment and liberation arise more from posing the right question than by insisting upon the right answer.

We might learn from one tradition that has sought to replace declarative with interrogatory theology. I am referring to the discourse of "Testimonies, Advices and Queries" found among the Religious Society of Friends, or Quakers. T.Canby Jones defines this tradition as follows:

A "Testimony" is a standard of faith, ethical behavior or Gospel Order which a group of people covenants together to observe. ...

A "Query" is a sharply focused question designed to challenge persons or a group to live up to a corporately adopted standard of faith and behavior ...

An "Advice" is friendly counsel from the group on what it means to live by a commonly accepted testimony.

As a vehicle for community self-assessment, this discourse tries to preserve a delicate balance. It presents questions to the common life, not accusations, yet they are *hard* questions, not merely rhetorical ones. It is by definition open to constant rearticulation. Historical testimonies endure, but should be reinterpreted into new contexts. Queries stand ever in need of honing so they do not become rote or irrelevant. Advices must be revised as the times change so they will be practical.

We who question the dominant culture today should remember that we *too* stand before Jesus the Interlocuter. It is a good thing for prophetic Christian communities to compare their work and witness — this is the stuff of *testimonies* — as long as we do not hold our own practices up as the *only* legitimate expression of discipleship. We need to offer each other practical suggestions about how to live more simply, or nonviolently, or justly — this is the stuff of *advices* — as long as this does not deteriorate into a new kind of purity code. And the *query* that ought to circulate among us is not "Who is the most faithful?" but rather "How can we all deepen our journey — wherever we are starting from?"

"Criticism is about discomfort," Cornel West reminds us; "It's unsettling; it's about being transgressive in the sense of calling what one has assumed into question. America does not take well to that. Socrates said that the unexamined life is not worth living. But we could say the examined life is painful." This goes for all of us.

Perhaps if we learn to share questions with each other and the world, rather than condemnations or categorical statements, dialogue will come more easily.

Ched Myers, a *Witness* contributing editor, develops these ideas further in his new book, *Who Will Roll Away the Stone? Discipleship Queries for First World Christians* (Orbis Press, 1994).

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Even Me

by Naomi Long Madgett

For Mildred Dobey
and the
Plymouth Renaissance Choir, Detroit, Michigan

My Lord
wasn't no stuck-up man.
He was one of us.
He ran with common folks,
spoke up for street women
and lepers
and stuck by friends like Lazarus
when they had given up on life,
Smiled at black Simon
who shared his burden on the road to Calvary,
And when they nailed him
to a cross,
he told one of the crooks
beside him
they could hang out together when they got
where they was goin'.

And even now
when I sometimes feel like
the bottom's dropped out
of everything,
he speaks to me and says,
"Come on, child, you got somethin'
on your mind.
Let's you and me sit down awhile
an' talk about it."

My Jesus,
he ain't no stuck-up man.



Detroit poet Naomi Long Madgett is author of eight collections of poetry, the most recent being Remembrances of Spring: Collected Early Poems, *published in 1993 by Michigan State University Press. She is winner of the 1993 Michigan Artists Award and of the 1993 American Book Award.*

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Passion and dialogue:
an interview with Steve Charleston

Steve Charleston, bishop of Alaska, spoke with The Witness *by telephone recently. The interview explores Charleston's conviction that the church will enjoy a second renaissance in the next century. To get there, of course, we may have to speak with one another.*

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann: You've spoken about a second Reformation in the next century — a time when the church will come alive again. Looking at the Episcopal Church right now — and how divided we are — where do you see room for conversations that might get us from where we are to the church that you anticipate — one which is really multicultural and has a strong role for women?

Steve Charleston: There are several places where bridges of communication need to be built — between traditionalists and progressives; between men and women; cross-culturally we still have a lot of work to do; and, finally, between people of different economic categories — different economic concerns. The last is kind of a hidden agenda. It's one that's not often put out in the forefront, but is beneath several of these issues. For example, between men and women and between people of different cultural backgrounds.

Until we pry open that lid and really start to look seriously at how much we're influenced by economic realities, we may be talking more on the surface rather than really building the bridges that I'm describing. We can try and lay the superstructure of a bridge, but unless we undergird it with some hard-core, real dialogue about the economic realities of the latter part of this century and a prospectus for the future, we are just going to be building a bridge without a foundation.

J.W-K.: Do you see any areas where divisions are so deep or are based on something so true that there should be no conversation?

S.C.: No, I don't. We are to be a people of hope and of possibility and never turn away. No matter how big the division may seem between us and others, however we define ourselves as the "us" and the "other" in relation to us — there is no gulf that separates us that the gospel cannot bridge and that we are not called to make the attempt to bridge through the witness of Christ.

J.W-K.: What do you do with people with whom you disagree?

S.C.: I've had a lot of experience with that.... That's a joke, but it's true in some ways. I suppose most of us who are active in the church and take our theology seriously can name any number of individuals or groups with whom we are in disagreement.

The first thing I try to do is to listen. It seems like a simple answer to a complicated question, but it is fundamental. If we're not willing to at least listen carefully — and I mean listen intently, listen with an open mind, listen through the ears of compassion — then we'll never get anywhere.

J.W-K.: It seems that you're not feeling discouraged about the life of the church, while an awful lot of folks are. Can you say a little bit about the landscape that you see and where you see the signs of things that may be changing?

S.C.: In my response to the question about naming different groups that are at odds with each other, one of the interesting things about most of those communities that are in conflict with one another is that many of them share a common denominator of feeling discouraged or hopeless. They are motivated by a vision of the future that is colored with dark colors. They feel that there is little resolution. They see images of disunity, even the dissolution of the church. They feel themselves trapped into small pockets that are constantly in states of siege with others and so there's a real strong sense of foreboding and even hopelessness in the life of the church.

We often think of the gospel of Jesus as something so brittle and so fragile that if you question it at all, it's liable to shatter in your hand like a piece of fine porcelain. In fact, the gospel of Jesus is so strong and so flexible that we can push on it and push on it and still find that it makes room for us — for each one of us.

Over against that I keep trying to encourage people to join me in believing that this is perhaps one of the most hopeful times in the life of the church. We stand on the threshold of a renewed witness to the Christian faith that has profound consequences for the future — offering the whole global community a vision of hope and of tolerance, peace, justice and the truth

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Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. **Visminis Company** markets bulletin covers from P.O. Box 10189, Pittsburgh, Penn., 15232.

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of the gospel that is wonderfully liberating to all segments of the world's population.

I think we've been put in this place by the hand of God because we are a generation of Christians who have the ability and the insight, the wisdom and the love that can lead us to fulfill that promise of scripture. So I see this as a wonderful time.

J.W-K.: Our nation feels like it's on the point of collapse with gang violence and poverty and a popular culture that doesn't seem to leave room for any kind of personal integrity or family or community life. Our churches have been pretty much abandoned by the generations that are coming up. Say a little bit about where this gospel message is being kept alive and who the folks are that have been given these gifts and who they'll be speaking to.

S.C.: Why in the midst of all of this turmoil and apparent chaos both within the life of the church and the society would I say that this is such a good time for us? An acceptable year of the Lord? I would say that because I believe this is the time of incarnation. My reading of scripture — my understanding of the historical context of Jesus — reminds me that it was a very similar time in world history in which Jesus emerged. In other words, the times of chaos and confusion and of struggle are exactly the moments when God chooses through grace and love to intervene into human history. It is in exactly this time that God *would* choose to suddenly make God's presence felt in the lives of men and women.

The intervention of God to bring peace, to bring calm, to bring the light of the gospel — I see that emerging in the everyday lives of so many Christians. We have wonderful witnesses to this kind of faithfulness all around us.

When I project into the future and talk about the role of women, that's one of the communities I would point to. I'm absolutely convinced that not only have women kept the church alive through times of struggle both great and small, on the local level as well as on the global level, but that inherent in the vision and the ministry of women in the church are those seeds of the future that will lead us to the next reformation. That's only one community, but there are others.



Steve Charleston

J.W-K.: Let me ask you about the others in a minute, but one of the places where I see spiritual life with an intensity that's often lacking in the church-at-large is in communities of women — like in the predominantly Catholic women who've started Women-Church. They have created ways of worshiping with one another that minimize the effect of not being able to be ordained and feeling outcast in their own church. But the connection between their worship and the traditional Christian church is tenuous sometimes — actually a lot of times they draw on American Indian spirituality and other forms of worship. Almost everywhere I turn I'm running into women who have a really deep spirituality that's growing, but it's not within the traditional church. Is this the kind of group of women who will help bring in the second reformation or is this separate from your vision?

There is no real dialogue if there is no passionate commitment.

S.C.: My feeling is that when we talk about communities — in this case women — who are experimenting with a new form of expression of their spiritual faith, they do so within the body of the church. Sometimes it seems as though what they're doing is rejecting the traditional model, but I imagine it in the shape of an egg. That is, the shell around us is the shell of the church — our liturgies, our polities, our hierarchies as we've inherited them over the centuries.

Spiritualities are not formed in a vacuum. They are formed within that shell of tradition and of history that we have all grown up in. The question is in what ways do they affect that outer shell and what are they giving a new birth to? Women or men who begin to experiment and to challenge and to think about new ways of worship and new ways of organizing themselves are all drawing on their own personal histories as well as on the histories of their churches, so there's a direct connection — an umbilicus — between this experimental vision of the future and the past. Things don't emerge just out of thin air for us as finite people. They emerge because we have all been fed — for good or bad — by our historical connection with the traditional body of the church. It's like that shell. There's something new growing inside the church. The church is like a womb

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and something new is growing within it. There are times when that growth is painful. There are times when you think it may shatter the outer shell altogether. There are other times when that shattering process can be envisioned not as something destructive and negative, but as a necessary part of any growing process — it will occur so that something new can emerge, something new can be born.

J.W-K.: When you see this new vitality coming out of orthodox roots as a gift to our age in this time, you describe it as a "global gift." But historically whenever Christianity has made a broad sweep through the globe, it has left a trail of ruin behind it — the crusades and the taking of this continent. Is there going to be something different about the way it's done this time so that it doesn't end up with the same kind of repression?

S.C.: I am convinced that that's true. In our past historical experience of the global movement of Christianity, we described it as a tidal wave — the wave of imperialism, or the wave of the missionary movement, or the wave of the crusades. It was always envisioned as something that would start from a central point and then move out and sweep over other people.

When we look to the future, we're going to see something entirely different. We'll see an emergence, coming out of places around the world, in which it's not a wave washing over other peoples. It's a new vision of the church and a new spirituality that's going to come from the ground up. It's like a deep spring welling up from the earth, coming up and giving life and giving nourishment to local communities first and then merging with others that are doing very similar things around the world. You can see this happening in Africa, in Latin America, in Asia and here in North America. It's occurring all around us.

The global vision of the future I see for the Christian faith is not a vision of a church triumphant that would move out and claim new territories for itself. This is going to be a very organic movement of faith, growing up from within cultures and then spreading out gradually until it connects.

Look how wonderfully we experienced that when the Anglican encounter occurred with women of the Anglican communion in Brazil. You could find women from vastly different cultures and languages and life experiences, but they were speaking in a common language because something touched in their lives. They understood that while their ministry and vision was growing with a resonance of where they came from — there was a connection. There was some human quality to their voice that began to sing in harmony with each other. That's what I'm seeing in the future.

J.W-K.: Well, when a spring starts to rise up, I guess there are things we can do to help it survive — move the branches out of the way, protect it. What do we need to be doing to encourage these springs?

S.C.: We need to not be afraid of the experimentation and questioning that will happen throughout the rest of our lifetime before we get into the fullness of the reformation in the next century.

Progressives and those who are conservatives are both very necessary dance partners for the symphony of God to continue.

What we need to focus on in our theological education is not conformity, but creativity. We need to allow people to have the freedom of expression and the freedom of thought to test the limits of their understanding of the gospel.

We often think of the gospel of Jesus as something so brittle and so fragile that if you question it at all, it's liable to shatter in your hand like a piece of fine porcelain. In fact, the gospel of Jesus is so strong and so flexible that we can push on it and push on it and still find that it makes room for us — for each one of us.

We don't have to be terrified if we find that people are asking difficult questions or raising new ideas or trying new forms in the life of the Christian church — like the spring coming up from the earth or like something being grown within the womb of the church. They're organic images because they talk about a vision of the gospel that is very flexible.

That's why Paul's image of the body is such a wonderful one for the church. It doesn't say that you just remain in one fixed position forever in the church. It says that it's alright for us to continue to expand into new ways of understanding. That's something we have to make room for. Interestingly we need to do that both in a conservative *and* in a progressive way.

Very often progressive Christians look at so-called conservative Christians and say, "Well, they're not growing at all." But I would never say that growth only occurs on the ends of the fingertips. Growth occurs deep within the body itself. For us to remain vital it's perfectly alright to have both happening simultaneously.

When conservatives stand firmly planted with their feet on what they think is solid biblical ground and they say, "No, we have to pay attention to this, in many ways they are serving the same function of growth because they are challenging us to think back on where we came from. And in that way they are tethering us to the ground of our being so that those of us who push to the limits and the fringes don't fly off. So really the funny thing is that those who

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are progressives and those who are conservatives are both very necessary dance partners for the symphony of God to continue.

J.W-K.: In this global welling up of Christian faith and vision, what happens with Muslims and Buddhists and Hindus? If it's not going to be oppressive, I would guess that it's not a campaign to convert. Is that right?

S.C.: I was asked to go to the pre-parliament of the Anglicans at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago, which was this international, interreligious dialogue, and in some ways I think my message there was somewhat surprising because I talked about the need for Christians to be very clear about their understanding of who *we* are as followers of Christ Jesus, and I said that our message must be presented very clearly and in a non-ambiguous way.

The other person on the agenda with me had talked about how Christianity should not maintain any unique or exclusive truth claim for fear of offending Buddhists or Muslims or Jews or any other religious tradition.

One of the BBC [British Broadcasting Company] teams interviewed me later. They asked, if I am such a forward-thinking bishop, why would I come to this international dialogue and say we need to be clear about who we are as Christians? My answer is — and because I am a person of intense faith I feel passionately about what I believe in — I believe Jesus Christ is the son of God. I believe that the scriptures are the inspired word of God. I believe there's a liberating message for all of humanity in that. And I would much rather be in a dialogue with Muslims, or Jews, or Buddhists or any other persons of religious faith who felt just as passionately about their faith as I do about mine.

There is no real dialogue if there is no passionate commitment. The ground of our religious faith is our commitment to something in which we believe so strongly that we are moved by the spirit to share it with others. It is like holding an extremely valuable treasure in the palm of your hand — something life-giving, an antidote to illness. To withhold it or to be blasé about it would be almost criminal. To share it with other people and to say, "Come and see what I've found," is what I believe initiates real interreligious dialogue. I am not a believer in the "I'm okay



***Apocalypse of Baron Heinecker*, 1415-1420** courtesy of Visminis Company

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— you're okay" school of thought of the new age.

I need to be able to stand firmly rooted in my understanding of the Christian faith and my absolute devotion to Jesus Christ as my savior and share that with other people with a passion and an intensity that challenges them and invites them to share theirs with me. Now the key is — in the past, Christianity was willing to share its witness, but wasn't willing to listen to anyone else's witness in return. Our tragic experience of what that does to us as people has taught us that those of us who still are passionately dedicated to the gospel of Jesus can share that witness unashamedly and with fervor, but at the same time listen just as passionately to others. There is a quality of passionate listening — it means opening up your whole being to what another person is trying to communicate to you, to show them respect and tolerance.

I'm absolutely convinced that not only have women kept the church alive through times of struggle both great and small, on the local level as well as on the global level, but that inherent in the vision and the ministry of women in the church are those seeds of the future that will lead us to the next reformation.

J.W-K.: What about the mandate that we're supposed to make disciples of all nations? A lot of people would agree that this kind of conversation should take place, but there's this expectation that at the conclusion of the conversation, the people who are not Christian will take Jesus as their Lord.

S.C.: When Jesus says that we are to go and make disciples of all nations, he also reminds us through the scripture that our sense of time and his sense of time are very different. When he was asked the question, "When does all of this finally end?" he said, "I have no idea. God knows, but I don't." It's not as though, if I am in a dialogue with a person of another faith, we have a fixed end-point, a one-hour time line, at the end of which if they're not willing to be baptized, I've failed in my mission. The dialogue that we have as humanity in our search for God will go on far beyond any stretch of our imagination. My job is only to be faithful to the commission placed on me through Christ Jesus. That is, I am to go out and love God with all my heart, and all my mind, and all of my soul, and to communicate that love of God to others.

J.W-K.: And if we're faithful in this second reformation, what's the gift? What is it that's uniquely Christian in origin that we'll offer?

S.C.: One of the things that we will offer to the world, is, first of all, peace for the world. It is something that was at the heart of our message that we truly are dedicated to peace. We share that with other world religions in different ways, but it is a very powerful message coming out of the Christian witness.

J.W-K.: Does that mean non-violence?

S.C.: Mmhmm. That's right. I believe non-violence is a part of that. It is an attempt to say that we are envisioning a world in which the use of arms to resolve conflict will no longer be acceptable. I would hold that as a standard for the Christian witness. We are called to work toward a world in which violence no longer threatens the lives of any persons.

Secondly, we are a faith in which the need of the poor is paramount in our lives. Our mission is largely shaped and colored by the degree and the depth to which we are compassionately concerned with the lives of the poor and that encompasses both those persons who know hunger and refugees who know displacement and families who are broken and children who are abandoned. I think peace and concern for the poor are two of the most important things that Christianity can bring into the next century.

J.W-K.: You said early on that women wouldn't be the only people that were encouraging these wellsprings, that there would be other people as well.

S.C.: Absolutely. Some of the strongest, hopeful visions of the future are occurring in communities of color throughout our church. Certainly that's true here in Alaska. Those little springs of hope that I talk about are bubbling up all around us if we'll only take time to see them. In villages in the bush of Alaska, there is such a depth of faith and such a commitment to Christ and love for humanity. That's true in inner cities and in other dioceses all across the country. They're not always noticed, they're not always appreciated but they're happening in communities of color everywhere. And of all colors, and by that I mean I think they're happening for European Americans too and that's the joy of it — that whether we realize it yet or not, those springs of hope are emerging and it's only a matter of time before they merge and we have something new.

J.W-K.: That sounds wonderful.

S.C.: It's going to happen. I have *no* doubts in my mind. I'm not a troubled bishop. I'm not somebody that's hanging my head or wringing my hands. I've never felt so joyful and so glad to be born into this time. I feel blessed by God that God would have allowed me the joy of living in times of trouble for the sake of the gospel. TW

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Building on common ground:

opponents in the abortion controversy join forces

by Marianne Arbogast

Two years ago, Missouri legislators were startled by the signatures on a letter they received in support of a bill which funded a drug rehabilitation program for women with children. The names of Loretto Wagner and Andrew Puzder — prominent pro-life activists — appeared alongside those of pro-choice advocates B.J. Isaacson-Jones and Jean Cavender.

"We're all very well-known on our respective sides," Cavender says. "The legislators said they were surprised."

Public, joint advocacy of programs to benefit women and children is one outcome of a pro-choice/pro-life dialogue begun in St. Louis in 1990, shortly after the Supreme Court upheld Missouri's restrictive abortion law in *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services.*

Dialogue between pro-choice and pro-life supporters has been "growing from the grassroots," says Adrienne Kaufmann, co-director of the newly-formed Common Ground Network for Life and Choice in Washington, D.C., which offers linkage and resources to people engaged in local efforts. It is happening in St. Louis, Buffalo, Cleveland, Denver, and Washington, D.C.

"Common Ground" is an approach to dialogue in conflict situations which emphasizes areas of agreement while respecting profound differences. The national network is affiliated with Search for Common Ground, a 12-year-old agency which has sponsored projects in Russia, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and South Africa.

It offers opponents a space in which "to sit down together, hear each others' stories, and rehumanize people on the other side of the conflict," Kaufmann says. "The aim is to understand, not to agree."



Meinrad Craighead

She insists that "Common Ground is not middle ground," a refrain echoed by many who take part in the dialogues.

St. Louis

The St. Louis group began with a conversation between Andrew Puzder, the pro-life attorney who wrote the Missouri law, and B.J. Isaacson-Jones, president and board chair of Reproductive Health Services — the agency which filed the lawsuit that led to the Supreme Court decision.

"Shortly after we lost the case, Andrew Puzder wrote an op-ed in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch,*" Isaacson-Jones says. "He suggested that regardless of what happened with abortion, something needed to be done to help women who had unplanned pregnancies.

"I called him after reading it and asked if he would like to get together just to talk, with no agenda.

"I have always understood that people with different views are not my enemy," she says. "During all of our clinic invasions — there have been thousands of arrests, and one of our clinics was firebombed in 1986 — I have understood that the people involved in violent acts are really the fringes.

"Andy had always treated me with dignity when we were at the Supreme Court. Within just a few minutes, we discovered that we had more in common than we had differences."

They decided to continue to meet, and invited others. Loretto Wagner, a former president of Missouri Citizens for Life, and Jean Cavender, director of public affairs for Reproductive Health Services, joined them.

> *"I have always understood that people with different views are not my enemy. During all the clinic invasions, I have understood that people involved in violent acts are really the radical fringe."*
>
> *—B. J. Isaacson-Jones*

Few could match Wagner's credentials in pro-life circles. She has led lobbying campaigns, planned educational programs, organized demonstrations, and gone to jail for the cause which she says "has practically consumed my life since 1973 [the year of the *Roe*

Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness.* Artist **Meinrad Craighead** spent 14 years in monastic life in England.

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v. Wade decision]."

She also co-founded two shelters for pregnant women which serve more than 600 women and children each year.

"I learned that you have to work with people who don't agree with you," she says. "Most of the women who come to us have been abused, and about 70 percent are addicted to drugs or alcohol. Many of the people we have found to help them don't agree with us on the abortion issue.

"We can't say we aren't going to associate with one another and pool our resources and our compassion and help someone when we can agree," she said.

Cavender tells of a ten-year-old girl, pregnant by her stepfather, who sought an abortion but was beyond the legal limit. Since the pregnancy was high-risk, she was confined to her home, and needed a baby-sitter to stay with her while her mother worked.

"Because of my relationship with Loretto Wagner, I called her, and she went out and raised money to secure a babysitter," Cavender says. "One of our doctors gave her care, and she was able to carry her pregnancy to term."

Cavender, who was confirmed in her pro-choice commitment by the discovery that her maternal grandmother had died after an illegal abortion, says that it has been "healing" to meet with pro-life people in a non-hostile environment.

"There have been years of hurt," she says. "We have been yelled at and screamed at by protesters. Common Ground has given us an opportunity to heal from the pain."

But they encountered a new form of hostility.

"When we first began meeting it was painful because we found it was our colleagues in our respective movements who were the most critical," Cavender says. "People were highly suspicious; they felt we were out to compromise."

Wagner says her participation in the dialogues shocked some pro-life leaders.

"They could not understand that Common Ground doesn't demand a retreat from our principles," she says. "I don't think we can depolarize. I don't think we can become one mushy middle. I don't have to give an inch in my opposition to abortion, and pro-choice members are as determined as ever to keep abortion legal.



"But I don't think we can withdraw to the safety of our own mindsets and speak only to those who agree with us. I think the resolution of this issue rests on the arguments themselves. People haven't been able to hear the arguments because the debate has been so shrill. How can anyone hear if we refuse to acknowledge the other side except to shout at them?"

"The longer I work, the stronger I feel about choice," says Isaacson-Jones, whose commitment dates back to her college days, when she obtained money from her father to help friends who had to travel out of state for legal abortions. "I think caring for a child is the greatest human responsibility. I think it should be very intentional and planned.

"At the same time, I have always known I don't necessarily have 'the' right answer about choice — God hasn't spoken to me."

Isaacson-Jones says that she has "broadened the agenda" of reproductive services as a result of her work with pro-life people. Three years ago, she established a state-licensed adoption agency at the clinic. The clinic has also expanded its birth control services for women on Medicaid.

"I believe abortion is a woman's r-i-g-h-t, not a woman's r-i-t-e," she says. "If we can combine some of the passion and some of the resources [of the pro-choice and pro-life movements] we certainly can reduce the need for abortion. That would be very, very positive."

"I don't think we can withdraw to the safety of our own mindsets and speak only to those who agree with us. The resolution of this issue rests on the arguments themselves. People haven't been able to hear the arguments because the debate has been so shrill. How can anyone hear if we refuse to acknowledge the other side except to shout at them?"

—Loretta Wagner

Buffalo

In Buffalo, the 1992 Operation Rescue "Spring of Life" campaign left in its wake a bitterly divided city.

"People who had been friends suddenly couldn't talk to each other," says Karalyn Schmidt, a former Planned Parenthood regional president with a long history of commitment to women's issues. "We had been

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thrown into what felt like a war."

The Buffalo Council of Churches sponsored the formation of a steering committee of people on both sides. After a year of weekly meetings the committee sponsored a "Dialogue Day" in February, 1993. Three more have been held during the past year, and three ongoing Common Ground groups now work in the Buffalo area.

"I was in a small group with two pro-choice and two pro-life people, and the pro-life people both talked about having been involved in the peace movement," Schmidt says. "I remember being just stunned that people coming out of the same roots I did had arrived at such a different place."

Through Common Ground, Schmidt met Karen Swallow Prior, a high- school principal who is media spokesperson for the Western New York Rescue Movement, an Operation-Rescue-style group.

"The first time Karen and I met, we had a heated battle," Schmidt says. "I thought she was just this young stupid upstart who didn't know what she was talking about. I now know that she has given incredible time to thinking about the position she holds. I respect that, I respect her — and I like her."

Though she says that "Common Ground is about dialogue, not about solution," Schmidt holds on to the hope that "if we hit the walls enough times, we will get through them.

"Karen recognizes the inherent difficulty of making abortion illegal," she says. "She hopes that if that happened there would at least be fewer. I say, what about those who give their lives? That's one of the walls."

A conversation between Schmidt and Prior was broadcast by a local TV station, and they served as co-facilitators of the Dialogue Day in February.

Prior believes that by focusing on areas of shared concern, activists can achieve gains that cannot be made "with so much collective energy focused on abortion."

At the same time, she remains committed to rescue work and to stopping legal abortion.



Common Ground method

"Common Ground work is compatible with pro-life and pro-choice activism, but not in the same space," says Kaufmann, who is integrating her experience with Common Ground into doctoral work on conflict.

Those who apply to attend Common Ground workshops are asked to identify themselves as pro-choice or pro-life. Kaufmann has learned to recognize refusal to do so as a warning sign. "If you say you're on neither one, how can you talk to the other side?"

Applicants are also required to sign ground rules, agreeing to "respect the humanity of all present," and to "offer our ideas without attempts to convert and convince."

Kaufmann developed a values questionnaire which she gives to workshop participants. People are asked to rate their agreement or disagreement with 25 statements (eg. "It is a worthwhile goal to lessen the number of abortions in this country.") on a scale of one to five. Everyone fills it out twice — once for themselves, and once as they think people in the other camp would answer.

"It not only surfaces the commonalities and differences, but also the misperceptions of each other," Kaufmann says.

"Pro-choice people do not think pro-life people value equality, but pro-life people score very high on valuing equality. Pro-life people do not think pro-choice people value spirituality, but pro-choice people score very high on valuing spirituality."

In small groups, participants are invited to share the story of how they came to call themselves pro-choice or pro-life.

"We can't argue with a person's experience," Kaufmann says. "It's amazing how often the common denominator is a painful experience — sometimes I wonder if that's not why there is so much passion on this issue."

Other topics include: "How have you been stereotyped by the other side and how has that affected you?" "What is your stereotypical view of the other side?" "Which parts of the stereotype fit you and which don't?" "What question did you always want to ask but were afraid to ask someone on the other side?" and "I wish this group could work together to do Project 'X' because of Reason 'Y.' "

Common Ground works for "people who don't have to create an enemy in order to do their work," Kaufmann says. Participants "realize they may meet the same people next week at a clinic on opposite sides of the sidewalk. But many say, 'When I go there I'm looking at people differently because I have met them in another space.'" TW

[For more information, write or call the Common Ground Network for Life and Choice at 1601 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 200, Wash., D.C. 20009; 202-265-4300.]

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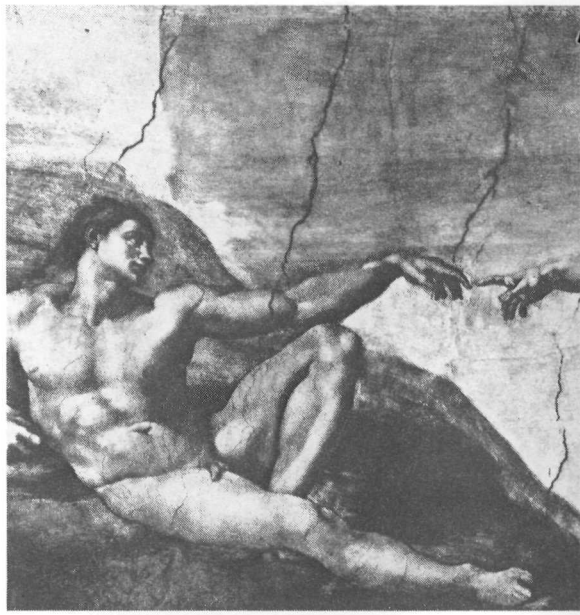
Disrupting the hegemony in God and in us

by Walter Brueggemann



Creation of Adam, **Michelangelo, 1511.**

Pluralism is not simply a matter of competing or multiple truths, but is always ... a matter of conflicting centers of power, so that all our *truth-claims* are at the same time *power assertions.*

Hegemony and change

I believe pluralism characteristically appears *after* something else, namely a previously established hegemony; pluralism is the crisis which comes when that hegemony has collapsed, been threatened, or called into question.

By "hegemony" I refer to a social relationship in which one set of faith claims or one voice of authority... holds unchallenged sway. The hegemony may hold sway because it is intellectually compelling. More likely, it holds sway because of the political force which establishes it, or the moral force which legitimates it. In any of these cases, hegemony comes to exist ... either because no alternatives are permitted, or because in a more or less "tribal" context, no alternatives have yet appeared. ...

In such an established and unchallenged hegemony, there is, of course, no problem of pluralism. Adherence to the hegemony may in part be glad assent, or in part coerced assent, or in part a habitual indifference that simply does not bother. I suspect that in a stable, well-ordered church, society, or family, hegemony operates mostly unnoticed. And, of course, the agents and beneficiaries of hegemony characteristically much prefer that the hegemony be unnoticed.

The maintenance of such an hegemony characteristically entails repression, that is, the silencing and censoring of any counter-opinion. In Christian practice, that repression might be done through the power of excommunication, or less formally through "shunning." While the power of these is more dramatic and visible in Roman Catholicism, there is among Protestants at every level of the church, including national offices, an effective capacity for shunning and silencing those who hold unacceptable counter-opinions. One simply disappears from the conversation. Thus, so long as the hegemony can keep the lid on counter-opinion by repression, there is no pluralism and no practice or problem of pluralism. Insiders have a confident sense of "coherence" and "consensus."

Pluralism arises when the hegemony is no longer able to repress, silence, deny, or censure counter-opinion. Thus, pluralism as a real political emergent does not come about through the benign proposal of an equally plausible alternative, but pluralism comes about as an act of dissent against dominant opinion, a dissent which may be mild, civil, and respectful, or may be abrasive, threatening, and seemingly violent. Pluralism seen as a counter-voice of power in the community, characteristically, is no problem for the practitioners of dissent. It is, however, a serious problem for the custodians and beneficiaries of the old hegemony. And thus the issue for the hegemonists is how to honor and engage the dissenting alternative, or conversely, how to silence the dissenting alternative and re-establish the authority of the one voice which conventionally has overridden all others. ...

Pluralism cannot be a polite parlor game of respect and distance, but requires a serious regrouping of power and truth under the impetus of the spirit.

What passes for conversation is frequently a power struggle, a battle for the microphone, and the erstwhile holders of hegemonic power usually do not admit (or ofttimes even recognize) that they are defending a power advantage. Characteristically they

Walter Brueggemann is an Old Testament scholar at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Ga. This article draws from a presentation Brueggemann gave at the Trinity Institute in February, 1994, titled *God's "Othering" and Our "Otherness."*

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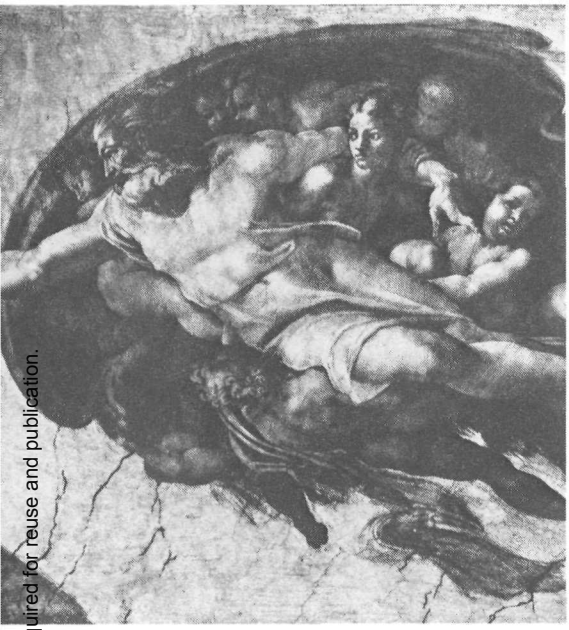

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imagine themselves only to be defending truth.

The complexity of God

[Brueggemann suggests that our understanding of power and of challenges to reigning power is rooted in our beliefs about God. By stressing that God is one God, omniscient and omnipotent, we oversimplify the complexity of God, of ourselves and of the social order.]

Our Christian theologies about God, though rooted in the biblical text, tend to be reductions concerning God in the interest of some kind of domesticity. That is, our several monotheisms tend to have a monist view of God which allows for no ambiguity or incongruity in the character of God. ...

But things are not so easy for God.

In Numbers 14:20, God will pardon and forgive as Moses urges; but in the next breath (vv. 21-23), God resolves to kill the entire generation, except for Caleb. In I Samuel 15:29, God will not recant or have a change of mind, but in the same chapter with the same verbs, God does have a change of mind. God dismissively consigns wayward Israel to Egyptian punishment in Hosea 11:5-7 but immediately, in one of God's most poignant texts (vv.8-9), God has an interior rumble that turns to compassion. In Jer. 30:12, God asserts of Jerusalem:

Your hurt is incurable,
your wound is grievous ...

At the end of the same poem, however, God declares to the same folk,

For I will restore health to you, and your wounds I will heal, says the Lord (v.17).

The biblical God is, in God's own character, a model for pluralism in terms of hegemony, repression, and dissent. The hegemony of God's life is in mercy and justice. That is who God resolves to be and mostly is. But the repressed stuff breaks out, and we are given scenes in which God repents, and I dare say, reincorporates the repressed, dissenting material into the now deeply changed ego-identity of God. God's own life, in the Bible, is a pluralistic transaction, in which God's own identity is always under transformation by incorporation of God's "otherness," as the "id-ish" truth speaks to ego-power and insists upon being heard and taken seriously. It is as though God, in seasons of regression, says shrilly, "That is too who I am!" I dare imagine that the church's trouble with pluralism and our inability to host ways other than our own established way, derives at least in part from our flatly monotheistic, monolithic, monarchic notion of God, rather than accepting that God's own life is a continuing practice of the fine art of hosting incongruity.

I dare imagine that the church's trouble with pluralism derives at least in part from our flatly monotheistic, monolithic, monarchic notion of God.

The "otherness" of self

My second [observation] concerns human personhood. We are, we confess, made in the image of God. Because our notion of God is characteristically one-dimensionally monotheistic, monolithic, and monarchic, i.e., reduced and domesticated, we imagine that "image of God" is most faithful, full, and effective when we become unified personalities capable of "willing one thing." ...

The problem with such a sense of "self," of course, is that it takes enormous energy to keep the thing together. It takes equally repressive energy to deny those parts of self which do not conform and cohere with the dominant self. Pushed to its extreme, as we all know, such a well-ordered self is required to live with considerable discipline and intentionality, often with considerable denial, until something explodes that is destructive of others, or more likely, until something internal explodes that is destructive of self. Or *apropos* our subject, a self that cannot entertain the "otherness" of self is likely to be a failed self. Such a one-dimensional self, I suggest, is theologically derived from a miscontrual of God, for the God of the Bible is indeed an endlessly negotiated plurality, not without dominant characteristics, but for whom disparate dimensions are always being reexpressed and reincorporated in transformative ways.

Likewise a healthy, faithful self is one who has rich interiority, i.e., the self is a drama of many voices that interact and that are endlessly under negotiation to see to what extent this or that voice will prevail. In that drama, there are for each of us characteristically dominant voices who have

been in power over other selves for so long that they do not wait to hear other voices or honor other selves, but tend to disregard, censure, and silence such alternatives. There are, nonetheless, diminished, marginal selves in our bodies, often voices of hurt and hope, who do cry out and who sometimes grow shrill and demanding. And when the dominant self must finally, reluctantly heed such lesser selves, the dominant self may continue to prevail, but having heeded, must change profoundly. And if refusing to heed and change profoundly, the regnant self may be fated to dethronement and demise.

Resisting conversation

It is our long, slow *nurture in monolith* — our unreflective monotheism, our confident ego-strength as maturity, our Constantinian certitude, our white, male sense of domination now frequently imitated by non-males and non-whites, our military metaphors that people our imagination — all of that together is enough to preclude conversation which is an act of negotiation between center and border. And when conversation is transposed into non-negotiable struggle and confrontation, the center is unable to yield, the border is destined to gracelessness, and winning becomes more important than newness.

The work of conversation is not to dislodge the hegemony. It is rather to incorporate into the vision and purpose of the hegemony the truth to which the hegemony itself does not have immediate access, but which is offered by these voices of inconvenience.

One may, of course, wonder if that means giving up some normative claims. But it is not known beforehand what happens when one undertakes such a conversation, for it is the very act of conversation itself which is the mark of fidelity to the neighbor and to the God of the neighbor. Such a practice of hegemony in pluralism means that the hegemonic agent is prepared to credit the dissenting self or voice as having an important claim to which attention must be paid, and conversely, acknowledging that one's hegemonic claim is not yet fixed.

God and hegemony

In ancient Israel, in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, prophetic faith insisted that there are times when God *scatters* and when God *gathers.*

Who can listen seriously? Well, not those who are mushy and find one notion as good as another. And not those who are so insecure of their place in the conversation that they have no critical reference by which to "test the spirits." I suggest that serious, transformative listening can be done only by those familiar enough and confident enough about faith that it can be risked in disclosure and vulnerability.

The *scattering* is a time of exile when risks are run, truth is reconfigured, and power is redeployed. The *gathering* is a time of homecoming and consolidation. Both the *scattering* and the *gathering* are of God's hand. But of course God cannot do both at once. There is a dialectical relation between the two.

It is my judgment that ours is a time of scattering when old configurations of truth and power are ending, when old certitudes are necessarily impinged upon, when old forms of domination are necessarily threatened. Or as Mary sings:

He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly (Luke 1:51-52).

Specifically, I believe that the loss of the old Western white, male, colonial hegemony which long thought it embodied God's "preferential option" is indeed our time of *scattering.* And that assault hits at the certitude and domination of the Christian establishment, and derivatively it hits at the established power of the church, even if that white, male agency of certitude and domination is partly peopled by non-whites and non-males who now control budgets and printing presses.

With that scattering comes a deep loss of certitude in old faith affirmations, old ideological orthodoxies, and old preferred moralities. With it comes, moreover, a scattering of old politics and old denominational patterns of church authority and influence.

I believe that this deep and broad *scattering,* (a) is of God, (b) touches all aspects of life, public and personal, and (c) touches every dimension of reality for both liberals and conservatives. The great fact of pluralism, I believe, is that the wind of God is blowing where it wills, and as is usual, that wind is deeply disturbing to us who have been accustomed to wind-resistance.

I believe that the great theological reality is that God is ending our several hegemonies, and requiring us to attend to the repressed voices of dissent which now enact a shrill transformation of how we know, how we believe, and how we live. That is, Pluralism is not everywhere, always the same. I want to insist that this is our time in God's hand, and I do not say that with any jubilation, for I understand myself as a tenured member of the hegemony.

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Pluralism and power

I am led to conclude, if my sense about the "scattering" is correct, that pluralism cannot be a polite parlor game of respect and distance, but requires a serious regrouping of power and truth under the impetus of the spirit.

But who can listen seriously? Well, not those who are mushy and find one notion as good as another. And not those who are so insecure of their place in the conversation that they have no critical reference by which to "test the spirits." I suggest that serious, transformative listening can be done only by those familiar enough and confident enough about faith that it can be risked in disclosure and vulnerability. And that requires greater clarity and greater discipline in faith than I sense to be usual among us.

The church, to be faithful in pluralism, must understand not only its intellectual inheritance, but must understand, appropriate and appreciate the long history of ideas, practices, and assertions by which things have been sorted out. That is, pluralism requires us to go back to basics.

My own sense about our "hegemony in pluralism" is that the most urgent conversation is not with other religions, but with the powerful claims of consumer ideology. In our slovenly pursuit of "management" and "therapy," we have made easy peace with consumerism, whereby conservatives readily confuse faith and free-market ideology, and liberals worry most about the size of the office and retirement packages. I submit that serious engagement and obedience in pluralism begins in repentance, in order that in our conversation the voices of dissent may regard the claims in the center at least as credible.

In such an exchange, God will work transformation. Such a trustful and risk-taking conversation is a way to the news that the Creator has promised to all the creatures, even the ones baptized. TW

Transforming Sarajevo

Jim Douglass, longtime anti-nuclear activist, is fasting in Rome in an appeal that Pope John Paul II and other religious leaders will intervene in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Starting February 12 through the 28 days of Ramadan, Douglass took nothing by day and juice by night. For the following three weeks he plans to drink only water. Excerpts of his appeal follow:

On Saturday, February 5th, the day the market was bombed, my friend Jagger and I were caught in downtown Sarajevo behind a fence between two open areas that were being hit by sniper fire. I shall always remember a small, hunched-over woman in her kerchief and winter coat, perhaps 80 years old, trying with all her might to run faster than the sniper's bullet could find her. She made it, as did the others around us.

Jagger and I made it safely to the President's Building, There I learned of the market massacre.

The reason why I went to Sarajevo to meet with religious and government leaders, and why I am now fasting in Rome, is that I want to support Sarajevo but without contributing to World War III. The decision to use NATO planes to bomb Serb artillery positions if they are not removed reminds me of the chain of events represented by the Princeps Bridge which I walked across many times in Sarajevo, the site of the beginning of World War I. Government leaders believe the forces of Radovan Karadzio and Blobodan Milosevio do not have nuclear weapons. That is probably true, but it will not be very long. If the lesson to be learned is once again that the possessor of the more powerful bomb wins, then the lesson to the loser will be that he needs a nuclear bomb.

From the massacre at Sarajevo's market and the 22 months of horror which preceded it, we need to learn a new lesson — that there is in truth a power of nonviolence which can stop those massacres. It is a divine power represented in the old city of Sarajevo by the four great religious traditions whose places of worship stand only a few meters from one another: Muslim, Orthodox, Catholic and Jewish. I believe the transforming nonviolent power of each of these ways into God is relatively unexplored. I am fasting and praying that the leaders of those traditions as well as other religious leaders will go on pilgrimage to Sarajevo as a transforming alternative to the global war we are all risking.

Plowshares trial

The trial of Philip Berrigan, John Dear, Lynn Fredriksson and Bruce Friedrich ended in an uproar February 15th. The defendants admitted hammering and pouring blood on an F-15E fighter jet December 7, 1993. Despite the objections of U.S. District Court Judge Terrence W. Boyle, the defendants read a statement condemning "the high crimes" of the U.S. government and military, then turned their backs on the judge as did the 20 supporters in the court room. The judge declared a mistrial and said he would recommend that the four be tried separately.

National Catholic Reporter, 2/93

Artists and technocrats

If William Ruckelhaus [the first administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency] had it to do over again, he would fill the EPA with not only technicians, but also with poets, artists and priests. These explorers of the heart and soul are needed to articulate and distill the ethical and spiritual values that shape society's relationship with the environment.

Earth Letter, 1/94



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art and society

Frustrated dialogue

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

We are facing each other, producing a continuous vocal sound.

We slowly build up the tension, our faces coming closer together until we are screaming into each other's open mouths.

(from the performance work "AAA-AAA," 15 minutes, 1978)

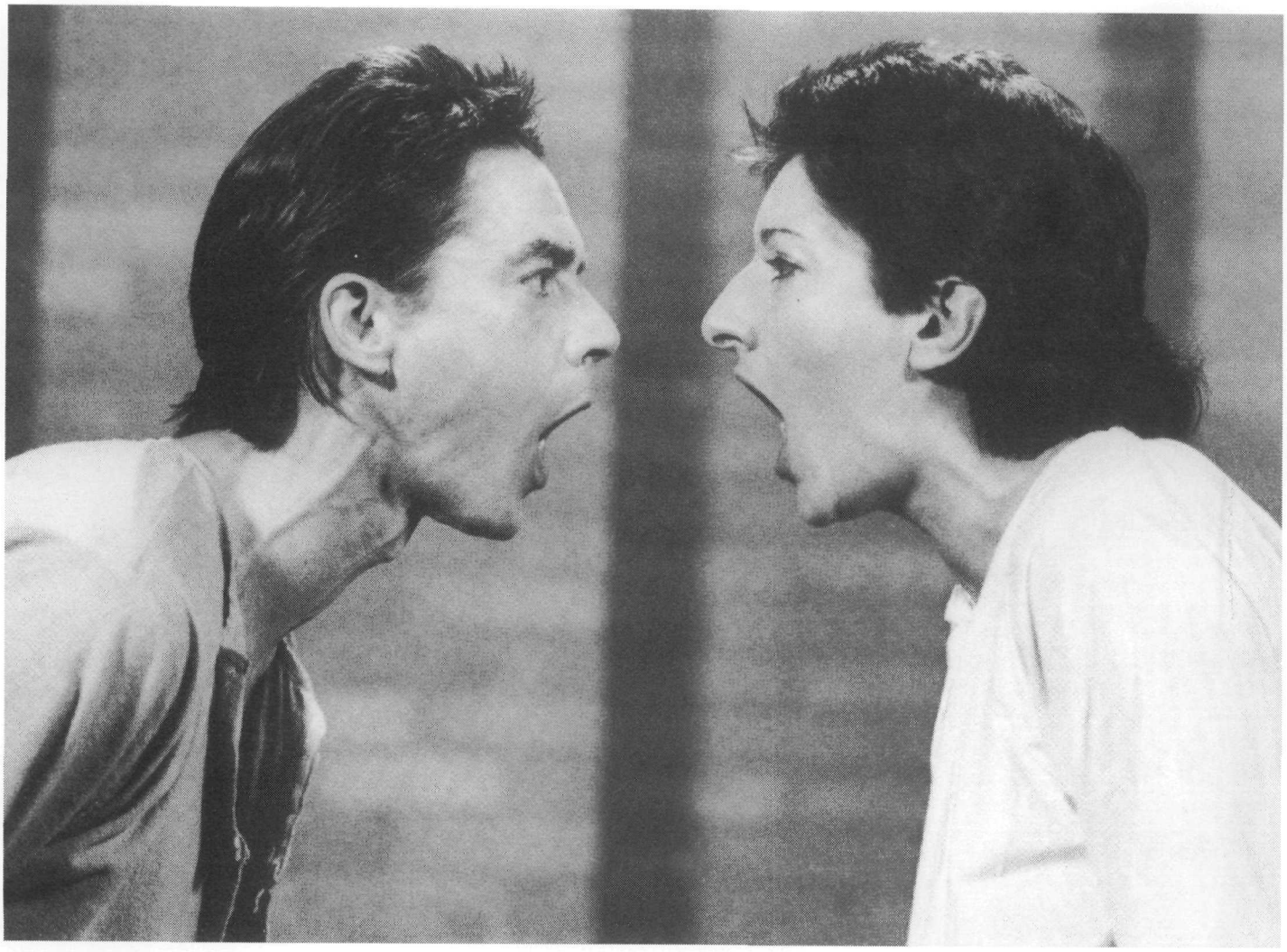
How often have we become enmeshed in a situation of frustrated dialogue such as this: making sounds at each other, rather than communicating ... talking at once without pausing for a response ... cranking up the volume until, like artists Marina Abramovic and Ulay, we find ourselves literally "screaming into each other's open mouths?"

Artists Ulay (who goes by one name) and Marina Abramovic met in Amsterdam in 1975. Marina, born in Yugoslavia, had studied painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade; Ulay, German by birth, had been involved with experimental photography. They began making artworks together in an artistic collaboration that was to last for more than a decade, choosing jointly to pursue the new genre of "performance art" rather than either of their more traditional specialties. (Performance art is a hybrid of visual art and theater that grew out of the "happenings" of the 1960s when many artists had grown dissatisfied with the limitations of painting, sculpture and photography. It allowed for an expanded form of representation, could incorporate sound and movement, and could directly involve the responses of an audience. Many of the modes pioneered by performance artists have become part of the "symbolic" protest actions of groups such as Greenpeace.)

They extended their exploration of interpersonal dynamics to include the participation of the audience as well. In a 1977 performance titled "Imponderabilia," Marina and Ulay spent 90 minutes standing naked at the main entrance of a museum in Bologna, Italy. Facing each other in the narrow doorway, those who wished to enter the building had to pass sideways through the small space between the artists, and, consequently, had to choose which one to turn towards while squeezing by.

Most of the pair's performances took a highly emblematic approach to their own relationship, and by extension, to the relationship between women and men, between individuals. They once sat back-to-back for 17 hours in a gallery, with their hair tied together. Another time, kneeling face-to-face in the dark, illuminated by two spotlights, they alternately slapped each other's faces for twenty minutes. A year earlier they had spent nearly an hour running past

Blaise Tobia and **Virginia Maksymowicz,** Philadelphia artists, edit the Art & Society Section of *The Witness.*



***AAA-AAA*, 1978, Marina Abramovic and Ulay** Photo courtesy of Ulay/Marina Abramovic from the book *Relation Work and Detour* © 1980. Loaned by Burnett Miller Gallery, L. A., Calif.

each other at close proximity, touching, until at high speed they finally collided.

They extended their exploration of interpersonal dynamics to include the participation of the audience as well. In a 1977 performance titled "Imponderabilia," Marina and Ulay spent 90 minutes standing naked at the main entrance of a museum in Bologna, Italy. Facing each other in the narrow doorway, those who wished to enter the building had to pass sideways through the small space between the artists, and, consequently, had to choose which one to turn towards while squeezing by.

Art like Marina Abramovic's and Ulay's makes people uneasy. Part of the queasiness comes from the nature of performance art. Occurring in real time and real space, without rehearsal and without a predicted end, there is an undeniable sense of uncertainty and suspense. (The actions of the audience are unpredictable as well; during one performance, a member of the audience ran up and attacked Marina.) While conventional genres like painting and sculpture interpret visual experience, performance art interprets lived experience and distills it into a concentrated and heightened form.

An even more unsettling aspect of their work comes from the sensitive and intimate nature of the questions these artists have asked us: How do we relate to and interact with each other? What kind of dialogues do we set up among ourselves? How can we live in community? These are questions that continue to plague us all—whether we see ourselves as Christians in particular communities, or whether we see ourselves as citizens of the world. TW

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Indianapolis '94

Church decision-making: an interview with Pamela Chinnis

In 1991 Pamela Chinnis became the first woman to be elected president of the House of Deputies, one of the two legislative bodies (the other is the House of Bishops) that address the vital matters before the Episcopal Church during the church's triennial General Convention. The House of Deputies consists of lay and clergy representatives or "deputies" from each of the church's dioceses. Resolutions brought forward for General Convention action must pass in both houses in the same form before becoming official actions of the church.

Julie Wortman: What's the job of president of the House of Deputies?

Pamela Chinnis: The main thing people think about is that the president presides over the House of Deputies at General Convention, but as a matter of fact that's a very small part of it — a very stressful part, but that's only a couple of weeks out of every three years. One of the important things that I do in conjunction with the presiding bishop is to make the appointments to the interim bodies of the church [that address church music, ecumenical relations, peace with justice and other matters important to the church between General Conventions]. He appoints the bishops and I appoint the clergy and lay members of those 23 interim bodies. I also appoint the members of the legislative committees which will function during the General Convention. There are 26 committees, so that's quite a few people.

I've also tried to attend at least one meeting of each interim body during the triennium. And there's an awful lot of correspondence.



Pamela Chinnis Episcopal News Service

J.W.: General Convention is primarily a legislative entity. What do you think of reform-minded talk that urges a less legislative approach to church governance?

P.C.: Bishop Sam Hulsey, who is chair of the committee [that has been planning the bishops' meetings], has been in conversation with me and with my advisory council and others to look at ways whereby the deputies and the bishops might move into a new model of working together by reducing legislative sessions and providing time for discussion of issues. And the Joint Standing Committee on Planning and Arrangements has decided to extend the bible-sharing and eucharists on two mornings during the 1994 General Convention to allow discussion of the bishops' pastorals on racism and sexuality. Still, I know that the deputies are concerned that if we give a whole morning over to discussing issues, it cuts down on the legislative time and that we're already stressed for enough time. You're also talking about maybe 150 bishops who get together twice a year *vis à vis* 850 deputies who've never met together before — this will be the first General Convention for about a third of them. So what does that do to the dynamics of the whole thing? Now that the House of Bishops is meeting more often, it gives them a sense of building community and knowing one another, but we don't have that advantage in the House of Deputies. Meeting once every three years, it's hard for us to come together and hit the ground running.

J.W.: More conversation seems important, but doesn't a legislative model favor a broader democratic participation in the governance of the church?

P.C.: I think it does because it's a bicameral system and all resolutions have to be concurred in by both houses. At table groups you might easily find shy lay people being dominated by clergy or bishops, but when it comes to voting everyone has the same vote except if it's a vote by orders. [In a vote by orders, lay and ordained deputies within a diocesan deputation vote separately. However, a "yes" vote requires a majority voting "yes" in each order. Split votes within an order are recorded as a "no" vote. The end result is that with a vote by orders it takes more "yes" votes to pass a measure than with the regular voting procedure.]

And I have not perceived in the House of Deputies that we have often been so dysfunctional [as the bishops who had to call several closed-door executive sessions during the 1991 Phoenix convention in order to settle personal disputes]. Only once can I remember that we've had an executive session and that was in Louisville in 1973 when Jack Allin was elected presiding bishop and the House of Deputies went into executive session to decide if they were going to concur. I'm not saying the House of Deputies is perfect or all sweetness and light, but it seems to me that they have an ability to disagree on issues. They don't attack one another personally — of course that's very much out of order in a legislative process.

I respect the democratic process but oftentimes we don't give it a chance to work, we just start criticizing it. We don't realize that parliamentary procedure really

Vital Signs

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protects the rights of the minorities as well as effects the will of the majority.

J.W.: The Executive Council [which governs the church between General Conventions] is asking the 1994 General Convention to mandate a task force to look into making the General Convention a unicameral body. Would you favor a unicameral structure?

P.C.: I'd be willing to try it. I know it has worked well for the Church of England. They vote separately but they do meet together. One of the pros of the suggestion that we meet around tables, bishops and deputies together, is that so many deputies have said, "We never have any opportunity to interact with the bishops. They don't listen to us." So there are many people, bishops as well as deputies, who feel that more interaction between laity, clergy and bishops would be very helpful. However, I wonder if the bishops wouldn't dominate, both in the presiding and in the debates.

J.W.: The Executive Council has also asked that the Standing Commission on Structure review the need for the present interim bodies with an eye to either reducing their numbers or size. What's your reaction to that?

P.C.: I think it's a good idea. We always need more efficient ways of working — reviewing the need for interim bodies is supposed to be the ongoing function of the structure commission. We might find there are some commissions we no longer need or new ones we do need. However, I think it would be a big mistake to do away with interim bodies altogether. They're part of the policy-making arm of the church, making recommendations to the General Convention on positions the church should take, ministry priorities, worship and other matters. I wouldn't like to leave such matters to the employed staff at the church's national headquarters. Also, the members of the interim bodies [which include bishops, lay people and other clergy] don't have to be deputies to the General Convention, so it is possible to appoint members who have special expertise or valuable perspectives to offer but who might not otherwise be involved in the church's governance.

J.W.: Some have said the church's current manner of doing business favors a "left" agenda. Do you have a perspective on that?

P.C.: I've heard it said that the people who are elected deputies tend to be much more liberal than the person sitting in the pew, but somebody has to elect them. Maybe the longer one works in the church the more liberal one gets. Nobody could have been more conservative than I was when I first became involved.

J.W.: I don't think there were any vestiges of that former conservatism in your speech to Integrity [the national organization of gay and lesbian Episcopalians and their friends] last year in which you said you were interested in hearing of qualified gay and lesbian deputies whom you might appoint to General Convention legislative committees. You took a lot of criticism for saying that.

P.C.: I said a lot in that speech, including that the presiding bishop and I had made the appointments to interim bodies based on ability and we did not have a litmus test for how we appointed people. Some of those people were gay men and lesbians and they've done a terrific job — I don't think anyone could deny that, even people who might not have wanted them appointed. I said I had been impressed by the work they had done and that when I made my appointments to legislative committees of General Convention that I would consider appointing qualified gays and lesbians to those committees as well. What was picked up was that I was going to "stack" the legislative committees of General Convention with gay and lesbian deputies. Well, there are approximately 550 deputies who are appointed to legislative committees and, so far as I know, only about six or at the most 12 deputies have identified themselves as gay men or lesbians. So it's a little hard for me to see how I'm going to stack the legislative committees with those few people, assuming I appointed every one. I said exactly the same thing to the National Network of Episcopal Clergy Associations about giving me qualified names of people to appoint, but that didn't make the papers.

I respect the democratic process but oftentimes we don't give it a chance to work, we just start criticizing it. We don't realize that parliamentary procedure really protects the rights of the minorities as well as effects the will of the majority.

The thing that disturbed me was that I have a son who is gay. I could go on for hours about how bright and well trained he is. To think that anybody would consider him not qualified to serve on anything simply because he is gay, when he could run circles around a lot of people, I can't reconcile that in my mind. I think what also surprised and depressed me was the viciousness of the response I got — from bishops, from male priests in this church. For instance, one priest wrote and said, "I'm sorry you have such a dysfunctional family." And then he wrote again and said, "Please read Article 20 of the Book of Common Prayer [which addresses the authority of the church, including the authority of Scripture], that is, if you still believe in the Book of Common Prayer." Now, how can someone read a little article in a news magazine that is inaccurate and then pass judgment on your faith? You think, "Where's Christianity in all of this?"

J.W.: You've put yourself on the line in this case. It brings up the question of personal witness among the church's elected leadership.

P.C.: I think that if someone is in a position where they can speak out and make a difference it's wrong for them not to. On the other hand, I feel very strongly that when I'm in the chair at General Convention it is absolutely imperative that I be impartial and that I not try to influence

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legislation in any way. But I don't think that means that for three years I have to keep my mouth shut if I can make a difference about something that I really believe in and think is right.

J.W.: At the last press conference at the 1991 General Convention you said you believed the House of Deputies had been more "prophetic" than the House of Bishops during that convention. It's hard to know how a General Convention can be prophetic.

P.C.: The example that comes to mind when I say prophetic is John Hines going to the General Convention in Seattle in 1967 and saying, "We have a crisis in this country and in this church and it can't be business as usual any longer—something has to change." And it did. Of course, there were a lot of people who thought it was a change for the worse — from then on the General Convention Special Program [to give grants to empower community organizations] was in hot water all the time. Still, I think that's the thing I mean by being prophetic and not just business as usual—how can you change things to make a difference in the church and society?

Maybe the longer one works in the church the more liberal one gets.

J.W.: It's easy to understand the need for the church to make decisions about "church" matters like changing the prayer book or ordination requirements. But many people find it harder to see any benefit to the General Convention taking a stand on, say, the death penalty or bringing peace to Bosnia. Do you think there is any benefit to peace and justice resolutions?

P.C.: Some of those resolutions have been very useful. The one on sanctions against South Africa, and certainly those on peace in the Middle East. In concert with those of other denominations and other groups such resolutions or stands have had an impact. I think that too often we pass resolutions without knowing what we're doing. We think we have to speak on everything without really having background information.

There have been lots of other resolutions that haven't had any impact at all. On issues like the death penalty, it's important for a Christian body to say where it stands.

Many of the interim bodies seem to be moving away from resolutions and more into "position papers." Instead of asking the General Convention to take a particular position on, for example, human sexuality, they're hoping to come up with something that will further the dialogue. I think that if we could move in that direction we would be light years ahead of where we've been by being forced to say "yes" or "no" on an issue, which only polarizes us.

J.W.: Would you be in favor of limiting the topics considered?

P.C.: It may be a possibility. One of the things the Standing Commission on Structure is looking at is the possibility of taking up only the "A" resolutions first — those are the resolutions that come from interim bodies — because they say these bodies have been meeting for three years [and have had more of a chance to study and deliberate on the General Convention-mandated topics before them. "B," "C," and "D" resolutions come from bishops, diocesan conventions and deputies].

J.W.: How would you change the way the church operates?

P.C.: I would like to see less bickering over "my" agenda or "your" agenda and more concern with the common good. I guess I'd like to see more Christian charity. I'd like to see people really listen to one another and try to engage in dialogue instead of speaking at one another and really not hearing what the other person is saying.

J.W.: You're talking about a change of heart. Is there any practical change you'd make in the way the General Convention operates?

P.C.: Well I think you have to have a change of heart before the other comes. I don't think you can legislate people listening to one another. They have to want to listen.

PB okays air strikes in Bosnia

Last Feb.18th the Episcopal Church's Presiding Bishop, Edmond L. Browning, issued a statement on air strikes in Bosnia in which he said, in part, "While I believe violence is not the answer to violence, I cannot oppose NATO air strikes against military targets as long as they hold the promise of ending the despicable siege against the civilian population of Sarajevo and provided they are accompanied by a firm resolve, especially from the United States, to bring all diplomatic means necessary to achieve a fair and just negotiated settlement. Hopefully, the withdrawal of Serbian forces from Sarajevo will be permanent and follow-up negotiations fruitful.

"My decision not to oppose such air strikes is predicated on providing humanitarian relief to the people of Sarajevo and an expectation that such strikes be limited to that sole objective, and not as a step to widening the conflict.

"Until this awful war is ended and there is peace once again in the Balkans, I call on every congregation to pray at every public service for the suffering people of Bosnia. Let us not forget."

Phil Jacobs, chair of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship, said he regretted the presiding bishop's stand, "both tactically and theologically.

"Notions of limited, target-specific bombing and conflict-containing belligerancy are hubristic," Jacobs added. "Aerial bombing is not surgery and military escalation will lead only to greater bitterness and escalation, now or in the future.

"I agree that violence is not the answer to violence. Rather than perpetuating the myth of redemptive violence and the fallacy of bombing our way to peace, we need to seek non-violent solutions. In addition to further negotiation, I would hope the church would support a peace presence in Bosnia, not more warfare."

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Can we talk?

by Julie A. Wortman

Frustrated and exhausted by seemingly endless and often rancorous debate over the acceptable parameters of Christian sexual behavior, the 1991 General Convention meeting in Phoenix, Ariz., finally embraced the impasse, declaring a "discontinuity" between the church's official teaching that physical sexual expression is appropriate only within the lifelong monogamous "union of husband and wife in heart, body and mind" and the experience of its members. The Convention also required that deputies and bishops, along with provincial representatives, design a process of congregational dialogue "to deepen understanding" of the issues and report to the 1994 General Convention on the results.

No one expected miracles, but an estimated 30,000 Episcopalians in 86 dioceses were involved in the discussions, including 212 people who were trained to facilitate the five-session process. The organizers offered dioceses the option of using a curriculum prepared by the Lutherans, one offered by the Episcopal Church's Province VII or developing their own. Judging by the sometimes euphoric tone of reports issued afterwards, the exercise demonstrated that chances to speak honestly and openly in respectful company have been in short supply throughout the church.

"Parishes had few dropouts, which is an outstanding affirmation to the process and the curriculum," Ellen Wondra, chair of Rochester's diocesan task force on human sexuality, reported in her diocesan newspaper last fall. "The overall feeling is that this was a wonderful beginning that should not end. People want more dialogue on other subjects and participants want the diocese to suggest ways to keep the spirit [of the dialogues] alive."

Similarly, Judith Carlson, director of education in New Jersey, observed, "Skeptical at first, most [participants] came to feel strongly that the climate of respectful, non-judgmental listening created a safe place to explore issues, many of which had never been talked about in the church before."

The skepticism Carlson noted seems to have been widespread. "There were strong feelings among participants that the national church was trying to influence the dialogues to a more liberal point of view through the study materials it supplied — the language, the way issues were stated, scriptural texts included as well as not included," commented Ken and Layne Racht, co-chairs of the dialogue committee in Southeast Florida. Likewise, a West Texas report quoted a local participant's observation: "When we started, some of those participating felt the course was 'propaganda' from the national church designed to pave the way for a more 'liberal' attitude toward certain sexual practices." However, this man admitted, this turned out not to be the case. "The study materials reinforced the traditional scriptural-based stand of the Anglican communion on sex outside of the bonds of marriage," he said, noting that participants did change their attitudes that sexual issues are clear-cut. "We discovered the other point of view," he concluded.

No one expected miracles, but an estimated 30,000 Episcopalians in 86 dioceses were involved in the discussions, including 212 people who were trained to facilitate the five-session process.

In a post-dialogue questionnaire prepared by the national church committee assigned to study Episcopalians' attitudes towards human sexuality, however, participants revealed that the differences between them had as much to do with authority as with questions about when and with whom sexual relations are okay. The 18,000 who filled out the questionnaire were asked, among other things, whether they agreed or disagreed with this statement: "It is more important for the church to offer guidance on what to think about human sexual issues than on how to think about them." The final tally has not yet been released, but in at least two dioceses more than 50 percent of the participants agreed with the statement.

Nevertheless, there are already signs that the dialogue process is being appropriated as a tool for building consensus. At last February's diocesan convention in Colorado, for example, a resolution asking for the blessing of same-sex relationships proposed by a Denver parish was withdrawn in favor of a commitment to substantive congregational discussions using a process developed by Timothy Sedgwick, professor of Christian ethics and moral theology at Chicago's Seabury-Western Theological Seminary. Congregations are mandated to hold the discussions prior to June 18, 1994, the date of a special diocesan meeting on the topic involving clergy and vestry leaders.

Shelley Brown, a member of the diocese's commission on human sexuality, was positive about the Colorado decision. "We'll be discussing first instead of voting on an issue first and simply hoping dialogue follows," she said.

National church leaders are also hopeful that debate and confrontation of the sort which prevailed in Phoenix in 1991 are at an end.

"People are beginning to realize that the goal is no longer to win," said Gene Robinson, a member of the national study committee.

According to O'Kelley Whitaker, retired bishop of Central New York and chair of the committee, the people trained to facilitate the sexuality dialogues could be used more widely, such as in small group study of the pastoral teaching on sexuality now being completed in the House of Bishops. "We hope the bishops recognize what a valuable resource we have at our disposal," Whitaker said.

— based on Episcopal News Service and diocesan news reports

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Ecu Takes:

Anglican Church of Canada

Carolyn Purden is editor and general manager of the Anglican Journal, *the national newspaper of the Anglican Church of Canada.*

Over the past 20 years, there has been a lot more concerted effort to keep people informed and get people involved in dialogue on the local level. This has happened particularly around the issue of homosexuality. Everyone knows the church cannot go blasting right ahead with legislation for the whole church without knowing how people are thinking.

I couldn't commend the unicameral synod highly enough.

When I first started in this job the bishops sat and met separately. Now they only meet separately when electing a primate — about once every ten years.

You now have the bishops sitting at the table with the delegates through the whole synod. What you get in the debate on the floor is a more unified approach to a question. Lay people feel closer to the bishops, and they feel they are on a more equal footing.

Quakers

Edward Sargent is a staff member of Friends Journal *and a member of the Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting.*

A lot of people would say the Quaker decision-making process is consensus. That's an oversimplification, but it's close to consensus.

For meetings affiliated with Friends General Conference— most Quakers in the East — there is no hierarchy, no legislation, no show of hands, no voting.

Everyone can come to a business meeting. The clerk, who is chosen by the members of the meeting, presides and reads the sense of the meeting. If the clerk feels there is not unity, the issue is held over, and maybe discussed again in three months time.

I'm sure if you got a hundred Quakers together, some would say, I wish there was a way to resolve things more quickly so they don't drag on.

In the late 1700s and early 1800s, one meeting agonized for 40 years over whether or not Quakers could hold slaves.

Our meeting struggled for six years over a request by one of our members who wanted to marry his lover — another man— in the care of the meeting (with the meeting's blessings and good wishes). For years, if we had raised hands, there would have been a majority for whom there wouldn't have been any problem at all, but there were maybe a half-dozen people who felt a "leading" that this was not the right thing to do. They weren't standing in the way, but all the members understood there was not a unity. It took about six years before the monthly business meeting finally decided that this was all right.

In this process, everybody's voice counts for something. Decisions are as much a part of those who were against them as those who favored them.

[Some have suggested that] the Quaker process is likely not only to lead to a better decision spiritually, but that it leads to a decision less likely to be sabotaged by people who don't want it. Major policy decisions, like what do we do about Bosnia, or about same-sex marriages, are discussed at the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, which is made up of about 50 meetings within 100 miles or so of Philadelphia.

There are a number of yearly meetings around the country. This provides an opportunity for discussion based on other meetings' experience. There is no enforcement there, but decisions of other monthly meetings would suggest precedent.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Edgar Trexler is editor of The Lutheran, *published by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

We have a biennial churchwide Assembly every two years, which is the chief legislative body of the denomination. In between there is a 37-member Church Council which meets twice a year.

In general, the topics that come up at Assembly will already have been discussed at Synod Assemblies.

With things like social statements that tend to be more controversial, it's routine for us to have task force or committee reports available [well in advance of the Assembly]. There would be Listening to the People conferences or some other kind of forums set up around the country. The responses that come back in might well effect a revision. It would also be revised by the Conference of Bishops and the Church Council before the floor debate.

There is a rather wide opportunity for discussion and consensus-building before anything is voted up or down.

People will still say, "That's not the way I would have done it," or "They don't speak for me," but the intention is clearly to have as much feedback as possible in order to inform the final document.

For instance, we have now a new study on human sexuality. I belong to a congregation that has put together an adult forum. We will have four meetings, and then mail in a response that becomes part of the feeding-in process.

I can remember when there was not nearly so much emphasis on forums around the country or feedback. In those days the best minds of the church could assemble and decide things and people tended to go along. That's not true any more.

I don't find that there's much dissent about the structural way we do our decision-making. The larger issue is that people today tend to think they have the answers or know better locally. The allegiance they give to some large and in-their-mind distant body deciding things is not as strong.

We could not do things the way we used to. This more open dialogic process is the only way things can be done today. It's harder, longer, more expensive and cumbersome, but I also think it's right.

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Digging graves with dialogue: the views of Marc Ellis

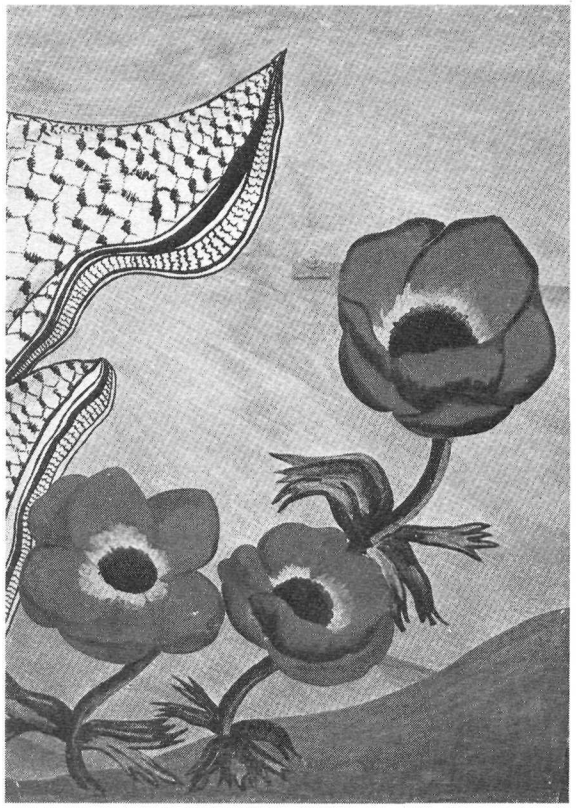
by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Marc Ellis, an author and professor at Maryknoll College in New York, addressed the limits of dialogue during a speech several years ago. While the situation in the Middle East has changed, Ellis' controversial remarks serve to challenge our ideas about the virtue of dialogue and offer some cautions for ecumenical work . On a hopeful note, Ellis noted that the American Jewish community is now more open to discussions challenging blind Zionism. More recently, since the Hebron massacre, thousands of Israelis have demonstrated for the elimination of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The current ecumenical dialogue between Jews and Christians "takes on a criminal aspect" when one considers Israel's oppression of Palestinians, Marc Ellis told members of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship in Royal Oak, Mich., in 1990.

"The ecumenical dialogue as we know it today means the end of traditional Palestinian life," Ellis said.

Ellis spoke of his Jewish roots and the ethical tradition of his faith, but said that events in Israel — particularly since the 1967 War — are destroying Judaism even as they destroy Palestinian lives and homes.



Yet "Christians won't speak out, because they entered the dialogue in a spirit of repentance" for their complicity in the holocaust.

The innocence of Jews and the complicity of Christians is the foundation of Jewish-Christian dialogue, Ellis said. This has evolved into an "unhealthy and unholy dependence between Jews and Christians." Participants in the dialogues end up "ingratiating themselves with one another and reassuring each other that they will move beyond the bloody history."

Yet, as Christians avoid confronting their Jewish counterparts with the abuse of Palestinians in Israel and the territories, *both* Jews and Christians become complicit in yet another genocide.

"Christians demonized us and now romanticize us," Ellis said. "We are ordinary people with a special heritage. Israel is many things, but it is a state like other states."

A new foundation for ecumenical dialogue must include admission of Christian guilt, he said. "You *have* been persecuting us for 2,000 years — 'fess up to it." But it must also include a clear challenge to Jews for Israel's current actions.

"We must begin moving to a Jewish-Christian dialogue that shows mutual repentance. We are not innocent. We must move into a shared humility and renewed honesty. Our histories are beautiful *and* bloody.

"Set some rules. If an ecumenical group won't agree to work for a Palestinian state, then end the dialogue. The meetings serve as a cover. These discussions add up to a public support or at least a public silence.

"Place the Palestinians at the center of the ecumenical discussion, have Palestinians present, because they are dying.

"Those who are suffering — those who have lived on the other side of Israeli power — call us to more than guilt and redemption. They call us to a shared land.

"I think that to have a Palestinian state would be a miracle," Ellis said. "I believe in miracles. I believe in working for them. That's a very Jewish understanding." TW

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. Graphic is from the original murals painted in occupied Palestine in 1989 by the **Break the Silence Mural Project**, a group of Jewish women artists in solidarity with the Palestinian people's quest for freedom and independence. This was a collaborative effort with Palestinian artists combining traditional and contemporary images. Break the Silence Mural Project, 1442A Walnut St., No. 252, Berkeley, Calif.

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Loving Our Enemies

by Virginia Ramey Mollenkott

Jesus insisted that it was no virtue to love those who love us — those of our own interpretive community — because anybody can do that much. Instead, Jesus said, we should pattern ourselves after the Most Holy One, who is "kind to the ungrateful and the wicked" (Luke 6:35).

According to Jesus, we are expected to be "merciful, just as our [Mother and] Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36). To anyone who has ever spoken to large groups of people of an opposing interpretive community, as I have, this can sound loony and even self-destructive, too idealistic to be of any earthly use. My phrase for speaking in "enemy territory" is "going into the lion's den." I don't do it very often, because at best it is an exhausting experience, at worst a battering one. Even a one-on-one conversation can sometimes be exhausting and battering! Yet I assume that Jesus was not only sane, but a wise and loving teacher who would not tell us to do what is impossible or harmful for us. So it is worthwhile to explore the meaning of this command.

Neil Douglas-Klotz, whose study of the Aramaic words of Jesus has been so helpful to me, gives us a translation of "Love your enemies" that tries to capture the many nuances of the Aramaic statement:

From a hidden place,
unite with your enemies from the inside
fill the inner void that makes them swell outwardly and fall
out of rhythm: instead of progressing, step by step,
they stop and start harshly,
out of time with you.
Bring yourself back into rhythm within.
Find the movement that mates with theirs
like two lovers creating life from dust.
Do this work in secret, so they don't know.
This kind of love creates, it doesn't emote.

Douglas-Klotz explains that the Aramaic for *enemy* conveys the image of being out of rhythm, moving with harsh movements that don't keep the beat, like a really clumsy dancer. What a great description of how people from opposing interpretive communities sometimes seem to us! And the Aramaic language depicts injustice with similar imagery — being out of tune, out of rhythm, and with an inner emptiness and vanity that causes the unjust person to seem to swell up like a boil. Our personal "enemies" are all of these things *only in relationship to us*: "out of step, impeding, vacuous, and puffed up." The "enemies" of a whole interpretive community, or a nation, or the whole planet, are "out of step, impeding, vacuous, and puffed up" in relation to a much larger sphere. But *relationship* is always the key to understanding what "enemies" are. Because of the subjective evaluations involved in relationships, one person's enemy is another person's friend.

The Aramaic for enemy *conveys the image of being out of rhythm.*

In the command to "Love your enemies," Jesus used an Aramaic word that suggests an impersonal force acting in secret to bring separate beings together to create new life. (The root of the word can refer to planting seed or to having sex.) But Jesus used a different word for love when he talked about loving our neighbor as ourselves: that word referred to having compassion and mercy on our neighbors.

In the context of interpretive communities, Jesus seems to be saying that to communicate across the gap between such communities, we must align ourselves with an impersonal and mysterious creative force that is beyond anything our "separated" egos can drum up. Therefore he is not telling us to placate our "enemies," to concede the whole store, or to let them walk all over us. Rather he is talking about finding within ourselves and them a rhythm that can harmonize and thus perhaps move us toward greater harmony, as a very good dancer can help a clumsy partner to dance more smoothly. He is talking about searching within our common humanity to find something that would fill the inner emptiness of the "enemy" and then *addressing only that* within them.

Perhaps it would help us to remember how we feel when we are being lavishly entertained in someone else's home. Even if we disagree with them, we try to find a polite and gracious way to do so because we are dependent upon them as our hosts. Obviously, if we all behaved this way, our ecological, interpersonal, and intercommunity problems would be solved. Although communication would still be difficult across interpretive gaps, we would all treat our "enemies" as if they were our hosts and would treat the earth, air, and water the same way.

I want to reiterate that we are not asked to love the cruel behavior of our "enemies." We are *not* asked to pretend agreement with interpretations that we consider cruel, misguided, insupportable, or illogical. But we *are* asked (for our own benefit) to recognize and speak to the Divine Ground of our opponent's Being, a recognition that will make us happy because it is the same Divine Ground upon which we ourselves stand. TW

Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, an English professor at William Paterson College of New Jersey, is author of *Sensuous Spirituality: Out From Fundamentalism* (Crossroad, N.Y., 1992), from which this essay is drawn.

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Reconstructing a racist

by Doug LeBlanc

Hodding Carter: The Reconstruction of a Racist, Ann Waldron, Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill. 1993, 369 pp.

In his college years, Hodding Carter moved out of his dormitory room because a black student was moving into the building. He spoke the word "nigger" easily.

But later in his life, The Boston *Herald* called Hodding Carter "the Alan Paton of the American South". Carter, who died in 1972, may well deserve comparison to the author of *Cry, the Beloved Country.*

Carter experienced no epiphany in shedding racism. Waldron traces Carter's slow reconstruction to three key events: working as a cub reporter for *PM* in New York City; joining the Army during World War II (which convinced him that racial equality is important to democracy, and that racism is a form of fascism); and a trip to India during the 1960s, during which Carter said he lost whatever prejudices he held until then.

As the founding editor of the Greenville (Miss.) *Delta Democrat-Times*, Carter urged his fellow Southerners to behave more as Christians than as racists. Journalism ran in the family: The Carters' oldest son, Hodding III, took over the newspaper in the 1970s before joining Jimmy Carter's administration. Another son, Philip, wrote for *Newsweek.*

Carter defended segregation, but argued — against the tide — for "decent housing, adequate medical care, equal educational opportunities, equal pay for work, and equal justice in the courts."

Carter probably seems unreconstructed today, but as Waldron writes, "Virtually all southern liberals believed in a gradual approach." Carter was heroic because he eventually *overcame* racism, not because he was always free of it.

Carter paid a heavy price for taking important stands. Waldron speculates that some of Carter's Mississippi neighbors literally drove him mad in his final years, after decades of threatening to kill him.

Carter, born a Presbyterian, became an Episcopalian when he married Betty Werlein of New Orleans. (Betty's father taught her a concise chant of self-identity: "I'm Betty Werlein. American. Episcopalian, Democrat.")

Episcopalians make cameo appearances in Waldron's narrative.

Eight faculty members of Sewanee's School of Theology resigned in 1952 when the school threatened to exclude black ministerial students. Carter agreed with the professors that "Jesus Christ is more important than Jim Crow."

Parishioners at St. James Episcopal Church, Greenville, voted Carter off the vestry in 1955 after he said the church should welcome worshipers regardless of race. They reinstated him as senior warden two years later.

Carter ran a front-page story when the University of Mississippi withdrew a speaking invitation to Episcopal priest Alvin Kershaw because he had donated money to the NAACP.

book review

For such stands as these, Carter attracted the attention of Byron De La Beckwith, who reportedly planned to kill Carter. Just this year, a jury convicted Beckwith of murdering civil-rights worker Medgar Evers.

Carter often stressed that racism knows no geographical boundaries, and one library patron in Colorado Springs proves the point. Beneath a quote from U.S. Rep. Frank Smith of Mississippi in which he says Carter made Greenville a civil town, one bitter person scrawled this inquiry: "Nigger or Kike?"

Hodding Carter, pray for us.

Doug LeBlanc edits *United Voice*, the newspaper of Episcopalians United. In suggesting that he do this review, LeBlanc wrote, "Some *Witness* readers may be surprised to find an Episcopalians United writer addressing racism as an evil, which I hope will make the review proposal intriguing." Like Hodding Carter, LeBlanc was born in Louisiana.

Breaking silence,

continued from page 5

In that vein, Gandhi said that it is better to resist oppression with violence than not at all. Best, he says, is to resist oppression — break the silence — without weapons.

Brueggemann says pluralism is always a struggle for power; it is not a parlor game. It is a tug-of-war over how reality will be defined and how the public debate will be shaped.

The tension of the power struggle can only be worth withstanding if your heart is woven through the argument that you present.

Standing wide open, holding only to what you believe and the certainty of God "seen and unseen" is to test spirits, to ask what spirituality stands in the heart of your adversary and in your own.

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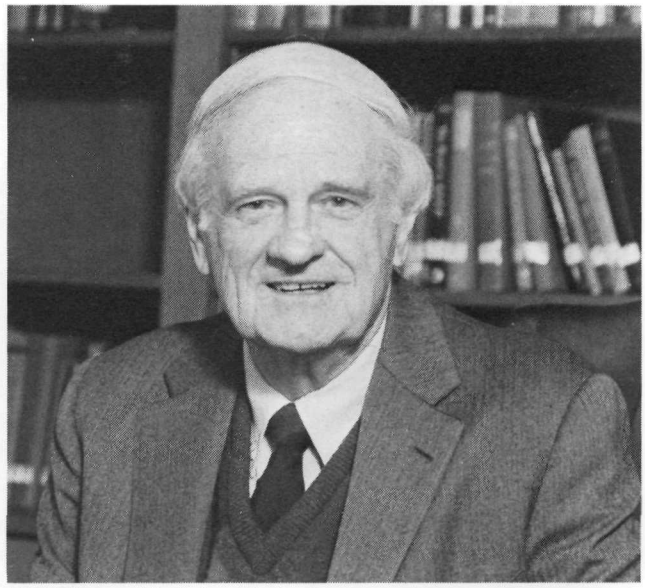
"Unity in the church means that people should be able to speak up, regardless of their point of view."



H. Coleman McGehee, Jr.

Outspoken listener

by Julie A. Wortman

A parishioner once spat in his face, she was so enraged by one of his anti-Vietnam War sermons, but angry disagreement has never prevented H. Coleman McGehee, Jr., from following his conscience and speaking his mind — not during his 11-year tenure as rector of the large parish of Immanuel-on-the-Hill in Alexandria, Va., not as bishop for 20 years in Michigan, not now at age 70 in the midst of an active retirement.

"Unity in the church means that people should be able to speak up, regardless of their point of view," McGehee says. "[Church leaders especially] should speak their minds — not carelessly, not recklessly, but they should speak their minds."

While rector of Immanuel from 1960 to 1971, a parish only a few miles down the road from the Pentagon and nearly in sight of the Capitol across the Potomac, McGehee found himself at loggerheads with church members by speaking his mind not only about Vietnam but also about the need for local fair housing legislation. As Bishop of Michigan (he was elected coadjutor in 1971 and became Bishop of Michigan in 1973), he drew bitter criticism for his support of diocesan efforts to combat heterosexism and for his public defense of Pennsylvania's Robert Dewitt (who subsequently became editor of *The Witness*) and the other bishops who performed the first ordinations of women to the priesthood in 1974 — a stand which also raised the hackles of then presiding bishop John Allin. To the irritation of many within his diocesan fold, McGehee's liberal commentaries on, as he says, "all the issues of day," from abortion and the equal rights amendment to Cold War stockpiling and deployment of nuclear weapons, were for many years broadcast on WDET, Detroit's local public radio station.

Four years into retirement, McGehee continues to be reproached for work with the Triangle Foundation, a Michigan gay-rights advocacy organization, the Poverty and Social Reform Institute headed by former Michigan Department of Social Services director Agnes Mansour and with the Michigan chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union.

But unlike many other outspoken activist church leaders, McGehee also has been committed to spending time — a lot of time — listening to those with whom he strongly disagrees. And listening has had unlikely consequences. Today McGehee counts a former Republican president, a four-star general and an assortment of conservative clergy among his longtime associates and friends, friends who still call on him from time to time for pastoral care. The president, Gerald Ford, has asked that McGehee officiate at his funeral.

"My own feeling is that Christian teaching tells us that people are to be valued," he says. "No one has all the answers. It's out of respect that you should listen."

Under his tenure as rector of Immanuel, the parish voted to formalize this baptismal precept by instituting a half-hour sermon response period before the final benediction at each of the two main Sunday services. After the late service there was also a separate discussion group for the same purpose. This coffee-hour discussion format was something he later continued as part of parish visitations during his tenure as bishop in Michigan.

"People could say what they wanted. It was an opportunity for people to disagree with what we [clergy] were saying," recalls McGehee of those sermon discussions at Immanuel, noting that between 80 and 90 percent of the congregation would participate. "It was a time — we're talking about the 1960s now — when things were changing and there was controversy and people were disturbed

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Julie A. Wortman is managing editor of *The Witness*.

— more so then than now because the church had been through the 1950s, during that upbeat period when we were building buildings and increasing congregations and not much more. People just seemed to want to say something about what was going on but didn't have the opportunity to do that."

Two prominent parishioners who opposed his anti-war stance, Gerald Ford and Robert Ellsworth, both serving in Congress at the time, asked McGehee to come into the city to meet with them and other members of Immanuel who worked on Capitol Hill to talk about how their Christian commitments might play out in their work. The group numbered about 35, with 15 to 18 showing up every other week. Besides Ford and Ellsworth, the group regularly included General Lucius Clay, Lewis Odan, the chief of staff for the Senate banking and currency committee and John McFall, majority whip in the House of Representatives. These and others in the group often disagreed with McGehee's social and political views.

McGehee enjoyed those Capitol Hill meetings. "One of the things that was very obvious in that group was that the person with whom I would have some debate knew that I respected him or her and they respected me. I had a pastoral relationship with most of these families. Also, at this time there was a lot of respect for the institution [of the church] and for the leader of the institution. Not only a respect, but a commitment."

McGehee believes both his background as a lawyer — he served as assistant attorney general of Virginia for five years in Richmond, Va., before pursuing ordination and is still a paid-up member of the Virginia State Bar Association — and a stint in the army won him additional credibility in Immanuel's generally pro-government and pro-military community.

His legal training also had a lot to do with his willingness to discuss and debate a matter to consensus.

"I came out of a legal tradition of people sitting down and talking about things. In the attorney general's office we would sit down together to decide what we were going to do. It would be a consensus-type thing, but we would really argue it out. And then, in seminary, this was a period when pastoral theology was high on the agenda and geared to encouraging people to express themselves."

The catalyst for McGehee's decision to give up his legal career and pursue ordination was a 10-day preaching mission in Richmond by Church-of-England evangelist Bryan Green.

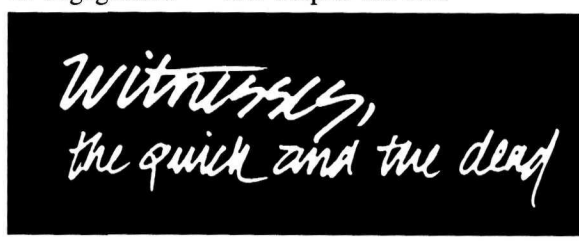
"At that time I was attending church primarily to enhance my reputation as a lawyer in the community," McGehee admits. "Green was very engaging — a sort of Billy Graham on a more intellectual basis. I listened for 10 days and then began reading and attending other lectures. My boss, [Virginia Attorney General] Lindsey Almond, who was an active Lutheran, tried to argue me out of it. He said that law and politics needed more committed Christians. I felt he had a good point and I struggled with the decision for two years."

His legal mind may expect that every issue will have its opponents and defenders, but that doesn't make McGehee blind to the fact that for some, like the woman who once spat in his face, the rage stirred up by discussions and debates may make it impossible to continue the dialogue.

"I've talked with many gay and lesbian people who have just given up on the church," he reflects, but says he wishes they and others who feel the same would hang in there.

"When people disagree and walk away they lose sight of a larger picture — they lose sight of the greater things we have in common — the faith, the scriptures and the Eucharist."

Not immune to feeling pain and hurt at the personal attacks which have sometimes been the price of his up-front style of engagement — and despite the fact that he can point to few occasions when debating an issue has led him to change his mind — McGehee still contends that taking the time to listen is most valuable for reminding a person of the value of the individual.



"I don't know that I've ever met someone with whom I totally disagree." TW

Welcome to The Witness!

The Witness addresses different themes each month, and includes art, poetry, book reviews and profiles. For 75 years *The Witness* has published articles addressing theological concerns as well as critiquing social issues from a faith perspective. The magazine is owned by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company but is an independent journal with an ecumenical readership.

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May issue:

Economic justice with a twist of militarism

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The Witness

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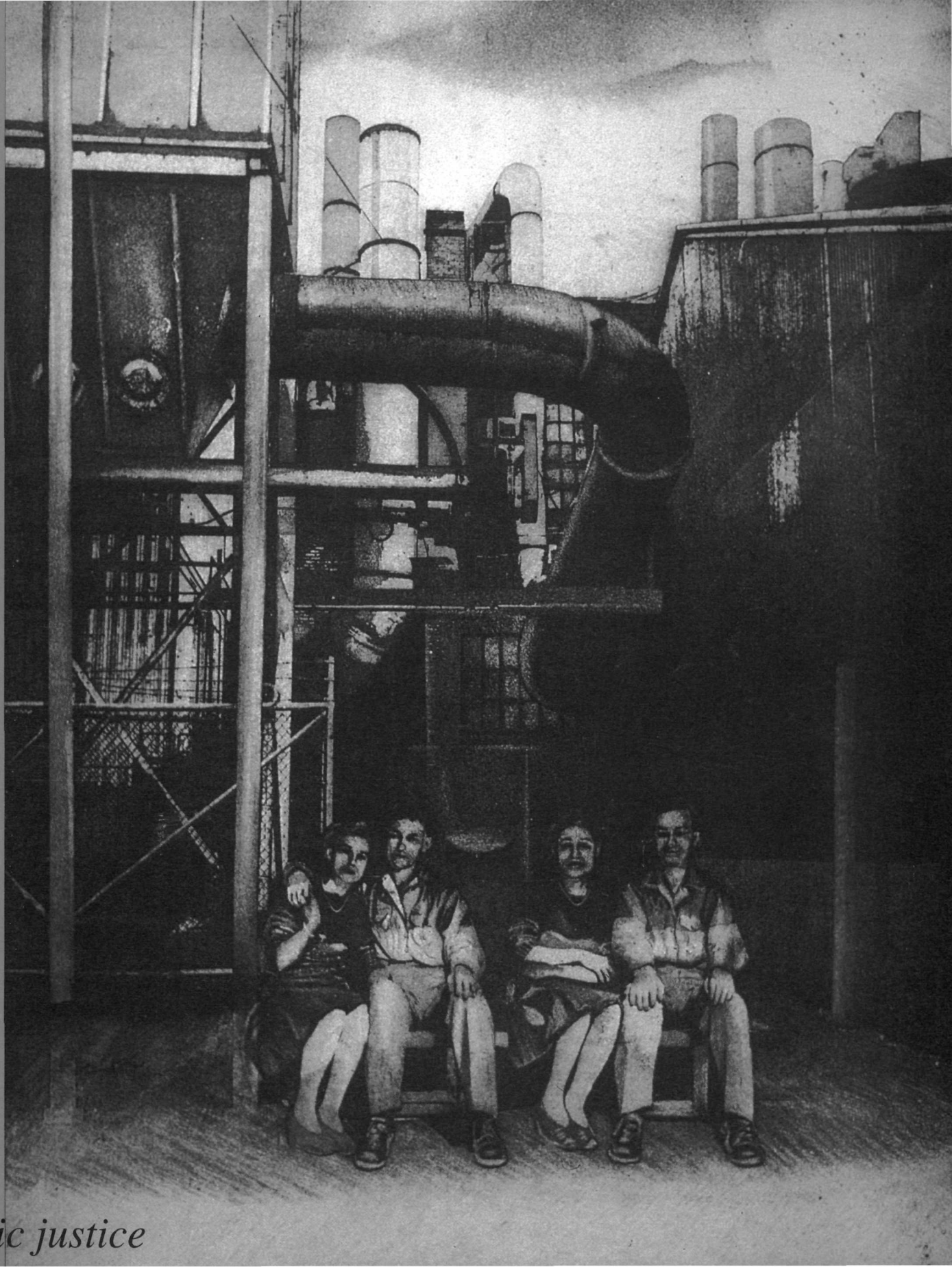

Economic justice

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The left

YESTERDAY, I completed the poem for James Boggs. I had been carrying around the draft for some time. Yesterday, the mail carrier delivered *The Witness* article by Grace L. Boggs.

I'm sorry that I let my subscription lapse and was happy to receive this copy. I will be renewing my subscription. I was glad to find that it continues to be an excellent thought/spiritual provoking magazine.

The letters that call you the "lunatic fringe" are humorous. This past week at the Lenten mission that our family attended, Rev. Eddie Bernal reminded us how Jesus and his followers were also considered the "lunatic fringe"!

Keep up the great work that you're doing. I enjoyed catching up on some good reading material.

Trinidad Sanchez, Jr.
San Antonio, TX

I'D LIKE TO COMMENT on the letter in the March *Witness* from a reader who feels that a gay person's coming out is manipulative.

He says that when a gay person comes out, "what wasn't relevant before hovers over the friendship" and "what was perhaps genuine friendship" is compromised. Interesting new definitions of words! If his friend's gayness is a problem for him now, it always was relevant — he just didn't know it before. And I can assure him that it was always relevant to his friend. Every closeted gay person looks at his friends and wonders "would he like me if he knew?" When I came out, I lost some friends and gained some — gay and straight in both categories. It's clear to me that the "perhaps genuine" friends I lost weren't genuine in any normal sense of the word.

He feels that we crave approval of a lifestyle about which we ourselves feel shame and guilt. Probably — but who taught me the shame and guilt? He did. And when I begin to see that what I've been taught is bogus, who wants to manipulate me back into hiding? Right! The writer's "Don't ask, don't tell" policy implies that I'm hiding something shameful. While there are things that I'm ashamed of, being gay isn't one of them.

He claims to value people for character and gifts, not for sexual activity. I do sometimes tire of saying it but I rarely discuss sex — it's usually not appropriate. What I do is have my boyfriend's picture on my desk at work — as my coworkers do; I tell friends at work and at church about a vacation or a great movie that we saw — exactly as they do; we participate in the life of the church as a couple — as heterosexual couples do. If that is manipulative, well, he'd better get used to it.

And his grousing over being forced to talk nicely about gay people to avoid being thought ill of — that's right up there with his "perhaps genuine" friendships.

John Scherer
Lincroft, NJ

I WOULD LIKE THE OPPORTUNITY to respond to the letter Michael Davis wrote in the March 1994 publication of *The Witness*. It seems Mr. Davis and I have very different experiences concerning the coming out of gay people, and I would like to share mine with him.

I will say now that I am a lesbian, and I can't deny that at times my coming out has been out of manipulation; it has been done in order to challenge the anti-gay beliefs of many of my "friends" within church circles. However, the bulk of my coming out has been quite the opposite; it has been done because I don't want to hide myself from the people I love.

In contrast to what Mr. Davis suggests, *none* of my coming out has ever "forced" anyone to say they loved me regardless of my sexuality. In fact, it has been rare that I have experienced acceptance by those people who have been given the opportunity to know the real me. I am the one who is judged as "non-Christian," and while I may chalk up their disapproval to homophobia, I have yet to see homophobia cause a person problems with employment, housing, adoption rights, or any other society-based privilege of the like. I won't address the privileges extended to heterosexuals in the church.

Mr. Davis next goes on to explain that in his experience, when a gay person comes out to a friend, "suddenly what wasn't relevant before, now hovers over the friendship, always the dominant reality. What was perhaps genuine friendship is now compromised ..." My sexual orientation is relevant in our friendship simply because it is an important part of me; it is relevant regardless of whether or not I choose to come out to you. Would you consider the marriage of a heterosexual friend to be irrelevant? I consider all the life experiences of my friends to be an important part of who they are, and I question the quality of any friendship where those can't be openly shared. Maybe we have a different definition of "friendship."

The next point in Mr. Davis' letter is that while gay people are applauded for their courage to come out, people who speak out against

ECPC Dinner Alert!

The date of our General Convention dinner has been changed to August 31! Steve Charleston, bishop of Alaska, *will* speak. And we will still offer ethnic food for $30 a ticket.

Witness subscribers who wish to promote books, tapes, cards or similar items (which they authored, crafted or produced) are welcome to display them on a designated table during dinner. Please let us know you are coming. It will be wonderful to see each other during this Convention honoring women's ministries.

Ad Opportunity

A special Convention supplement to *The Witness* will be distributed to everyone at Convention and Triennial. It will include advertisements. Ads will cost $400 for a whole page; $200 for a half page; $100 for a quarter page; and $50 for an eighth. (For long ads, these rates are cheaper than classifieds.) Ads must be received and paid for by June 15. Send them to the attention of Marianne Arbogast.

"homosexual behavior" aren't applauded despite the fact that they too face rejection. Yes, all people face rejection for stating their beliefs. Personally, I would really like to experience an environment where gay people are applauded for their courage. Where I live, it is the billboard-carrying right wing speaking out against homosexuality which more commonly receives recognition and acceptance, particularly within Christian groups.

Finally, Mr. Davis states that we should not be pressured into forming and expressing opinions on this subject by gay friends who come out. I too reject pressure; I advocate prayer and a personal search for the Truth of God. Just don't forget that we're all a part of the body of Christ. God's Truth exists in each and every one of us, and it is only through sharing stories and experiences that these truths become known. Thank you for listening to some of mine.

Gay in Fairbanks, AK

YOUR MARCH ISSUE ARRIVED Saturday as I was preparing the first real sermon I ever gave. The one-page essay by Erika Meyer was very helpful — I quoted it at length today in my sermon to the Episcopal Church at Cornell (the chaplaincy), which was about our trip with the Episcopal Peace Fellowship to Cuba in January. You figure it out.

Actually my point was that the Christians we met in Cuba knew exactly what the revolution was about, and had put up with oppression from the Castro regime until recently, when the Cuban government realized they were part of the solution, not part of the problem. They are Christian Socialists, and have engaged and apparently won over the secular left in Cuba.

I mentioned that your main source of advertising was the offer of a free issue, because one issue was enough for most Episcopalians to either love you or hate you. The following list signed up in the Coffee Hour. They would like to get this March issue, if possible. There is a good chance you will gain a couple of subscribers from the list.

Chris Pottle

[Ed. Note: Thank you a thousand times for taking the initiative to find out which people in your parish might like *The Witness*! Initiatives from readers are the *best* way for our circulation to grow.]

Witness/Trinity video available



One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, our video series from the forum we held at Trinity School for Ministry, is now available!

The series provides, in living color, a glimpse into the hearts of two radically committed groups within the Episcopal Church who often find each other suspect regarding interpretations of scripture, issues of morality and commitment to social justice.

The series features a conversation between Bill Frey, dean of the school and former bishop of Colorado; Virginia Mollenkott, a lesbian theologian and professor in New Jersey; Mary Hays, a pastoral theology professor at Trinity; and, Chester Talton, suffragan bishop of California.

The panel discussion can be used alone or, in a class series, each of the ten-minute workshop sessions which follow can be explored. These include the authority of scripture; sexuality, feminism and faith; the traditional way; conversations behind the wall; and the multi-cultural challenge. Each session is marked by a serious attempt to listen to one another and to be honest.

The tape costs $79.95 plus $4 handling and is available from the Episcopal Radio & TV Foundation, Suite 230, 3379 Peachtree Rd., N.E., Atlanta, GA 30326; (404) 233-5419.

Classifieds

Assistant publisher sought

THE OTHER SIDE, A CHRISTIAN MAGAZINE of peace and justice issues, seeks a full-time assistant publisher to conduct financial management and planning, plus provide support services. Experience in magazine publishing and-or financial management desirable. Excellent benefits. Deadline for application: May 15, later inquiries appropriate. Contact Hiring Team, *The Other Side*, 300 W. Apsley Street, Philadelphia, PA 19144 (215-849-2178).

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When ads mark anniversaries of deaths, ordinations, or acts of conscience, photos — even at half column-width — can be included.

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Cover: *Pepsi Cola and Moon Pie,* by Ellen E. Moore, intaglio, 24" x 18", 1993. Artist Ellen Moore lives in Fredricksburg, Va.

Back cover: *Physical Limitation* by Irene Duffy of Pullman, Wash.

Banking on community

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Even as the U.S. becomes a unilateral superpower, it is teetering on the brink of losing its empire.

Some economists expected that the European Common Market would have surpassed us by now. Whatever the mythology, we have to recognize that the powers that built this nation (on the blood of the Indians, the slaves and the immigrant laborers) are now cannibalizing American workers while they expand overseas.

In this issue, Noam Chomsky writes that the U.S. debt (bequeathed to us — some say calculatedly — by the Reagan administration) has paralyzed the nation (page 8). Should the president decide to institute social programs, Chomsky says the international lending community will call in U.S. debts and disable the administration. In essence, the austerity programs that we watched the International Monetary Fund impose on third-world countries are in effect now for us.

It's easier to see the brutality of the powers in Detroit than it may be in Minneapolis or San Francisco. We have minimal social services, dangerous schools, youth with nothing to lose and violent crime on a phenomenal scale. We have lost the high-wage manufacturing jobs that drew people to Motown.

When I moved here in 1980 everyone seemed to be connected to an alphabet soup of radicalism. People were publicly (or clandestinely) affiliated with the RSL (Revolutionary Socialists' League), the RCP (Revolutionary Communist Party), the CPA (Communist Party of America), the IS (International Socialists), DSA (Democratic Socialists of America), WWP (Workers' World Party), DARE (Detroiters for A Rational Economy), or, nostalgically, the IWW (International Workers of the World).

After the insurrection in 1967, many parties believed the revolution would start in Detroit, so the vanguard moved in. And while there was arrogance in planning to lead a revolution and while there was considerable in-fighting, there was something exciting and hopeful about being surrounded by people who had such a clear take on the failings of capitalism. The alphabet-soup contingent had a grasp on class allegiances and power broking. And, actually, most other Detroiters did too — several decades of union activism had worn deep recesses in which people *knew* that the rich have, and have always had, a clear agenda to further their own affluence and power no matter which charities or public television broadcasts they may support.

As a one-industry town, Detroit's capital is easy to track. Henry Ford's agenda and the cozy relations between GM and the Nazis (one Senate committee reported that had Hitler won the war, GM would have been "impeccably Nazi") did not surprise people who came from Europe with socialist ideals and from the south with slavery in their nightmares. Change would take vision and it might take blood.

In the 1930s and 1960s, there was courage and vision, but in the 1980s the collapse of the left was also easy to track.

The United Auto Workers, once legitimated in the 1950s, exchanged grievances (even environmental) for money. By the 1980s, they showed little interest in the newly unemployed. The tens of thousands who lost auto jobs in Michigan could have been mobilized. Empty plants could have been taken over. Groups of former workers — with little to lose that wasn't already being stripped from them by creditors — could have worked together like the workers in Pittsburgh who prevented evictions and house foreclosures during that same period.

Instead we had televised demonstrations of auto workers smashing Japanese cars and isolated instances of unemployed people taking shotguns to the Edison office or killing their families and barricading themselves in their homes.

Part of the left's silence sprang from a realization that the industry is not in a cycle of depression — it is radically altering the way it does business. It's losing a share of the market and what it retains it is manufacturing across the globe — in Mexico, Brazil, Korea.

No question it's time for an international union. Organizing Chinese youth who are working 12-hour days making the baubles that sell in U.S. dollar stores won't be easy. Labor will find it hard to cross national and cultural boundaries. The ethnic fights that the corporations depended on in the first half of the century (accomplished by hiring one ethnic group to replace another during strikes) are now acted out with states and nations competing with one another for the favor of a corporation which will demand every tax abatement, every benefit and every leniency on environmental standards.

More promising, however, may be refusing to allow U.S. military services for international conglomerates. Is it in our

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editor's note

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

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The war against black youth

by Manning Marable

Although we measure the impact of poverty, unemployment, and economic exploitation upon the family and community, we should focus our attention more specifically on the social devastation among our young people. In terms of education, health care, the criminal justice system and other criteria, what is happening in our cities is nothing short of a war against black youth.

Let us examine the statistical evidence provided by New York City and New York state. In the area of health care, six out of 10 preschool children in New York City are not immunized. There are currently only 96 nurses for 600 elementary schools in the city; nurses no longer regularly visit middle schools and high schools. Every day in New York City, as estimated 70,500 children use drugs. Each day, 35 babies are born at low birthrates, and four babies die before their first birthday. Over 160,000 children, mostly black and Latino, have no health insurance. Since 1987, TB cases in New York City have doubled. And today, AIDS is the leading cause of death in New York City for children under the age of five.

In 1979, 82 percent of New York's African-American children under the age of six lived in households headed by one or both of their parents. By 1989, that percentage had dropped to 69 percent. This means that thousands of our children are being raised increasingly by their grandparents, or by individuals who are not related to them at all.

The war against black youth is strikingly apparent within the criminal justice system. In central Harlem alone, 2,500 young people were arrested in 1992. Ninety-five percent of those in jail in New York City are Latinos and blacks. Who is this prison population? Ninety percent do not have a high school diploma; more than one-half have under a sixth-grade level of educational ability. About two-thirds of all young black people who are in jail are awaiting trial, at an average cost of $150 per day. The average pretrial detention in New York City is 50 days — *costing $7,900 per prisoner.* Instead of spending tens of millions of dollars warehousing black youth, we should spend that money educating and training them to be productive human beings.

In the area of housing and homelessness: There are about 90,000 homeless people in New York City today. On a typical evening, 24,000 people, including 9,700 children, will sleep in a city-run shelter. About 90 percent of the homeless are black and Latino. In a five-year period, about one out of 12 black children in New York will live in a homeless shelter.

The war against black children is most clearly demonstrated in education. New York City has 37 percent of the state's children in its public schools, but the city receives only 34 percent of the state aid. That shortfall amounts to an underfunding to the public schools each year by $400 million. In the suburbs of New York, the average suburban school spends $9,236 per pupil; New York City spends $6,326 per pupil, nearly $3,000 less per child.

The basic factor which underscores the dynamics of oppression for black children and youth is economics. Between 1980 and 1992, New York City lost 87,000 private-sector jobs. During the same years, the number of African-Americans living below the poverty level in the city grew from 520,000 to 664,000 people. The average black family in the city earns $24,000 annually, compared to more than $40,000 per year for whites. Black men have unemployment rates of 13 percent, compared to under six percent for white males. As the economic situation for black households declines, the status of our children and young people also deteriorates.

At Columbia's Institute for Research in African-American Studies, we are planning a national conference, to be held in April, 1995, on the theme: "The Crisis of Black Youth." The greatest challenge for African-American leadership is finding solutions to reverse the war against our young people. Our children are the future of the black community. TW

continued from page 1

national interest to protect GM's investments in Korea? What if we don't send the marines to Brazil or Mexico? Would corporations hire their own military forces? Would they bring their capital back to the U.S.? As U.S. cities brink on the realities of Detroit, Americans may have a different attitude toward the purpose of the Pentagon.

In the meantime, activists are taking two approaches. The first includes efforts to control the beast (pages 10 and 22). The second explores ways to pursue sustainable communities without the aid or interference of the beast (page 18).

Either way, we can expect a change in our standard of living. As the top six percent of the world's population, we will not always manage to consume 40 percent of the world's resources. But what we're promised is a chance to bring the powers into right relationship to God (page 14) and the strength and grace of community.

Manning Marable, a *Witness* contributing editor, is director of the Institute for Research in African-American Studies at Columbia University.

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February Thaw

by Skip Renker

Beethoven on the radio insists
on our hearts.
Who can take this
rush of yearning,
snow melting off roofs,
gutters churning

out twigs and leaves,
the month's first sunlight
slanting down the eaves,
when this year's bombs
have a mind of their own?
They hone in on palms

the pilgrim plants.
They strike at roots.
Someone, somewhere, wants
this. Next year's crop,
the newsbreak
reports, won't stop

until they find cell
and molecule, ring
the subatomic bell
in the target's heart.
The musicians are live
now, playing Mozart,

a man of another
mind. We barely listen,
as if to smother
hope, but blue water
shines in puddles,
someone's daughter

slides her delicate foot
across a tree's reflection,
leaps lights over. Root
and branch, something
animates this
beauty, sings

to spirit and flesh.
We refuse
this song, this fresh
infusion, or embrace
its astounding demands,
treat it like grace.



Skip Renker lives in Midland, Mich.

How bad is it?

by Noam Chomsky

About 20 years ago there was a big change in the world order, partly symbolized by Richard Nixon's dismantling of the postwar economic system. He recognized that U.S. dominance of the global system had declined, and that in the new "tripolar" world order (with Japan and German-based Europe playing a larger role), the U.S. could no longer serve — in effect — as the world's banker.

That led to a lot more pressure on corporate profits in the U.S. and, consequently, to a big attack on social welfare gains. The crumbs that were permitted to ordinary people had to be taken away. Everything had to go to the rich.

There was also a tremendous expansion of unregulated capital in the world. In 1971, Nixon dismantled the Bretton Woods system, thereby deregulating currencies. That, and a number of other changes, tremendously expanded the amount of unregulated capital in the world, and accelerated what's called the globalization of the economy.

That's a fancy way of saying that you export jobs to high-repression, low-wage areas — which undercuts the opportunities for productive labor at home. It's a way of increasing corporate profits, of course. And it's much easier to do with a free flow of capital, advances in telecommunications, etc.

Becoming third world

There are two important consequences of globalization. First, it extends the third world model to industrial countries. In the third world, there's a two-tiered society — a sector of extreme wealth and privilege, and a sector of huge misery and despair among useless, superfluous people. That division is deepened by the policies dictated by the West. It imposes a neoliberal "free market" system that directs resources to the wealthy and to foreign investors, with the idea that something will trickle down by magic, some time after the Messiah comes.

You can see this happening everywhere in the industrial world, but most strikingly in the three English-speaking countries. In the 1980s, England under Thatcher, the United States under the Reaganites and Australia under a Labor government, adopted some of the doctrines they preached for the third world.

The second consequence, which is also important, has to do with governing structures. Throughout history, the structures of government have tended to coalesce around other forms of power — in modern times, primarily around economic power. So, when you have national economies, you get national states. We now have an international economy and we're moving towards an international state.

To quote the business press, we're creating "a new imperial age" with a "*de facto* world government." It has its own institutions — like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, trading structures like NAFTA and GATT (the North American Free Trade Agreement and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), executive meetings like the G-7 (the seven richest industrial countries — the US, Canada, Japan, Germany, Britain, France and Italy — who meet regularly to discuss economic policy) and the European Community bureaucracy.

As you'd expect, this whole structure of decision-making answers basically to the transnational corporations, international banks, etc. It's an effective blow against democracy. All these structures raise decision-making to the executive level, leaving what's called a "democratic deficit" — parliaments and populations with less influence.

Not only that, but the general population doesn't know what's happening, and it doesn't even know that it doesn't know. One result is a kind of alienation from institutions. People feel that nothing works for them.

There are serious issues here.

Herman Daly and Robert Goodland, two World Bank economists, circulated an interesting study recently. In it they point out that received economic theory — the standard theory on which decisions are supposed to be based — pictures a free-market sea with tiny little islands of individual firms. These islands, of course, aren't internally free — they're centrally managed. But that's okay, because these are just tiny little islands on the sea. We're supposed to believe that these firms aren't much different than a mom-and-pop store down the street.

Daly and Goodland point out that by now the islands are approaching the scale of the sea. A large percentage of cross-border transactions are within a single firm, hardly "trade" in any meaningful sense. What you have is centrally managed transactions, with a very visible hand directing them.

You could say that one alternative to the free-market system is the one we already have. Our actual economic policy is a mixture of protectionist, interventionist, free-market and liberal measures. And it's directed primarily to the needs of those who implement social policy, who are mostly the wealthy and the powerful.

Noam Chomsky, a professor of linguistics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is the author of more than 30 books on contemporary issues. This article is drawn from *The Prosperous Few and the Restless Many,* copyright © 1993 David Barsamian; all rights reserved; published by Odonian Press, Box 7776, Berkeley, CA., 94707; phone (510) 524-4000 or (800) REAL STORY. Chomsky's reflections were offered in response to questions posed by David Barsamian.

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The U.S. has always had an active state industrial policy, just like every other industrial country. It has been understood that a system of private enterprise can survive only if there is extensive government intervention. It's needed to regulate disorderly markets and protect private capital from the destructive effects of the market system, and to organize a public subsidy for targeting advanced sectors of industry, etc.

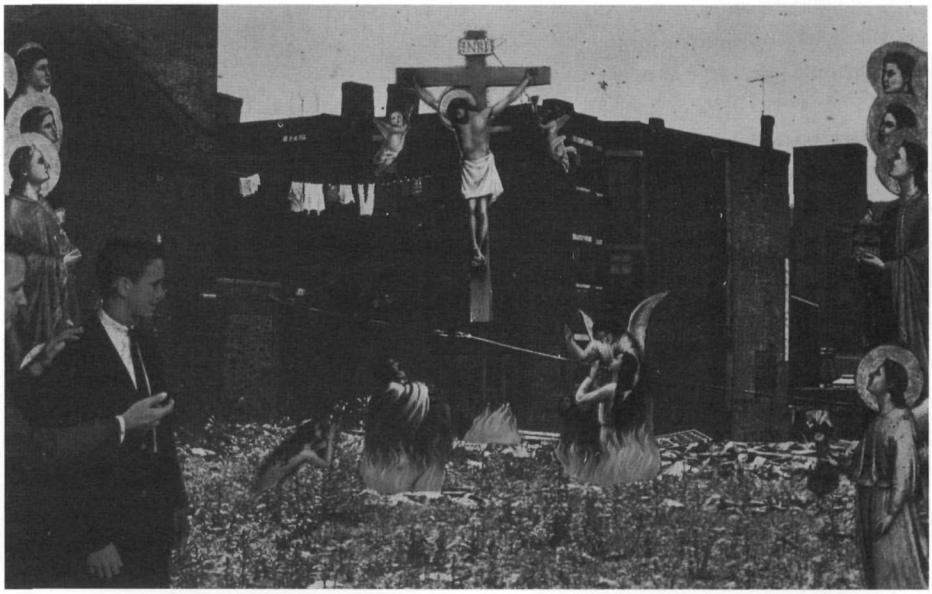
The Pentagon

But nobody *called* it industrial policy, because for half a century it has been masked within the Pentagon system. Internationally, the Pentagon was an intervention force, but domestically it was a method by which the government could coordinate the private economy, provide welfare to major corporations, subsidize them, arrange the flow of taxpayer money to research and development, provide a state-guaranteed market for excess production, target advanced industries for development, etc. Just about every successful and flourishing aspect of the U.S. economy has relied on this kind of government involvement.

But they can't maintain the Pentagon-based system as readily as before. The mask is dropping. So the system is in trouble. Economists and bankers have been pointing out openly for some time that one of the main reasons why the current recovery is so sluggish is that the government hasn't been able to resort to increased military spending with all of its multiplier effects — the traditional pump-priming mechanism of economic stimulation. Although there are various efforts to continue this (in my opinion, the operation in Somalia is one such effort), it's just not possible the way it used to be.

The *Wall Street Journal* was the most extreme advocate of Reaganite lunacies for 10 years. They're now publishing articles in which they're bemoaning the consequences — without, of course, conceding that they're consequences.

They had a big news article on the collapse of California's educational system, which they're very upset about. Businessmen in the San Diego area have relied on the state system to provide them with skilled workers, junior managers, applied research, etc. Now the system is in collapse.



Marek Czarnecki

The reason is obvious — the large cutbacks in social spending in the federal budget, and the fiscal and other measures that greatly increased the federal debt (which the *Wall Street Journal* supported), simply transferred the burden of keeping people alive and functioning to the states. The states are unable to support that burden. They're in serious trouble and have tried to hand down the problem to the municipalities, which are also in serious trouble.

Now businessmen are complaining. They want the government to get back into the business of providing them with what they need. That's going to mean a reversal of the fanaticism that the *Wall Street Journal* and others like it have been applauding all these years.

One problem was kindly pointed out to the Clinton administration by a front-page article in the *Wall Street Journal* the other day. It mentioned what might happen if the administration takes its own rhetoric seriously — like spending money for social programs. The United States is so deeply in hock to the international financial community (because of the debt) that they have a lock on U.S. policy.

If something happens here — say, increasing workers' salaries — which will cut down the bondholders' short-term profit, they'll just start withdrawing from the U.S. bond market. That will drive interest rates up, which will drive the economy down, which will increase the deficit. The *Journal* points out that Clinton's $20-billion spending program could be turned into a $20-billion cost to the government, to the debt, just by slight changes in the purchase and sale of bonds.

So social policy, even in a country as rich and powerful as the United States (which is the richest and most powerful of them all), is mortgaged to the international wealthy sectors here and abroad. Those are issues that have to be dealt with — and that means facing problems of revolutionary change. TW

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Controlling the beast

by Camille Colatosti

"Corporations cause harm everyday," write Richard Grossman and Frank Adams in *Taking Care of Business: Citizenship and the Charter of Incorporation.* They pollute the air, contaminate the land and destroy neighborhoods. In their drive to increase profits, they demand wage concessions from their workers and tax abatements from communities. And, in the end, corporations often close up shop and relocate to low-wage countries. In their wake, many companies leave behind abandoned plants —- and poverty.

"In the last 15 years, the traditional economic anchors of most working-class communities have become unstable," says Jim Benn, the executive director of the Federation for Industrial Retention and Renewal — a national coalition of more than 30 community and regional organizations fighting to win a U.S. industrial policy that is responsible to working-class communities. Plant closures and capital flight, explains Benn, "have not only resulted in a rise in poverty. They have led to a complete collapse of the institutions that have traditionally helped people rise out of poverty."

The low-paid service jobs created today don't lessen the poverty. The city of Cleveland, often touted as a model of how a community can recover from the economic loss of its manufacturing base, presents a telling example. From 1979 to 1989, the so-called "Cleveland Miracle" brought scores of service jobs to that city. Unemployment fell during that period from 11 to six percent. Yet, at the same time, poverty increased 35 percent. Why? People work harder and earn less money than ever before.

In fact, a study released in March by the U.S. Census Bureau reveals that the share of Americans working full-time and earning poverty-level wages increased by 50 percent between 1979 and 1992. One in five full-time employees belongs to the working poor.

How did a self-governing people let this corporate irresponsibility come to pass? wonder Grossman and Adams. And what can be done about it now? Pointing to the history of corporations in America, the authors remind readers that states originally designed corporate charters in order to ensure that businesses served the common good. It's time, say the authors, for communities to again make sure that corporations "cause no harm."

Grossman and Adams aren't alone in their thinking. As unemployment, underemployment and poverty reach new heights, a growing number of community and workplace activists — from auto workers in Detroit, to steelworkers in Pittsburgh, to garment workers in El Paso — are developing strategies that take on corporations at a number of points. Some fight plant closing; others transfer ownership of factories to workers; some oppose corporate tax abatements; still others use their power as shareholders to pressure corporations to make socially responsible choices; and some struggle simply for fair wages.

While the battles are difficult, people are winning. But even when unsuccessful, the fights reveal what's needed to prevent future decline.

Fighting plant closings

From the late 1970s to the present, as factories attempted to lock their gates and move their plants to low-wage countries, unions and communities resisted. Workers, and especially union members, learned important lessons about building local coalitions, enlisting governments and community organizations if they hoped to win.

Pennsylvania's Steel Valley Authority (SVA) provides a model. Composed of trade unionists and religious and community activists, it is a state-chartered agency with the power of eminent domain. Essentially, the SVA turns a corporate strategy on its head. (State and city governments have worked with corporations to use the power of eminent domain to demolish neighborhoods where factories plan to locate.)

The SVA, says founder Mike Stout, "has the legal authority to acquire abandoned but viable manufacturing facilities, raise funding for their purchase and renovation, sell them to new owners or operate the renovated plants itself."

But raising funds has been the SVA's largest barrier. Paying "fair market value" for factories worth millions often proves impossible. "Most communities who belong to the SVA are bankrupt," says FIRR's Jim Benn. "The closure of plants has left them virtually no tax base. It's a vicious cycle."

The battle to save Dorothy Six, the last blast furnace at the Duquesne Works of U.S. Steel, near Pittsburgh, provides an example. In December 1983, U.S. Steel announced not only the mill's shutdown, but its demolition. As Stout explains, "It was as though lightning had struck a sleeping giant. All of a sudden, the boroughs and workers woke up one day after being married to U.S. Steel for half a century to discover that the company had filed for divorce, packed its bags and said, 'By the way, I'm taking the house and furniture with me too.'"

Union, community and religious ac-

Camille Colatosti, author of *Stopping Sexual Harassment: A Handbook for Union and Workplace Activists* directs the Working Women's Project in Detroit.

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tivists fought back. The demolition was stalled twice. A feasibility study confirmed the fact that a market existed for the mill's product — semi-finished slabs. But the SVA was, in the end, unable to raise the $200 million needed to pay U.S. Steel. The mill was destroyed.

Employee ownership

Another Pittsburgh example, the story of City Pride Bakery, reinforces the need for new strategies to capitalize businesses that are important to the community.

It began in 1990, when Continental Ralston-Purina, the dog food conglomerate that owned the 100-year old Braun Bakery, the largest bakery in Pittsburgh, decided to close shop.

Tom Croft, executive director of the SVA, tells how Braun workers, members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers Union Local 12, fought the shutdown with a region-wide boycott, demonstrations and eminent domain action. "When the plant closed anyway," says Croft, "workers developed a strategy to finance a new bakery in Pittsburgh."

The union, the SVA and the community joined together to build the first worker-owned factory to be created from the ground up. They raised close to $10 million from individual, community and business investors. "The project had phenomenal political support," says Croft. "Pittsburgh Mayor Sophie Masloff, the entire Pittsburgh City Council, the County Commissioner, and other state and congressional legislators, the AFL-CIO, the neighborhoods, some savvy lawyers, FIRR and church leaders were all behind the effort."

Before opening, the workers won a contract for eight million loaves of bread a year from local supermarkets. In its first year, it employed 175 people, three-quarters of whom were former welfare recipients. Benn explains that for many City Pride workers, this was their first full-time job. The bakery established literacy and child care programs. Representatives from neighborhood organizations were placed on its board of directors.

But after one year, the fairy tale nearly ended. Under-capitalized from the start, the company went bankrupt. An investor



David McLimans

bought it from the workers and he kept the City Pride workforce and most of the company's innovative programs. But, in January 1994, with four days notice, the bakery closed again. Still, says Benn, "all is not lost. City Council is looking into new investors and hopes to start the bakery going again soon."

For Benn, the story of City Pride is the same as that for many employee-owned companies. "They are almost always undercapitalized. The companies aren't attractive to the private sector. If they were," says Benn, "they wouldn't have been up for sale, or employee takeover, in the first place. Bankers will give only the bottom line and are unsparing in their payment requirements. When you realize that 70 percent of all new businesses fail in the United States anyway, it's no surprise that employee-owned ventures, that have no capital with which to make mistakes, don't make it. For the employee-owned business, each error is almost always terminal."

For Benn, the City Pride example points to the need for greater public involvement in employee-owned companies from the startup.

Opposing tax abatements

One of the first steps towards greater public involvement, and towards holding corporations accountable, involves demanding that companies who do accept local, regional and state tax abatements fulfill their obligations to those communities.

Kary Moss, executive director of the Detroit-based Maurice and Jane Sugar Law Center for Economic and Social Justice, a project of the National Lawyer's Guild, sees promise in a district court decision in a suit against General Motors. General Motors had pitted its Ypsilanti-based Willow Run plant against an Arlington, Texas plant, to see which union local would offer the greatest concessions, which community would offer the largest tax breaks. After General Motors announced that it would keep Arlington open, Ypsilanti took the corporation to court, arguing that GM had not fulfilled promises made when it accepted over $1.3 billion in tax abatements.

The court ruled on the community's side. And while the February, 1993 decision was eventually overturned,County Judge Donald Shelton wrote,"There would be a gross inequity and patent unfairness if General Motors, having lulled the people of the Ypsilanti area into giving up millions of tax dollars which

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they so desperately need to educate their children and provide basic governmental services, is allowed to simply decide that it will desert 4,500 workers and their families because it thinks it can make the same cars a little cheaper somewhere else."

For Moss, this decision "advances the notion that workers have a right to a job. It also reinforces the idea that the auto industry has an obligation to the people who have produced its cars, and made its profits, for so many years."

Currently, Moss and the Sugar Law Center are developing a model contract to be used by communities who are considering offering tax abatements. The contract would clarify the corporation's obligations if an abatement is given.

Some communities are joining together across county or state lines to oppose corporate demands for tax breaks altogether. Together, two Indiana communities saved 350 jobs at the LaSalle Steel mill in Hammond, Indiana.

In the summer of 1990, LaSalle Steel, owned by Texas-based Quanex Corporation, planned to close and move to Frankfort, Indiana, just 100 miles away. LaSalle claimed that Frankfort offered reduced taxes and other incentives that made the offer too good to refuse.

But the independent Progressive Steelworkers Union and the Calumet Project for Industrial Jobs — an organization of unions, churches, and community members which was formed in the early 1980s in response to the loss of 40,000 industrial jobs in northwest Indiana — convinced the two city governments not to enter into a bidding war.

As Calumet Project leaders Bruce Nissen and Lynn Feekin explain, "The Hammond City Council and mayor wrote to their counterparts in Frankfort requesting that no public subsidies be given to LaSalle. The letters pointed out that a bidding war between the two towns would only benefit the company. Expressing sympathy with Hammond officials, Frankfort Mayor Don Snyder responded favorably in his local press: 'I can't see us offering incentives for them to come here because I wouldn't want that to happen to any of our companies."

In the face of this pressure and unfavorable publicity, LaSalle reversed its decision. In late 1991, the Hammond plant even expanded its operations, employing additional workers.

Investing responsibly

Public pressure can also be exerted by shareholders. Starting in the early 1970s with Episcopal Presiding Bishop John Hines' call for divesting South Africa, church and community groups have pursued socially responsible investments. According to Tim Smith, director of the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), some $700 billion is currently invested with an eye to social responsibility. ICCR provides lists of corporations that pollute excessively, are involved in weapons production or which market hazardous products. ICCR works with groups which become members to consider appropriate portfolios.

Smith suggests that shareholders vote their proxies, initiate shareholders' resolutions and write letters to companies' boards of directors. "If you think a corporation shouldn't have an all white, male board, you can write to the company and let people know," he explains.

"We're very proud of the role we played to put pressure on corporations with investments in South Africa," says Smith. The ICCR endorsed a "Code of Conduct for Businesses Operating in South Africa" that was put forward by the South Africa Council of Churches..

"Our goal was to help force the South African government to come to the table," says Smith. "And they have."

Victories

While victories to hold corporations accountable are rare, they aren't impossible. Many communities — especially closely knit towns which take on small to mid-size corporations, those without the resources of General Motors — have experienced success.

The Committee Against Schlage Plant Closing, in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, is a good example. Located in the heart of North Carolina's industrial expansion — the state has enticed more than 1,400 companies in the past 15 years — Rocky Mount is a primarily African-American community. It is also the home of the Black Workers for Justice, a statewide organization of workplace activists who struggle to unionize the South and to win African-American representation.

Schlage Lock Company operated a plant in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, between 1972 and 1988. At its height, it employed 800 workers, 80 percent of whom were African-American women. A subsidiary of the multinational Ingersoll-Rand, Schlage decided to relocate to Tecate, Mexico in 1987.

The decision was important. It demonstrated that corporations, which often move to the South because of the low-wage nonunion workforce, will stop at nothing to find cheaper labor. Rocky Mount workers averaged $7 an hour. Tecate workers earn just $3.50 a day.

The Committee Against Schlage Plant Closing lost the battle to keep the plant open, but they continued to fight for back pay and health benefits. Hourly workers had been denied severance and given only one month of health insurance, while management received severance pay, six months of extended health care, life insurance and bonuses. The Midwest Center for Labor Research — a Chicago-based research, organizing and educational service organization for labor unions and working-class communities — conducted research for the workers and found the cost of the shut-down to the

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community to be $10.5 million in lost taxes and unemployment insurance.

In the process of fighting for back pay, the Committee Against Schlage Plant Closing discovered some shocking news: 17 workers had died in a four-year period while scores of others suffered from chronic respiratory, liver, kidney and skin diseased linked to the use of lead, nickel and chrome at the plant.

The Schlage workers organized a May Day march and rally, drawing 300 people. And the workers won. The company agreed to severance pay for 500 workers employed at the time of shutdown. Schlage released pensions, and conducted health screening at company expense to all workers suspecting job-related illness.

Joan Sharpe, a leader of the Committee, explains how this victory made workers feel. "Most of us came right out of high school to work for Schlage. This was our first experience ever at educating ourselves about workers' rights. I learned that even in a non-union workplace, people can fight back."

The Schlage workers went on to establish a workers' association that helps people in other communities form similar organizations. Perhaps most significant, North Carolina Schlage workers visited their counterparts in Tecate, Mexico, warning them of the dangers of the chemicals they used and trying to establish links of international solidarity.

In El Paso, Texas, an organization of women garment workers, *La Mujer Obrera*, is making similar, international connections. Joining with their counterparts on the Mexico side of the Texas border, they use civil disobedience and hunger strikes to demand improved working conditions in the region's garment shops. On the most basic level, their work has ensured that workers are paid.

The garment industry today is overrun with subcontractors. Large companies, based primarily in New York, contract work to small jobbers. These jobbers subcontract production to sweatshops like those in El Paso. The sweatshops employ primarily immigrant women, many of whom are unfamiliar with their rights. Owners promise payment when the contract is filled. But when the work is completed, women have trouble collecting. Often, workers arrive on payday to discover that the gate is locked and the employer has gone out of business.

La Mujer Obrera discovered that small employers often declare bankruptcy only to reopen a few weeks later, under a new name with a new contract. *La Mujer's* strategy involves pressuring the subcontractors, as well as the larger garment companies who award the contracts.

Just recently, for example, 14 workers won back wages of $3,000 from Just-In-Time, a garment sweatshop that closed in July, but owed workers two weeks of back pay. To win, workers organized picket protests and press conferences against the sweatshop owner and the jobber who awarded the contract. *La Mujer* also reached out to union members across the country and convinced many to write letters to JonBil Manufacturing, the New York firm for whom the work was done.

Finally, to prevent future problems, *La Mujer* created a Garment Industry Commission, made up of labor, business and government officials. Its goal is to shape an industrial development strategy for the city.

National industrial policy

La Mujer's efforts demonstrate how important it is for communities to demand responsibility from the businesses they support. But economic development, in the end, requires national solutions.

The Sugar Law Center has been instrumental in winning laws to protect workers against plant closures. The most significant victory to date is the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN), the federal law that requires companies with 100 or more workers to provide 60 days notice of a plant closing or massive layoff. It took effect in February 1989 and, though it is by no means perfect, it has given millions of workers advance notice of shutdowns and it has enabled state dislocated worker programs to assist more people than they could have reached before.

Kary Moss hopes to improve the legislation to, as she explains, "lower the employer threshold." That is, she wants the law to apply to all employers. And she wants to lower the threshold for the number of people a company must lay off before the WARN act goes into effect. Currently, an employer must lay off one-third of its workforce within a 30-day period in order to be subject to WARN. "Many companies simply manipulate this limitation," says Moss.

Eventually, Moss, like FIRR's Jim Benn, would like to see a national industrial policy. As Benn explains, there must be parity for all communities. This means that one state doesn't try to underbid another, promising greater and greater tax reductions, to woo companies. Also, economic anchors for communities must promote justice and be supportive of national sectoral strategies, such as steel and auto. They must have an international perspective and be linked to training and educational programs. Perhaps most important, though, there must be a national commitment to fund economic development. "We need loans and grants to shape business plans to educate workers, managers and directors," says Benn.

As Benn sees it, the country doesn't have time to waste arguing about the future. "We face the most severe economic crisis of the past 60 years. We are witnessing the destruction of our production capacity. Our cities are in decay. Poverty increases. We must respond with vision and determination. And we must respond now." TW

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Spiritual warfare and economic justice

by Bill Wylie-Kellermann

Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in Christ all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers — all things have been created through Christ and for Christ.

— Colossians 1:15-16

Among the biblical resources for Christian economic thinking, there is none more important (nor more neglected) than the theology of principalities and powers.

When William Stringfellow, who must be credited with the theological and political discernment which has since awakened so much of the recent practical interest in the powers, first began in the early 1960s to speak on the topic, he had a strange encounter. He was slated to give two identical presentations in Boston, one at the Harvard Business School and another at a a nearby seminary. He debated with himself about excising, from the business-school version, any explicit biblical reference or language, but decided in the end to let it stand intact. The business-school students, it turned out, engaged him thoroughly, bending his ear with numerous examples from their own experience of corporate dominance, of distortion and possession by the commercial powers. Their experiences verified his own observation.

Later at the seminary, with the identical speech, he was ridiculed and written off. Ruling authorities, principalities, world rulers of the present darkness! Come now! These were but the incidental vestige of a quaint and archaic language, an esoteric parlance now obsolete, with no real meaning in history or human life. Such was the debasement and neglect of the biblical understanding then current.

Stringfellow's insight from scripture — the one which rang true with the business students — was that economic institutions were creatures with a life and integrity, even a vocation, of their own. He recognized them, however, as creatures utterly fallen and in bondage to death. If we can comprehend this alone, it will alter substantially the character of our economic practice.

There is a certain public acknowledgement of some of this in the legal convention which considers corporations as "persons" before the court. More is here than anthropomorphic fiction; they are treated whole, as living entities. And as often in such matters, that whole is something more than the sum of its parts. The whole has a life and a momentum, almost a will of its own, transcending or overshadowing, directing as it were (so the business students confirmed), even the wills of those who presume to direct the corporate body. Here is an experience not far from Adam Smith's notion of the market's "invisible hand" moving in a pattern which no individuals completely control.

It is perhaps with respect to the "invisible" aspect of economic life that Christians may make the greatest contribution. As the Colossian hymn attests, the powers are both heavenly and earthly, visible and invisible. Walter Wink is the theologian who has most developed this understanding of the "spirituality of institutions" — recognizing their invisible, interior dimension. (See *Engaging the Powers,* Fortress, 1992 — reviewed in *The Witness* 3/94). Beginning from the biblical record, he has inferred that "every Power tends to have a visible pole, an outer form — be it a church, a nation, or an economy — and an invisible pole, an inner spirit or driving force that animates, legitimates, and regulates its physical manifestation in the world."

Conventional economic analysis, whether of the left or the right, is notoriously materialistic, which is to say blind to fully half of social reality. We must be alert that real, substantial, systemic change entails a spiritual transformation as well.

General Motors, let us say, has a particular spirit (as does the food co-op down the block). Anthropologists brink on understanding this when they speak of "corporate culture." To join the corporation fully is to enter into that spirit and identity.

Bill Wylie-Kellermann is author of *Seasons of Faith and Conscience,* Orbis, 1991 and editor of *Keeper of the Word, a Stringfellow Reader,* Eerdmann's Press, 1994. An expanded version of this article is available in a new 180-page study guide produced by Sojourners, called *Who Is My Neighbor? Economics As If Values Matter.* Single copies of the study guide are $10, but bulk prices are available. To order, call Sojourners at (202) 328-8842.

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And because of this common spirit, one could replace the executives, shuffle personnel, even modify the product line, but little of substance would actually change overall. The institution's interior gyroscope maintains the direction and fundamental character of its values.

We are only just beginning to surmise the implications of this for the work of economic transformation on scales both large and small. Conventional economic analysis, whether of the left or the right, is notoriously materialistic, which is to say blind to fully half of social reality. We must be alert that real, substantial, systemic change entails a spiritual transformation as well. A big question for us must be: How can the church bring the gift of discernment to economic change, naming and addressing the assorted institutional spirits, hand in hand with the work of material restructuring?

The creatureliness of the powers also means that they stand as "persons" not only before the courts, but before the judgement of God. As with human creatures, they are accountable for fulfilling their God-given vocations, for being who they are uttered in the Word of God to be. As Colossians puts it, they were created in and through and for Christ — which is to say for humanity in its fullness. Stringfellow used to say that the primary vocation of the principalities was to praise God and serve human life. We might amend to say: serve creation as well. Imagine General Motors or General Dynamics (or even the local co-op) held to such an account. Of course each power has a more particular and concrete calling. The vocation of the commercial media, for example, might be to serve human beings by getting the truth out; the vocation of the health care system is to nurture and heal; the vocation of an auto company, I suppose, is to serve creation by facilitating transportation.

As a tool of analysis and discernment, "vocation" is at once a simple and radical idea. It means Christians begin by asking about root purposes. What is a bank for? What is a health care system for? What, even, is an economy for?



"All in favor of summoning the powers of darkness say 'Aye.'"

Francino, © 1981, *The New Yorker Magazine*, Inc.

To some these queries will seem naive or simple-minded, because certain purposes are assumed beyond question, or threatening because certain vocations have been forgotten or even inverted. For example, contrary to popular assumption, the purpose of an economy is not "to grow" or to centralize or to globalize. If I remember correctly, Florence Nightingale is reported to have quipped, "I may not be sure what a hospital is for, but I'm pretty certain it's not for the spread of disease." I'm not sure what a defense industry is for, but I'm pretty sure it's not domination and annihilation. And I'm pretty sure the vocation of the media has nothing to do with turning a profit by the repetition of lies or official disinformation. As Jesus once put it (in loose translation), "I may not be sure what a House of Prayer is for, but I'm pretty certain it's not to be a den of thieves."

What is suggested here is the radical confusion of vocation from which the assorted economic principalities suffer. It is part of their fallen character. They forget who they are called to be. Instead of praising God and serving human life, they imagine they are gods, dominate human life and assault creation. They become literally demonic. Were economic institutions made for humanity, or humanity for the institutions? The bumper sticker logion, "People before profits," is a theological affirmation.

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In Detroit there is a bank which ran an ad campaign some years back averring itself to be the bank "where the bottom line is you." This of course is a bold-faced lie, as could be demonstrated in court, human or divine. At that financial institution, it is the bottom line which is the bottom line. (Though it must be granted there remains in the ad some vague notion, a haunting commercial memory, of what the vocation of a bank ought to be).

The simplest confusion, the initial act of forgetting a creaturely vocation, stems from a power making its own structural survival the first and final priority. In the institutional realm of economic powers this leads to a deadly "ethic of survival" — and becomes virtually the *only* morality which governs among them. It sets the powerly self interest above every other. We witnessed it in the clash of competing economies in the Cold War era which, arming themselves to the nuclear max, were prepared to incinerate half the planet for the sake of "survival." It was plain in the deadly and death-dealing bureaucracy of eastern-block command economies (ironically where Marxist eschatology had envisioned their benevolent withering away). We see it in the predatory combat of corporate takeover with its contempt for human consequences in the devoured corporation. It is attested where companies move their operations (south of the border, for example) blithely abandoning communities to which they are truly indebted. It is plain in the famous "war" of capital against labor — the exploitation of human beings as workers. It is apparent in the production and aggressive marketing of commodities known to be harmful to human beings — from cigarettes to handguns to Pintos and Dalcon Shields. It is exposed in the contempt for the ecosystem, pouring toxic by-products into rivers and airstreams. In these and endless examples which might be named, the willingness to spoil creation and to dominate human beings, for the sake of corporate survival, is manifest.

The principalities' radical anxiety about survival is in fact their homage to death. It signifies at once a worship of and a bondage to the power of death, in Stringfellow's view. Wink's term for the ethic of death, its spirit and logic, is the "domination system." Both are apt and accurate.



Helen Siegl

I think of an incident in Detroit a few years ago, replicated in many places, where one teenager was killed by another over a pair of gym shoes. The event could be analyzed in terms of their family and social histories, but it is edifying just to identify a few of the economic principalities hovering about, at work in the deadly moment. There is, of course, the international shoe manufacturing conglomerate, paying women in Korea, say, the barest wages to make the shoe. There is the ad agency, virtually indifferent to the actual product, whose work is to make the "name" of the shoe a household desire. They certainly had a billboard just up the street. "Name" incidently in the biblical scheme may itself be considered a principality — as in "above every power and name." Then there are the principalities of commercial sports and in particular the "image" of the sports personality which has been associated with the shoe to inflate its value and meaning. The "image" also is a distinct principality — often incorporated itself (and thereby having the standing of a person before the courts!). There is the handgun manufacturer, probably based in Connecticut, muscling for a share of the $16 billion annual market. Here again there is a chain of marketing and distribution principalities — including some 4,000 licensed dealers in the Detroit area, and of course one of the most powerful political lobbies in Washington, the NRA [National Rifle Association], to keep the product flowing. Finally, there is the general spirit of consumption, in which false needs are rendered virtually an addiction. All of these, and more, are at work in the shooting. This is not to say the boy pulling the trigger and running is not personally responsible, but merely to acknowledge and name the powers, visible and invisible, who play an aggressive and predatory part in the death.

The spirit of consumption merits further comment. In America it is like the air we breathe, an "atmosphere" which is polluting the entire globe. It functions like a generalized spirit of addiction. From the insights of the therapeutic community we are coming to see that the addictive process itself is deeply entrenched in, indeed intrinsic to, our culture. Therapists like Anne Wilson Schaef are speaking of the "addictive society." Just as the alcoholic invariably is part of a dysfunctional family, or a *system* of relationships which are all co-operating and co-dependent with the addict, so these same patterns operate on the broader scale of culture. Within an array of common mechanisms people are addicted to consuming

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in its endless variety. There is a shock of recognition in seeing writ large in culture the patterns of the individual addict and family system: pursuit of power and control, deception, amnesia, scarcity as the model, confusion and projection, and at a deep level, fear — these permeate the system. The mechanisms of addiction are endemic to the culture of consumption and synonymous with its spirit. They comprise the consuming spiritual matrix in which our economic practice is formed.

Jesus spoke of the spirituality of "Mammon." His ministry included a number of instances of naming and rebuking the principalities in a concrete and demystified sense. The action at the temple currency exchange was surely one of them. None, however, was more explicit and forthright than tagging money or wealth as Mammon. He literally named it for us. This is more than a quaint or archaic synonym; Jesus identifies Mammon's aggression in competing with God for human allegiance. You cannot serve both, he says.

Jesus points to money's invisible power. We are deluded to imagine that it is a mere passive medium of exchange, an abstract reference or token of balance. Mammon itself is a spiritual power which acts with a kind of autonomy, directing and controlling, and finally possessing, human life. We must not be naive in this regard if we are to imagine and create new economic forms.

Actually, Karl Marx had a related idea about money as a spiritual power. He wrote of it as alienation, naturally. Specifically he recognized the projection of human labor and human life onto money, in such a way that it takes on "life" of its own. (See Franz Hinkelammert, *The Ideological Weapons of Death,* Orbis, 1981.) It takes on a religious aura and is made sacred. This is his theory of "fetishism" in which money (or commodities or capital) is "personified" and human beings are "commoditized." (A familiar inversion or reversal, no?) He even identified it with the Anti-Christ, with the mark of the beast in Revelation 13! Money becomes an autonomous power determined not by the will of human beings, but instead by the logic of exchange itself.

How do we break the grip of this idolatrous power onto which we project our lives? In *Money and Power* (IVP, 1984), Jacques Ellul writes of a certain freedom as the very thing which profanes the sacred power of money:

"Now this profanation is first of all the result of a spiritual battle, but this must be translated into behavior. There is one act par excellance which profanes money by going directly against the law of money, an act for which money is not made. This act is *giving*. Individuals as well as authorities know very well that giving attacks something sacred. They know full well that it is an act of profanation, of destruction of a value they worship."

Where this happens liturgically, albeit unbeknownst and unrecognized, is in the Sunday morning offering. We are accustomed to imagining (often as a thin guise for moneygrubbing utilitarianism) that money brought to the altar is thereby set apart as "sanctified." Let the profane be made sacred — so go our prayers. To the contrary, says Ellul, exactly the opposite transpires: it is desacralized. I suppose money's vocation to praise God and serve human life may also be restored in the context of worship. There is something wondrous in imagining a new economy beginning at the altar, beginning literally in eucharist.

A biblical understanding of the powers authorizes action which confronts and rebukes commercial principalities. It nurtures in us a freedom from the spirit of consumption, and the grace to break the law of money by creating a culture and economy of gift.

Stringfellow thought the church had a unique vocation to be the "exemplary principality," the one which was not to be caught up in the survival ethic because it was not to be anxious about its own death. The church was to be the institution which knew the freedom to die — and thereby was the institution free to risk everything, all its resources, even itself. One smiles at bitter ironies. But also at wondrous possibilities. It may yet prove that churches are indeed the very place that a new and renewed economy can begin. If we are willing to risk.

A biblical understanding of the powers invites us to discern the invisible dimension of economic power. It encourages radical questioning about the vocation of economic institutions, and their confused inversions. It authorizes action which confronts and rebukes commercial principalities, calling them to repentance — which is to say, to the restoration of their creaturely vocations. It nurtures in us a freedom from the spirit of consumption, and the grace to break the law of money by creating a culture and economy of gift.

Perhaps lastly and most importantly, it may grant us the wisdom to recognize that our new efforts will not escape the fall. Our land trusts and co-ops and neighborhood entrepreneurial projects will become petty principalities, will forget where they began, will be tempted by a survival mentality. It is, alas, even so with exemplary powers. They too, we pray, will be summoned now and again and always to praise God and serve human life. TW

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Beyond corporate bondage

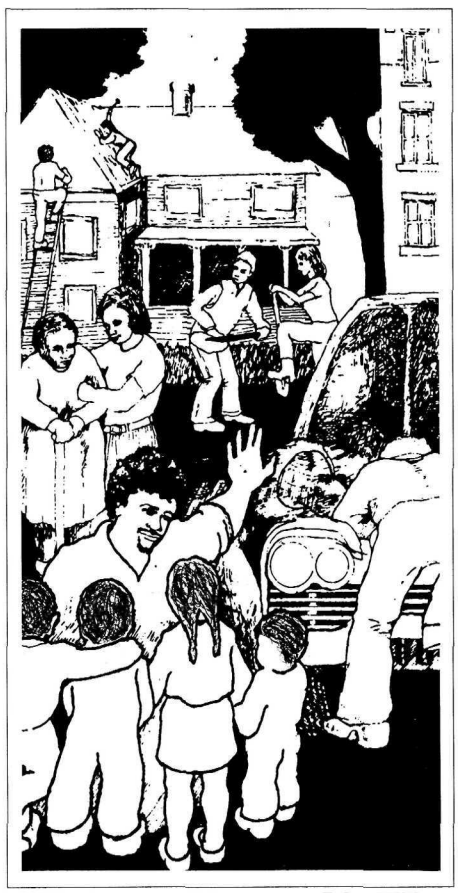
by Grace Lee Boggs

In the last five years companies like IBM, Xerox and Sears have been "shedding" technicians, management and sales personnel by the tens of thousands. In January 1994, even as the economy was growing, 108,949 people were laid off. PhDs and MBAs can't find jobs in their professions, and a recent cartoon depicted university graduates being given "Will Work for Food" signs instead of diplomas.

Having been shed by corporations whom they had begun to think of as family, millions are making their own jobs as "consultants," utilizing their skills as mechanics, desktop publishers, financial advisers, etc. to keep a roof over their heads. Often this self-employment is in addition to a more traditional job at minimum wages. The administration boasts of the millions of new jobs that have been created but glosses over the fact that most of these pay too little to live on. "I know why there are so many new jobs," one man commented. "My wife and I hold four of them."

At the same time Americans, particularly in our inner cities, have become increasingly conscious that we must find ways to rebuild our communities which have been falling apart over the last 50 years, not only because of abandonment by global corporations, but because so many people have been pursuing the American dream of individual upward mobility out of the community.

Until the 1960s, segregation and discrimination limited the mobility of blacks, but in the wake of the civil rights and Black Power movements, the black middle class has followed the same path



John Willens

of individual upward mobility out of the inner city, shattering the multi-class and multi-generational diversity which in the midst of poverty and blatant racial oppression once nurtured the cultural vitality of the black ghetto.

That is why so many people in our inner cities now talk so passionately about building community-based local economies, using our human skills which require little capital investment and learning how to do more with less, as blacks have done down through the years.

As incomes shrink, they say, we have to change the way we think about economics, not only to meet our material needs for food, clothing and shelter, but also to recreate the ties with one another across class and generational lines which once enabled us to survive as a people. In Detroit, for example, an informal group of elders, calling themselves "The Gardening Angels," plant community pesticide-free gardens, not only to produce healthier food for themselves and their neighbors, but so that they can impart to young people a sense of respect for nature and for process. People are utilizing their artisan skills to start small local enterprises, not only to keep money from leaving the community, but because they are determined to maintain and pass on these skills to young people.

Buying our needs at neighborhood stores to which we can walk or bike, and taking our clothes to the corner laundromat rather than each household buying its own washer and dryer, will not only be more economical; it will discourage criminals because it will mean more people on the streets looking out for one another. Locally produced goods and services will be of better quality because they will be produced for folks we know rather than for faceless consumers thousands of miles away. Producing goods and services on a small scale may cost a little more, but in the long run the social and environmental benefits are incalculable.

Quietly but unmistakably, a new American dream, a better reason to work and a new concept of economics-as-if people-and-nature-matter are taking shape.

Where will the financial support for this new economics come from? We can no longer depend upon traditional meth-

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Grace Lee Boggs is a Detroit activist and theoretician. She is the editor of the SOSAD (Save Our Sons and Daughters) newsletter and is active in Detroit Summer. She recently helped edit *James Boggs: What can we be that our children can see?* New Life Publishers, 161 W. Parkhurst, Detroit, Mich. 48201.

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ods of financing. Over the years local governments have depended for jobs and economic development upon outside investors and profit-making corporations, attracting them with an educated work force and infrastructural improvements, roads, sewers etc. The theory has been that what benefits these absentee owners, whose goal is to make a profit out of producing goods for export to other localities, also benefits local communities because of the jobs they provide. Most local administrations, regardless of race, are still operating by this theory, although even a fool can see that in this period of transnational capitalism it makes us hostage to corporations who extort tax abatements and other concessions with promises of jobs which rarely materialize, while they continue to blackmail us by threatening to relocate.

The strategy for financing community-based economies has to be based on different principles because the goals are different. The emphasis has to be on development of the community and the people in the community, on local control and local ownership, and on production chiefly for local/regional consumption rather than for export. Instead of a few big projects promising thousands of jobs, our aim should be to develop a variety of small local projects.

The main sources for financial support must be institutions which are part of the community and have a stake in the community: churches, local credit unions, local pension funds, co-ops, community land trusts, and community loan banks.

However, long before contacting these sources for funding, we need to build the human infrastructure for the new economy by encouraging the *organization on a voluntary basis of relatively simple activities which meet the practical needs of peoples' daily lives.*

For example, support networks to look out for each other; community gardens and neighborhood markets to sell the produce from these gardens; community recycling projects; community repair shops; community daycare networks; community mediation centers; skills banks and exchanges in churches, workplaces and neighborhoods; programs (like Detroit Summer) which engage young people with community groups on community- building projects. We need to enter into covenants with our friends, families, neighbors, fellow workers and church members; e.g., pledge with one another to buy locally produced food and

In the third world

It is women of color all over the world who are beginning to create the new dreams of the 21st century. Over the last 20 years people are finally waking up to the fact that women are not only the poorest section of the population but we do most of the world's work.

In the third-world countries women grow most of the crops, fetch most of the water, collect most of the fuel, feed most of the animals, weed most of the fields. And when their work outside the home is done, they light the fires, cook meals, do the cleaning and shipping, wash the clothes, bear and care for the children and for the old and the sick.

As this truth is dawning on women of color, they are transforming themselves from victims into activists and in the process creating the seeds of a new economy based more on community self-reliance than on technology, and social relationships based more on cooperation than on competition and domination.

For example, in Subsaharan Africa there are thousands of groups, ranging in size from 20 to 200, of villagers who have recognized that they cannot depend upon their governments or the World Bank and International Monetary Fund for economic development.

So they are working to end hunger through collective self-reliance, planting fields, diversifying cereal, fruit and vegetable crops, creating village granaries, bartering food between regions.

These groups, mostly led by women, are also changing centuries-old social relationships, not only encouraging women and young people to speak up but regulating dowries and other costly ceremonies celebrating baptisms and deaths.

In Bangladesh, *Grameen* banks have been organized in thousands of villages. *Grameen* is the Bangla word for rural. These banks have over a half-million members — the majority of them landless women. They are based on the principle that people's participation — and not technology — is the single most important force in generating socio-economic development and that the best way to combat poverty is to act as a group.

So *Grameen* members are organized into small groups of five members each who borrow money from the bank for economic activities, ranging all the way from manufacturing fans, boats or umbrellas to peddling or raising milk cows. The loanees are not just individuals: the groups collectively make the decisions as to who gets a loan and how much. Only after the first two member recipients have demonstrated that they will make regular payments are the next two members eligible. In this way the members together uphold and nurture the four principles of *Grameen* banking: discipline, unity, courage and hard work. There are now *Grameen* banks in half of Bangladesh's 68,000 villages.

— *G.B.*

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products rather than food and goods produced thousands of miles away, most likely by low-paid workers under unsafe, unhealthy conditions.

The possibilities are endless. Many of these activities are already taking place. As corporations continue to downsize and more people realize that the era of "better jobs" is over, we will be forced to depend more on one another, creating the conditions for a self-developing movement towards collective self-reliance.

At the same time, we need to make our schools into an integral part of the community, and stop viewing them as institutions to prepare young people for upward mobility out of the community. The best antidote to youth violence is providing opportunities for children and young people to play meaningful and productive roles in their families, schools and communities: child care, small repairs and maintenance in the home, community and school, planting gardens, keeping the school grounds and the neighborhood clean and attractive, organizing health demonstrations in the community, etc. We need more youth credit unions and economic development programs for young people like the one at Joy Middle School in my neighborhood, which was organized a couple of years ago to combat gang violence. Another model is the Occupational Skills Training Academy on the east campus of Wayne County Community College, where residents learn construction and maintenance skills chiefly in order to help rebuild the community rather than to get a job.

As we carry on and expand such community-building activities, we will discover that we are beginning to create an informal and collectively self-reliant economy which operates outside of the market economy. At the same time, we will be learning how to work together and make decisions together, how to empower and develop leadership capacities, especially of young people and women, how to learn from our elders, and how to make the best use of our human and natural resources.

The economy we will be creating will not be self-sufficient; it is not likely to replace the capitalist economy in the foreseeable future — although it is worth remembering that long before the word "capitalism" was invented, its seeds were being planted by merchants operating in the interstices of European feudalism. However, in the course of becoming collectively more self-reliant, we will also be transforming ourselves into the kinds of human beings who can make more informed and thoughtful choices and who are therefore better able to resist the blandishments of capitalist advertising.

Creating community-based economies has become a necessity for our material and social survival, as well as a means by which we can become better people. TW

Environmental justice

In this country African-American, Chicana, Native-American and Asian-American women are in the forefront of the environmental justice movement at the neighborhood level. This movement is not only fighting against the pollution and toxic wastes which are disproportionately killing people of color and poor people in this country. It is also struggling to create a new vision of equity and sustainability for our devastated cities.

Over the last few years the environmental justice movement has changed the meaning of the word environment so that it now not only stands for air, water and land but for what is going on in our cities: poverty, violence, unemployment, poor housing and inadequate education.

The movement not only includes thousands of grassroots housewives and mothers but hundreds of women lawyers, scientists and doctors who have come from the community and are now eager to use their skills and positions to empower community groups.

It has taken the introduction of the terms "environmental racism" and "environmental justice" to spark indigenous organizing around what is actually happening to people locally: water and soil poisoning by toxic waste, uranium tailings, pesticide and lead poisoning, epidemics of cancer and lupus, etc. The result has been the emergence of groups like Jesus People Against Pollution and MUSES (Mother United to Stop Environmental Suicide).

Paradoxically this has also created a new dynamic between ethnic groups which was not present in Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition (mainly, I think, because it was black-led and predominantly black). The beautiful thing about these people of color gatherings is that they are not racial. You don't feel the polarization which is always an undercurrent in black/white gatherings because of the 400-year history of racist oppression and struggle.

Also, because people of color do not have the same mobility as whites (not only because of discrimination but for their own cultural reasons) you get a sense of commitment to the places and communities where families live, often for generations. And mainly because of the powerful presence of Native Americans in the movement, the scientific rationalism which has dominated western thought all these years is constantly being challenged.

— *G.B.*

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Bringing the cost to light

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

The trillions of dollars that the United States spent to fight the Cold War are usually condensed into images of high-tech aircraft and missiles, or reports of $600 military hammers. But it is easy to forget that many of these expenditures were, and still are, buried away in secret programs and black budgets out of the public view. Others have been camouflaged within remote or unremarkable landscapes: the midwestern farm fields that harbor missile silos, Washington's Hanford Reserve — or Colorado's Rocky Flats, a scrubby stretch of mesa land between Denver and the Rocky Mountains. Most people drive by the unimpressive industrial buildings with hardly a second glance.

For six months during 1990-91, however, artist John Craig Freeman's five garish red billboards helped call significantly more attention to this now-closed nuclear processing facility. Standing near its entrance gate and proclaiming "Today we made a commitment for 250,000 years," they reminded people that this piece of Colorado landscape was thoroughly saturated with plutonium, the radioactive poison that had been produced in Rocky Flats' factories for over 40 years. In fact, the main production building alone was discovered to have more than 62 pounds of plutonium dust scattered throughout its nooks and ventilation systems. (Scientists have estimated that a few micrograms of plutonium breathed in by a person could be enough to cause cancer.) The 250,000 years to which the billboards refer represents the period it will take for this plutonium to decay into a relatively harmless state — quite a long time indeed, Freeman points out, since the entire history of human farming spans only about 12,000 years.

What did it cost to produce this plutonium in the frenzy of the Cold War? What will it cost to clean up and contain it during the next decade? What will it cost to secure it during the next 250,000 years? What did it cost many unknowing Americans who were experimented upon without their knowledge or consent, in terms of lost health and income, or pain? Similarly, what did it cost the thousands of soldiers who were positioned near atomic-bomb explosions — many fueled by plutonium from Rocky Flats?

These were the kinds of thoughts that motivated artist Freeman to convert a previously blank set of billboards into a potent communication tool. Freeman undertook the entire project on his own, designing the images on a Macintosh computer, and then printing them out — one letter-sized piece of colored paper at a time — on a laserprinter, and assembling them onto the boards that would cover the five 20-by-30-foot billboards.

With support from Greenpeace, Freeman was able to secure leases on the billboards and get the posters put into place. Ironically, a local environmental group opposed the project, arguing that the billboards were ugly and detrimental to their surroundings, even though the message they carried was noncommercial and ecologically crucial. Ultimately, it was this conflict on the political left that attracted tremendous media attention to Freeman's project, bringing its message to an even wider audience than originally had been envisioned. TW



Operation Greenrun II North Installation, northbound Hwy. 93 at Rocky Flats, Colorado, November 1990 to April, 1991, John Craig Freeman. Bill Stamets

art and society

Blaise Tobia and **Virginia Maksymowicz,** Philadelphia artists, edit the Art & Society Section of *The Witness.*

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Harnessing church funds: an interview with Doug Theuner

Douglas Theuner, Episcopal bishop of New Hampshire, is outspoken on questions of proactive investment of money in socially constructive ways. He is responsible for helping his diocese and several of the agencies of which he is a board member, including the Episcopal Church Publishing Company, owner of The Witness, *to reinvest some of their funds in creative ways.*

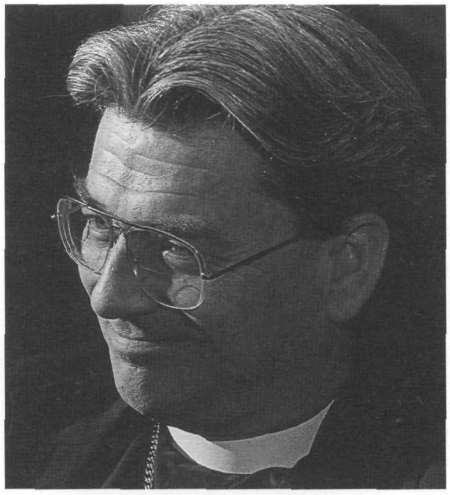
Julie Wortman: How have you gotten involved in discussions in the faith community about socially responsible investments?

Douglas Theuner: My involvement goes back to a general concern for stewardship which began when I was concerned about the use of church property, both when I was rector of St. Paul's in Willimantic, Conn., from 1968 until 1974, and then when I went to St. John's in Stamford, Conn., where we were property rich. In more recent years, as bishop, I've been working with the trustees of the Diocese of New Hampshire to try to find responsible ways to invest our money. That, in turn, has led me to a concern about the investments of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company.

The church has been pretty good in recent years about concern for what it does with its income, but where does it invest its assets? There is what I call "negative" or "passive" investment, which has to do with not putting money into anything bad, but the step beyond that is "active" or "positive" investment, which has to do with asking, "Where should we put our 'working' money to accomplish the goals coming out of the Gospel imperative?"

J.W.: What kind of vehicles do you have in mind for that kind of investment?

D.T.: Until recently, my experience has been limited to something called the New Hampshire Community Loan Fund, one of the original community loan funds in the country. When the Episcopal Church's economic justice initiative was passed by the 1988 General Convention in Detroit, we decided that in New Hampshire our focus would be affordable housing. And so we got involved big-time in the New Hampshire Community Loan Fund, which was organized to assist low-income people in obtaining housing. At this point the diocese has given, loaned or leveraged over $500,000. And now we're becoming active in trying to get other denominations to become involved.



Doug Theuner

J.W.: These days there is a lot of talk throughout the church about financial crises, but I've heard you say that the church is sitting on a pot of gold.

D.T.: The church is sitting on *pots* of gold! I don't have any hard statistics available, but by doing some projections I've estimated that the agencies of the Episcopal Church, U.S.A., probably have between $35 and $45 billion invested and that is *not* counting non-income-producing real estate.

J.W.: And an "agency" would be like a diocese?

D.T.: A diocese, a hospital, a social-service agency, a convent, a seminary ... In New Hampshire, if I look at the private schools in this state plus the diocese, the amount is probably about $250 million dollars in invested funds. Now, granted, most of that is St. Paul's School, which the church doesn't control in any way, but, nevertheless, it's Episcopal Church money.

J.W.: What would it look like if the church and its various agencies were to make some concerted effort to get organized about this?

D.T.: You can start simply, as I said, by divesting bad stock and then investing in loan funds and other things of which you approve. Then you can move on to establishing your own loan fund, your own community development corporations. There's no reason in the world why the church couldn't start its own bank! Churches or a consortium of churches — it doesn't have to be the whole denomination — could start a bank. You could start an investment service. You could start a mutual fund.

For instance, the Vermont National Bank has a socially responsible investment fund that in a 10-year period has developed about $19 million in assets. People who invest in that fund understand that their investments will be used only for five areas of relatively local concern — agriculture, small business, housing, environment and education. And that's the fastest growing component of the Vermont National Bank. Now, there's no reason churches couldn't go to their own local banks and say "Hey, local bank, why don't *you* do this if you want to use our money?"

J.W.: What obstacles do you see to the church being willing to do that?

D.T.: Well, the basic obstacle is the old

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bugaboo about fiduciary responsibility. There's the mistaken assumption that you cannot do socially responsible business and make money. In other words, you *can't* put your money in good things and have it grow. And that simply is not true. There are whole funds — like Franklin Research and Development Corporation (Boston, Mass.), into which the Episcopal Church Publishing Company is probably going to put its money — that have a very good rate of return and invest only in what they consider to be socially responsible investments.

J.W.: You consider this a watershed time for the socially-responsible investment movement?

D.T.: Yes. At the beginning of the 1970s Presiding Bishop John Hines filed the first church shareholder resolution on behalf of peace and justice — he asked that General Motors Corporation stop doing business with South Africa. That marked the beginning of the corporate responsibility movement, which has now grown to nearly $700 billion in total invested portfolio worth.

The engine that drove that movement was South African divestment. But now, with the ending of divestment in South Africa, I'm concerned about where all the energy that went into South Africa is going to go.

J.W.: Do you have a strategy for putting this before the church?

D.T.: Not really. I'm putting it to as many people as I possibly can and I'm finding a lot of interest everywhere. Our diocese has gone to the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and asked them to become partners with us in setting up a pool of socially screened and socially responsible community development investments in New Hampshire, so that we can go out to institutions — primarily schools and churches and colleges — and say, "Hey folks! Why don't you put some of your endowment capital into this." So that's a way that we're trying to use the church's leverage to get to a larger group of investors. If we can have an Episcopal Church Publishing Company, I don't know why we can't have an Episcopal Church Investment Company.

J.W.: Speaking of ECPC, you mentioned that the board is considering reinvesting with Franklin Research and Development. Do you have anything else to say about ECPC's commitment?

D.T.: My concern is that we don't discharge our responsibility by just taking our money from one money manager and placing it with another money manager.

We need a concerted strategy. ECPC has under $3 million. If we get together and take our $3 million and somebody else's $3 million and someone else's $3 million, before you know it we'd have enough money to really exercise some clout somewhere. The Episcopal Church — like some others — not only has the money, we have people with the investment expertise, we have everything we need to release this incredible amount of money. Yes, we have shortfalls, we have operating problems, but a church that sits on that kind of wealth cannot say we're poor, because we're not. TW

ECPC and socially responsible investing

In mid-1970s the Episcopal Church Publishing Company went public with its commitment to using investment funds for justice. It joined the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, divested all stock in companies doing business in South Africa and dedicated ten percent of its endowment to low-return loans for domestic and international community development.

Twenty years later, ECPC board members were shocked to learn that they had accumulated stock in a number of companies that the ICCR considered problematic. ECPC owned shares in companies with terrible environmental records and defense contractors.

Now the finance committee is recommending that the board remove the endowment from Brown Brothers Harriman, a major investment firm, and place it in the hands a socially responsible investment corporation. These firms are sensitive to justice concerns. In some cases, they are even proactive — investing in companies with good employee, environmental or community track records. They identify companies with commitment to the CERES principles, concerning the environment, and the MacBride principles, concerning economic justice in North Ireland. There are similar efforts to secure humane conditions for workers in China, Taiwan, India and the Philippines.

Board members will also consider placing money in the McGehee Fund, a revolving loan fund named for Coleman McGehee, retired bishop of Michigan and former ECPC chairperson. This fund allows investors to set a rate of return, which can be below market value, and to put their money in the hands of community development advocates. [For more information, contact John Hooper at the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan, 4800 Woodward Ave., Detroit, Mich., 48201.]

Lastly, the board will consider whether it can help facilitate creation of an Episcopal Church or Ecumenical Mutual Fund which invests church money proactively, becoming a stronger force in the finance community for social justice.

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Indianapolis '94

Can we avoid this budget quicksand?

by Julie A. Wortman

The folks at the Appalachian People's Service Organization (APSO) in Knoxville, Tenn., first got wind of the fact that the church's Executive Council was proposing to eliminate all future national church funding for their agency's social justice work this past February, when a Virginia reporter called for their reaction to the plan, made official at the council's meeting in Norfolk, Va., only hours before.

"We expected reduced funding, but not this," APSO's Sandy Elledge said when she called *The Witness'* office in frustrated search of a copy of the suddenly "hot" budget document a few days later.

APSO was not the only group blindsided by the council's proposal for a dramatically downsized and revamped national church program and budget — a plan precipitated by a projected shortfall of $5 million in diocesan support for 1995. "None of the agencies or individuals involved have been consulted about these proposed changes," bristled a fax sent directly to the Norfolk meeting by the Episcopal Church's Joint Commission on AIDS/HIV. The commission decried, in particular, the elimination of national staffing for AIDS ministry.

Suspect 'listening process'

A few weeks later, participants at the annual assembly of the Episcopal Urban Caucus in Charlotte, N.C. — a grassroots coalition which since its formation in 1980 has played a critical role in the creation of the Jubilee Ministries program and in lobbying for economic justice initiatives — frowned as the national church's peace and justice officer, Brian Grieves, justified the council's cuts to national social action ministries by pointing to the results of a "listening process" in which teams of national church staff and Executive Council members had visited dioceses to find out what "excited" and "concerned" local church members about their mission and ministries — and what kind of help they'd like the national church to provide. The teams heard a lot about "lifelong spiritual formation and faith development," youth ministry and "local outreach in mission and evangelism," but not much about making connections with either the ecumenical community or the larger Anglican communion. The listeners also heard little about dealing with "the hard issues, like racism," Diane Porter, the national church's senior executive for program, acknowledged during the Executive Council's Norfolk meeting. This raised the uncomfortable question, she said, of how "we remain true to the 'listening process,' and continue to bring forth the prophetic voice of the church regarding the unpopular issues?"

"Did we ask the right questions?" Grieves asked rhetorically at the Urban Caucus assembly in Charlotte. "Not really," he admitted.

So why, many caucus activists wondered, had the "listening process" become so sacrosanct?

"The 'listening process' was not an open process," the Episcopal Peace Fellowship's (EPF) Mary Miller pointed out, noting that only persons invited by the diocesan bishops could participate in the consultations. "Lots of voices were left out," conceded Judy Conley, former national president of the Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE) and a current member of the 38-person Executive Council. Conley attended four of the diocesan visitations, only two of which, she said, seemed "broadly representative" of diocesan membership and ministries.

Other caucus members wondered why the listeners had not paid more attention to the 1988 General Convention's emphasis on a national economic justice strategy or the 1991 General Convention's commitment to making anti-racism efforts a nine-year, national church priority. "There's a disconnect between what General Convention decides and what the Presiding Bishop's national staff does," said Mike Kendall, an archdeacon in the Diocese of New York.

Flawed operating assumption

Almost universally, too, caucus reaction was skeptical of the budget proposal's principal operating assumption — that if dioceses have more money to spend, they will spend their money on the same things that the national church did. Even Executive Council members had seemed uncomfortable with this expectation. After adopting the budget proposal in Norfolk — along with a new sliding-scale apportionment formula that would permanently reduce total diocesan contributions to the national church — several council members urged passage of an additional, somewhat plaintive-sounding resolution expressing the council's "hope and desire that provinces, dioceses and local congregations continue and increase their support of those ministries which during the Diocesan visits they indicated could be more efficiently carried out at provincial, diocesan and local levels and as a result of which, although it still considers them critical ministries, the Executive Council is recommending receive reduced support in the national church budget for the next triennium." To avoid confusion, the accompanying explanation spelled out just what those "critical ministries" were, namely, "the Episcopal Black colleges, foreign missionaries, Native American ministries, AIDS ministries, Jubilee ministry, social action and social welfare grants and independent Episcopal agencies."

Scott Allen, social missioner for the Diocese of Bethlehem (Penn.), was one of those who was dubious about the effectiveness of such a plea, particularly in connection with APSO. "I doubt whether the dioceses and parishes are going to change a hundred-year pattern and start giving money to advocacy groups which threaten the old coal-field social structure," he said. "The Episcopal Church was, and in many places still is, the church of the

Vital Signs

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coal operator and management. Most parishes and dioceses are supported by or feel an allegiance to those same oppressive forces which APSO actively tries to contend against. The irony of this is that local Appalachian congregations were perfectly willing to send the money off to a larger pot where it came back as having been given by someone else so that they didn't have to hold the 'smoking gun' of direct funding."

Emerging wisdom: don't beg

But although many social justice activists would like to see funding restored to certain ministries or more prominence given to others, the emerging wisdom is that it will be futile to lobby for change. People could organize to beg the national church for a piece of the more than $500,000 designated for undefined "partnership models," but that would require attempting to play a patronage game in which one or two staff people seem to have all the control.

In fact, although the Executive Council's budget is described as a "proposed budget," it appears to be a done deal — some of the 35 or so national church staff members affected by the cuts and consolidations have already left the national church's employ, while many, if not all, of the others have already accepted severance agreements that will take effect before the end of this year.

"A lot of people are counting on us to spend the next six months complaining about what we cannot change," Diane Pollard, a veteran General Convention deputy and member of the Standing Commission on Program, Budget and Finance, pointed out to her Urban Caucus colleagues in Charlotte.

In addition to advising that concerned social justice people not make the mistake of wading into this budget quicksand, representatives to the Consultation — an umbrella organization that periodically brings a variety of progressive organizations around the same table to talk about matters of mutual concern — are inclined to suggest that this summer's General Convention go the Executive Council one step further and eliminate *all* national staff and programs.

It would be a show-stopping move that could force church decisionmakers to re-examine their assumptions about the church's mission and how best to support it. Developing a budget around financial shortfalls is just plain wrong-headed, according to Katie Sherrod, a member of the EWC who is working on a Consultation "platform" for General Convention based on a progressive view of church structure developed by Ed Rodman, a longtime Massachusetts urban-ministry activist (see the March 1994 *Witness*). "We should be working out of a theology of abundance," Sherrod stressed.

What's a national church good for?

Apart from questions about whether specific cuts seem fair or logical, the proposed 1995 budget is problematic largely because, as a whole, it fails to offer an acceptable answer to the critical question of what dioceses and parishes can do better working together as a national church than they can accomplish either individually or regionally.

The building of Christian community, the essential task of the church, requires an up-close-and-personal local, congregation-by-congregation focus on community life through worship, education, stewardship and social/economic outreach. Local (within dioceses) and regional (among dioceses) alliances are particularly effective in stretching limited resources, providing technical assistance (a diocesan administrator I know says that a lot of problems in local churches could be solved by teaching folks how to facilitate meetings and small-group activities), and, most critically, in fighting the seemingly unavoidable myopia that accompanies localism and fosters exclusion and blindness to the larger economic, social, political and environmental eco-systems of which every community is a part.

Enthusiasm and concern for the benefits and challenges of community building is much of what the "listening process" uncovered (except, in most cases, for fighting the myopia). But it is not clear that staff and resources focused on "congregational ministries" (as some of the budget language reads) or on youth ministry should be based in and deployed from a national church office (this is a major piece of the proposed 1995 budget). Locating full-time, itinerant experts at the regional level makes more sense for frequent, personal and ongoing follow-through. Likewise, support, both technical and moral, for fighting racism, heterosexism, sexism and economic injustice, should also be based as close to local congregations and dioceses as possible.

Regional (not necessarily provincial) offices of the Episcopal Church, in this light, make a lot of sense. A national budget might provide for these (this budget only beefs up, slightly, a field office in Oklahoma), or dioceses could pool resources to create them on their own (current provincial structures might be a vehicle, but smaller regional collaborations seem more appealing, especially if based on bio-regional boundaries).

What can dioceses and parishes do better in a national alliance? Operate nationally and internationally — as a mutually accountable denominational entity able to wield collective clout; participate in national and international conversations on church and social affairs and access the deepest reservoirs of resources, both human and economic, for mission. This ranges from record-keeping to internal standards of accountability (professional standards for church workers is an example); from Anglican and ecumenical relations, including missionaries (an exchange, not a one-way deployment), to disaster relief; from advocacy for the poor and disenfranchised (a wide assortment of persons) to pooling resources for the most effective communication link-ups and economic justice efforts possible.

While there are pieces of this what-we-can-do-better-nationally piece in the Executive Council's proposed 1995 budget (the Washington office has been enlarged a little; the Presiding Bishop's Fund for is still in place; and, remarkably, there is a provision, finally, for computer

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networking of all parishes and dioceses), much that should be there has been dumped or reduced — most notably, the entire missionary program (the proposed leave-it-to-the-private-missionary-societies solution is unacceptable because unaccountable), the economic justice program, AIDS, and the women's office (barely visible any longer — despite the fact that the most innovative and successful work the women's office has done in recent years has been international and ecumenical in scope, the single remaining staff officer will now be part of a "congregational ministries" cluster).

These things don't necessarily require national staff positons or programs. In fact, the more movement-oriented we keep things, the better, because then we are talking about the need for passionate commitment to realize mission. Let grassroots groups persuade the General Convention of the importance — and need — of banding together nationally to accomplish a specific objective. But require every sponsor of a new "national" program to build performance standards and other accountabilities into the enabling legislation — it is difficult to defend programs and staff persons from being cut if people are unhappy with their performace, if not with their original *raison d'etre.*

In the end, perhaps the most important provision of the proposed 1995 budget is the one that provides for electronically (via computer, at a cost of $350,000) linking up all the church's congregations and dioceses. In keeping with the proposed budget's recognition of the importance of regional and national "networking," Episcopalians need, desperately, to communicate with one another about mission and the resources needed to accomplish it. Maybe this will be the national church of the not-so-distant future — an electronic super church that, despite the computerized foibles of the present age, might impress on church members more clearly than ever before, that in thinking locally there's a larger world of which to be a part.

Church Reaganomics

by John Hooper

The economic justice resolution passed unanimously by the 1988 General Convention in Detroit called for the church's very serious and substantial participation in community economic development. The resolution "urged the Church at every level to utilize, where possible, its buildings, properties, personnel, financial resources and moral power in support of this ministry." It authorized a national Economic Justice Implementation Committee (EJIC) and established a goal of raising $4 million per year for six years "for the economic empowerment of the disadvantaged."

Five years later, in October of 1993, at the church's first national economic justice conference, representatives from the EJIC reported to participants from 34 dioceses that during its first four years, despite problems of insufficent staffing and difficulties in raising new money, the committee had prepared a manual, offered a series of eight regional workshops, worked intensively with some dioceses and provided grants and loans for local implementation. The committee expected to recommend that the EJIC continue for three more years, in order to make the national economic justice program self-sustaining.

While participants at the Chicago conference were appreciative of the hard work and important results the committee achieved, they were critical of the lack of communication between the national committee, dioceses and local projects. They were disappointed that the EJIC was already planning its demise, since the program was hardly off the ground. Still needed, participants said, were a national organization or network of persons involved in economic justice work and regionally-based technical support.

Many of those engaged in economic justice ministry are even more disturbed by recent proposals by the Episcopal Church's national Executive Council: to reduce national staffing to a desk of one-and-a-half persons coordinating three other programs besides economic justice; to abolish the EJIC after one year; and to cut out all grants from the national level to local groups.

In my more pessimistic moments, I see an analogy between the action recommended by the Executive Council and that taken by the federal government in the 1980s: Reduce the social programs of the federal government (housing monies for low income people were cut by 80 percent) and let the states and local governments pick them up. They were not picked up.

I fear that these recommendations succumb to the desires of many to silence the prophetic voices in the church. The economic justice program *does* challenge some of the assumptions of our economic system. It *does* place a priority on the right of every individual to a job, to a living wage, to property ownership — to be, in summary, a significant *actor* in the economy. It calls upon the church to assume a significant role in bringing about a more just society.

The economic justice program was not imposed on dioceses and parishes by the national church. It was developed as a response to concerns about the economy expressed in a 1987 paper adopted by 80 bishops. The economic justice proposal adopted by the 1988 Convention was a plea addressed to the national church by the local church and lower-income communities.

The economic justice effort in the church needs to be, minimally, a 20-year program to allow long-term collaboration with others in the rebuilding of our cities and rural areas. The EJIC has identified only $7 million of the $24 million they were challenged to find. We have only just begun.

John Hooper heads the Diocese of Michigan's economic justice program.

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Condemning arms sales, Manifest Destiny

The Episcopal Church's Standing Commission on Peace with Justice began its work for this triennium with a mandate from the 1991 General Convention to deal directly with the issue of U.S. involvement in international arms sales. The commission's report states that "arms sales of any sort are morally unacceptable." The commission will also present a resolution calling on the President and the Congress to "strictly enforce the Arms Export Control Act and the Foreign Assistance Act in order to curtail international arms sales; expand the 30-day period to bar a weapons transfer to at least '30-days-in-session,' to allow more time for Congress and the public to consider the long-term consequences of each arms deal; and to end taxpayer and other government subsidies for arms bazaars."

Most of the rest of the commission's work has focused on the Episcopal Church's historic connection to this country's era of "Manifest Destiny" and the countries "deeply entangled" in that policy — the Philippines, Panama, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua.

The U.S. Episcopal Church's presence in the Northern Luzon area of the Philippines is a direct result of U.S. military, economic, and political influence in Manila, according to commission chair William Rankin. Likewise, Anglican and Episcopal clergy came to the Caribbean and Central America on the coattails of U.S. fruit companies and other business interests. Episcopalians' first loyalty must now be to the people, not the power structures, the commission believes, a stand apparent in a number of the resolutions it will offer to the 1994 General Convention:

- For the Philippines, the commission asks that General Convention urge the U.S. government to adopt a foreign policy which "promotes the protection of human rights, supports the reduction and/or restructuring of debt owed by the Philippine government to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, terminates direct and indirect military aid, discourages the 'total war' policy of the current Philippine government against the insurgency, and supports land reform."
- For Panama, urge the U.S. government "to complete reparations payments to the Panamanian people (appropriated by Public Law 101-302) for the damage and destruction caused by the December 1989 invasion."
- For Cuba, urge the U.S. government "to re-examine its foreign policy with respect to Cuba, in light of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent human deprivation incurred by the withdrawal of Soviet support, and the continuing U.S. embargo."
- For Nicaragua, urge the U.S. government "to honor its commitment to the Nicaraguan people by releasing the monies appropriated in 1990 under Public Law 101-302 to assist in the peaceful rebuilding of Nicaraguan society."

The commission is also putting forth a resolution on refugee policy that urges the U.S. government "to reformulate its refugee policies, abiding by the internationally accepted definition of 'refugee,' particularly as these policies pertain to persons from Central America and the Caribbean Basin."

Other resolutions will delve into Muslim-Christian relations and affirm the Israeli-PLO Declaration of Principles signed in September 1993. — *Jan Nunley*

(Jan Nunley is a deacon who lives in Rhode Island and works for National Public Radio.)

Addressing conscience

The Episcopal Peace Fellowship (EPF), the church's national grassroots organization of persons committed to justice through non-violence, will be offering four resolutions to this summer's 71st General Convention, all of them directed at personal conscience.

The first is aimed at entering Paul Jones into the church's calendar of saints. The church's bishops forced Jones, elected Missionary Bishop of Utah by the House of Bishops in 1914, to resign his office in 1918 because of his persistent public contention that war — the U.S. was then firmly involved in World War I — is "unchristian."

Jones became one of the founding members of the EPF in 1939, a period between world wars when members of many religious communities were calling their denominations to affirm the practice of conscientious objection to military service as a norm for church members.

Fifty-five years later, EPF is still pursuing the same campaign. A second resolution asks that the church declare its support of "selective conscientious objection as a legitimate exercise of individual conscience, allowing all people in civilian and military life to discern for themselves whether or not a war is just or unjust and to choose to take part in or withhold participation from each war."

The group's third resolution asks deputies and bishops to move beyond "simply reiterating the Episcopal Church's abhorrence of and opposition to violence" to instigating "a sense of personal responsibility for reducing violence," including active support for state and federal legislation which limits the sale, manufacture, exportation and licensing of weapons.

Finally, mindful of this society's triumphalistic tendencies, EPF is directing its last resolution at upcoming 50th anniversay commemorations of the ending of World War II, asking that church members take pains to avoid "Japan bashing" and that the church "designate Sunday, August 6, 1995, which is both the Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the 50th anniversary of the nuclear bombing of the city of Hiroshima, Japan, by the United States, as this church's official observance of the end of World War II and the beginning of the bondage of the nuclear age." — *Julie A. Wortman*

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Ecu Takes: Church Budget

Mennonite Church

Robert Hull is the Secretary for Peace and Justice of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

We do have a budget crisis. In the past five or six years we've seen a continual downward spiral. More money is being kept locally. We question whether a significant part of it is going into mission, or into building new buildings and upgrading the comfort level of buildings.

Nationally our peace and justice ministries have been cut back considerably. Five or six years ago my office had a budget of $27,000 - $30,000. This year it is $16,000 and next year it is scheduled to be $12,000.

Concern over the decline of members and churches leaving the Conference creates an atmosphere that as a church we can't really tackle the controversial issues.

Our Conference does not do any federal tax withholding for employees who ask for that [in order to resist military taxes]. That was voted on in 1983, so for 11 years we've been in violation of federal law. I seriously doubt that any resolution like that could pass now.

When our budget was $30,000 we had a poverty grants program that made small grants to congregations all across the country. That was cut completely.

We can participate in cooperative ventures (like New Call to Peacemaking and the anti-death penalty campaign) only by having a representative there; we're not in a position to contribute financially.

I think what we're seeing nationally is a real move away from denominational structures. We have to look at different organizational structures that are much smaller. More of the real work would go on in the provincial districts.

I think social justice ministry will be greatly dissipated. There won't be the opportunity to come together and develop a nationwide or North American thrust on something. I'm not terribly in favor of centralization, but unless we build in a real accountability to the Gospel, we are going to lose things.

[Two days after we spoke with Robert Hull, he learned that his position had been eliminated due to budget constraints. Hull says that in a national priority-setting process, peace and justice work on a national level was given the lowest rating.]

Baptists

Ken Sehested is Executive Director of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America.

Of the more than two dozen Baptist denominational bodies in the U.S., only six give any appreciable amount to justice and peace work. Four of these are African-American bodies and still radically decentralized, with funding authority still controlled on the local level. Typically, funds offered to justice and peace organizations go directly from congregational coffers to traditional black-led organizations like the NAACP.

Of the two predominantly white bodies — the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and the American Baptist Churches, USA (ABC) — the funding pictures are images in contrast.

The SBC, now fully controlled at the national level by leadership loyal to the Religious New Right agenda, has actually increased in recent years the budget of the agency which includes social justice ministries, the Christian Life Commission (CLC), mirroring the rise in political awareness occurring generally in conservative Protestantism. Its portfolio — opposition to abortion, gay rights, and changing gender roles, and support of prayer in public schools and "family" values — commands bigger budget allotments than previously, when the agency took more progressive stands.

The ABC has for several years operated under the constraints of a budgetary freeze at the national level. Given the impact of inflation and rising program costs, purchasing power has ebbed.

It can be demoralizing and overburdened staff can become more cautious. Yet another question arises as to whether such denominational "right-sizing" does in fact cripple the Body of Christ's life-leavening power. No doubt good and worthy influence is being lost. But might there be even better, more worthy power to be discovered with the diminishing of Christian empire? If not silver and gold, then what?

United Methodist Church

Jim Winkler is Seminar Designer/Program Director for United Methodist Seminars on National and International Affairs, General Board of Church and Society.

There's definitely a budget crisis. We sometimes feel like the bottom is falling out of the connectional system in the United Methodist Church.

Of the Church's four major national programs, the General Board of Church and Society, which deals with peace and justice issues, is by far the smallest. When the money comes up short we are really hurting.

We have just restructured our seminar program in the hopes of saving $40,000. It was gut-wrenching; this is a program that for 40 years has brought people from all over the country to New York and Washington for seminars on justice issues.

My own feeling is that the first programs that get cut are not just those that deal with social justice, but those dealing with ordinary, out-of-the-pew Church members. What gets protected is administration and the top level of the Church.

There is a feeling of persecution. We wonder if we have been punished because of the stands we have taken. There are other factors. More and more people cross denominational lines, and there is less loyalty and commitment to the larger church.

My concern is that at the local level, there is not much emphasis on trying to impact policy at either a local or state or national level, or on trying to ensure racial and ethnic diversity. There is more emphasis on band-aid work. I'm convinced that an emphasis on root causes would be lost if social justice ministries were ceded to the local churches.

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Resisting sales talk

by Sandy LeJeune

Sex, Economy, Freedom and Community, by Wendell Berry, Pantheon Press, N.Y. 1993

"All I ask of the author," Edward Abbey once wrote, "is to appoint himself a moral leader, wanted or not." Wendell Berry — poet, novelist, and, in Abbey's view "the best essayist now working in America" — clearly agrees. "This is a book about sales resistance," he admonishes us from the get-go of his new book of essays, *Sex, Economy, Freedom and Community.* "When technologies and ideas are adopted in response not to need but to advertising, salesmanship, and fashion ... the first duty of writers is to resist this ubiquitous sales talk, no matter from whose mouth it issues. But, then, this is also the first duty of everyone else."

Take note, dear reader: these are your marching orders. For while Berry is definitely on the same trajectory as in earlier works such as *Home Economics* and *What Are People For?* this new book takes even sharper aim at some of the disturbing questions facing post-industrial society.

Example: Berry has long championed agriculture's duties to farm in appropriate scale, self-sufficiently; to help preserve diversity, to renew, not destroy, the topsoil. That's fine — if you happen to be a small farmer. But what about us urbanites? The essay "Out of Your Car, Off Your Horse" offers his clearest suggestions to date on how to redress the imbalance between city and countryside. A sustainable city "would live off the *net* ecological income of its supporting region, paying as it goes all its ecological and human debts." How? Buy more locally grown food, thus encouraging smaller, more diverse, more productive farms. To reduce expenses on both ends, truck organic wastes from the cities to local farms for fertilizer. Diversity and productivity would also require more labor. The key result is "changed minds ... City people would assume an agricultural responsibility [prompted by] the wish for a dependable supply of excellent food and by the fear of contaminating that supply."

Sound a bit anachronistic? Well, Berry has an answer for you: the *status quo* isn't working. The title essay traces patterns of society's sexual and economic disorder to their source, the destruction of thriving local communities. A community is destroyed "when its economy is made ... *subject* to a larger external economy," he says, citing eastern Kentucky's absorption by northern-based coal industries as example. The outcome "speaks for itself: if you are dependent on people who do not know you, who control the value of your necessities, you are not free, and you are not safe."

Berry tackles some big-ticket items this trip out, too: how recent changes in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade threaten democracy, here and abroad; the real root of the Persian Gulf war ("military power fighting for the security of petroleum power ... and for the power, ease and wealth that come from [its] exploitation"); even a dreamt-up dialogue on the complex role tobacco plays in our national, and his private, life. There is an incisive, biblically studious look at how organized Christianity has ignored its mandate to nurture, not malign, the created order. Throughout, he encourages us to respect the land and all its inhabitants, and to rebuke the powers — whether global, national or personal — that don't. It's a resistance movement more of us ought to join. TW

book review

Sandy Lejeune lives in southern California.

Other resources

Our writers this issue recommend the following:

Severyn T. Bruyn and James Meehan, Ed. *Beyond the Market and the State,* Temple University Press, Philadelphia, Penn., 1987.

Paul Ekins, Ed. *The Living Economy: A New Economics in the Making,* Routledge and Kegan Paul, London and N.Y., 1986.

David Morris, *The New City-States and Self-Reliant Cities*, Institute for Local Self-Reliance, Washington D.C., 1982.

P. Pragervand, *Listen to Africa: Developing Africa from the Grassroots,* N.Y., 1989.

J. Andy Smith, III, *God's Gift, Our Responsibility: Biblical Reflections on Creation, Christian Stewardship and Corporate Accountability,* Box 851, Valley Forge, Penn., 19842-0851.

Marc J. Cohen, Ed. *Hunger 1994: Transforming the Politics of Hunger*, Bread for the World, 1100 Wayne Ave., Suite 1000, Silver Spring, Md. 20910.

Corporate Examiner, the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility, 475 Riverside Dr., Room 566, New York, N.Y., 10115.

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"Our political system ought to be encouraging cooperative development. But they're still so imperialistic, they think the only hope for black folks is that they come over and be integrated."



John Perkins

Re-allocating ownership

by Marianne Arbogast

John Perkins says he received his "first lesson in economics" at the age of 11 or 12. After a full day's work hauling hay on a white farmer's plantation, expecting to be paid at least a dollar and a half, Perkins was handed a dime and a nickel. Angry, but feeling powerless, Perkins left with a clear understanding of the dynamics of injustice.

Today, Perkins is recognized internationally for his expertise in community economic development.

"I developed a real understanding that our oppression as blacks was not social first, but economic," the 64-year-old evangelical church leader says. "Continuing economic oppression is part of slavery."

Perkins' mother died of a protein deficiency when he was seven months old. He grew up laboring on a Mississippi plantation, the demands of sharecropping superseding school attendance for all but three months of each year. At age 15, he dropped out with less than a fifth-grade education.

When Perkins was 17, his older brother was shot and killed by a sheriff's deputy. Concerned that he might react to his brother's murder in a way that would provoke retaliation, his family packed him off to stay with an aunt in Jackson. Shortly afterward, he boarded a train for California, planning to leave Mississippi forever.

Perkins took a job at a steel foundry, and before he turned 20, had helped to unionize workers and organize a strike.

In 1951, he was drafted into the army, and married a woman from his Mississippi home town that same year. Two years later, he returned to California to work and start his family.

Though he had earlier rejected Christianity as a tool of oppression, Perkins found himself on a spiritual search that led to a deep conversion in his late 20s. He was soon preaching, teaching Bible classes, and visiting prisoners. Contact with young black men in prison convinced him that "the roots of many of the problems in the ghetto were really the unsolved problems of the South I had left," and he felt a compelling call to return home. Leaving behind his house and the economic security he had struggled for, Perkins took his family back to Mississippi.

"The church as it existed in Mississippi was not related to economic development," Perkins recalls. "The pastors exploited the people instead of helping them; they had a king-type mentality. They saw me as a basic threat. I taught the Bible, and they saw that people liked my teaching."

Young people, especially, were drawn to Perkins. In Mendenhall, Miss., his ministry rapidly expanded. Responding to the "felt needs" of the community around it, the Voice of Calvary Bible Institute gave birth to a day care program, a tutoring program, and housing, food, farming, marketing and health co-ops.

After 12 years in Mendenhall, Perkins moved on to establish similar ministries in Jackson, Miss., and then Pasadena, Calif.

He has been called the "godfather" of the Christian Community Development Association, a national coalition of churches seeking to foster community and economic development in their neighborhoods.

"What people need most of all is basic economic education," Perkins says. "Poor people in urban communities own so little. Churches should be educating their people, offering models, credit unions or investment corporations where people begin to make small investments. Churches need to be investing more in neighborhoods, education, tutoring, small service enterprises."

Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness*.

Perkins is a forceful critic of the welfare system.

"Our political system doesn't do much to encourage economic development among the poor," he says. "They ought to be encouraging cooperative development. But they're still so imperialistic, they think the only hope for black folks is that they come over and be integrated. Consequently, black folks don't have a community."

He acknowledges the impediments to a new model.

"It's very difficult. The area we have the most skill in as black people is education itself. Yet most black people would be against the voucher system. They would see it as undermining their stable job with the school system. They don't think about the possibility of creating independent schools to educate our people and provide economic skills. Folks are being damaged by the welfare system. We need to organize small, creative alternatives."

Perkins teaches "three Rs" of Christian community development: relocation, reconciliation, and redistribution.

Relocation demands that "if you're going to work in a neighborhood, live there.

"People want to change the first 'R' right away," he says. "Even some of the best of black leaders want to do it *for* the people. They talk about doing it *with* people, but they won't live among the people they're trying to work with. That's offering them a false model: You're better off if you leave this community."

"Reconciliation" encompasses both racial reconciliation and the ongoing labor of honesty and forgiveness within a church community. Perkins knows the road well. After leading a civil rights march in 1970, he was ambushed by white sheriff's deputies and highway patrolmen, then beaten and tortured throughout the night. As he recovered physically, he entered into a spiritual struggle, tempted to turn his back on white people and his convictions about Christian unity. Finally, horrified by his memory of faces twisted with hate, he emerged with a strengthened commitment to work against racism, for the sake of white and black Christians alike.

The third "R," "redistribution," can happen if we "use the basic free enterprise system to empower people," Perkins believes.

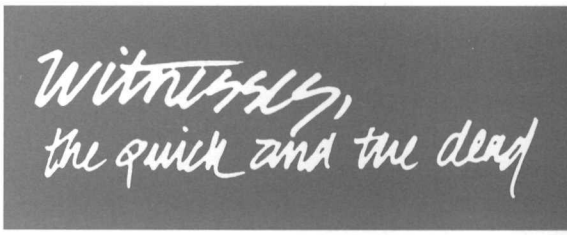
"Why don't communities say, if McDonald's is going to come in, then we're going to have an investment corporation, and buy 15 percent of the ownership?" he asks. "Churches have not been informed they could do that. If we could bring the churches alive! They ignore the theological mandate to liberate their people from oppression. They haven't developed a philosophy of economic development over the pulpit."

It's more than teaching someone how to fish, Perkins frequently says; it's helping them own the pond.

And it needs to be grounded in faith.

"I believe people need to come to know Christ," he says. "That becomes the focus and the base for creative development.

"I'm not just trying to change the world through simple economic development. The world will be changed by people who have experienced the love of God and who love others."



Greatly in demand as a speaker, Perkins has taken his message to cities across the nation and around the world. His audiences include political and business leaders as well as church members. Despite wide acclaim for his achievements, he laments that "none of this is successful enough." But he seeks to "hold up models of hope.

"I was reading Reinhold Niebuhr — he says nothing is worth working for if you think you will achieve it in your own lifetime," Perkins says. "We're laying a foundation." TW

Passing The Word

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The Witness addresses different themes each month, and includes art, poetry, book reviews and profiles. For 75 years *The Witness* has published articles addressing theological concerns as well as critiquing social issues from a faith perspective. The magazine is owned by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company but is an independent journal with an ecumenical readership.

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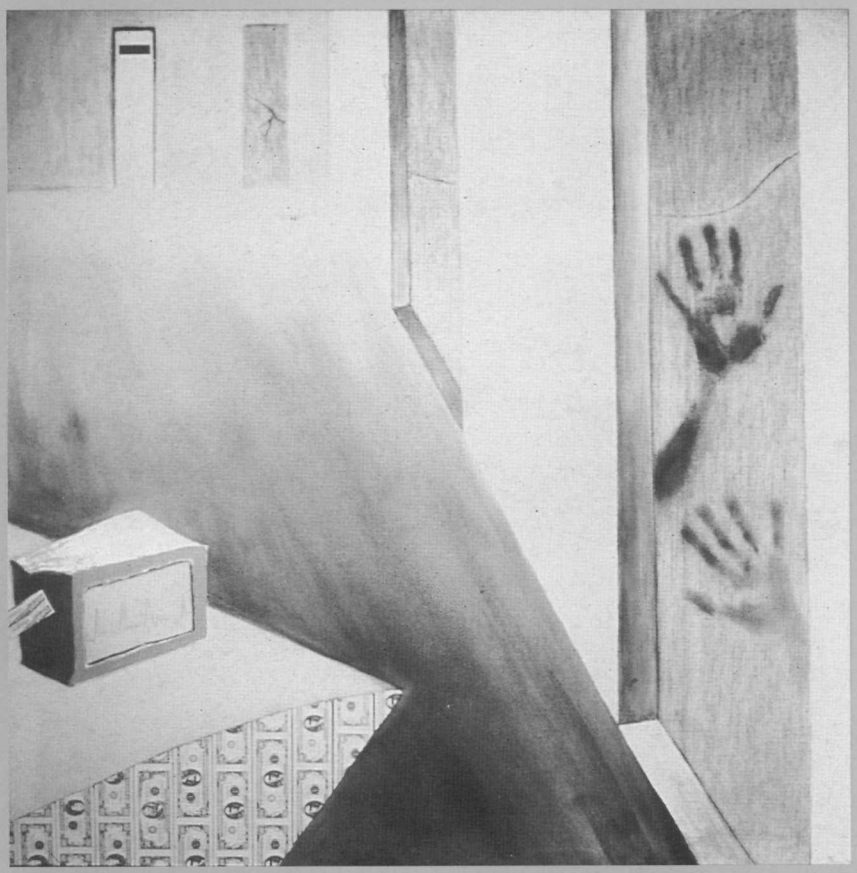

June issue:
disabilities

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The Witness

Volume 77 • Number 6 • June 1994

Disabilities

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Dialogue

YOUR INTERVIEW WITH Bishop Steve Charleston orchestrates so much hope in these trying times. However, I too find hope living in this age where the Christian faith is rising from within our ranks, rather than a top down movement. Until our community reaches out arm by arm to take in the whole world we cannot and will not be whole. Touching the lives of both our immediate community sitting next to us in the pew and our neighbor half-way around the world who doesn't even speak our language is the grassroots kind of healing I dream will one day be real.

Steve's interview touches on this same kind of dream where oppression will cease to exist. The flexibility of Christ continuing to take us in again and again is what pumps life into my faith. Passionate listening, respect and tolerance for ideas different from our own makes this kind of global vision possible for me from my own space on that globe.

Thank you for bringing so much hope and vision in your interview! Your magazine continues to be a catalyst for change and hope!

Sally Swart
Birmingham, MI

ADRIENNE AND I WANT TO THANK you for the extremely thoughtful article on Common Ground written by Marianne Arbogast. We also want to congratulate you on the entire April issue which is just excellent. It was so nice to see our work placed in a larger context and such a thought-provoking discussion.

Mary Jacksteit, Director
Common Ground Network for
Life and Choice
Washington, DC

THE COVER FOR THE LAST ISSUE of *The Witness* reminded me of a poem my nephew Vincent Mellado wrote some time ago. I thought you'd enjoy it.



Let's Talk
What do you think about;
birth control, abortion, gun control,
equal rights, euthanasia?
Can we talk about;
when life begins, the right to life,
the quality of life?
NO!
Don't push your morals on me!
Don't stand there and preach ...
Argue
about what you think is right.
I've made up my own mind.
I will make my own choices.
argue — to apply reason (to a problem), to maintain (an opinion),
to persuade by talk, to be a sign of, to prove, to dispute.
The word violence is not in the definition.
Okay;
somebody shoots your wife for her wedding ring,
your daughter comes home from school pregnant,
your neighbor's skull is bashed in because of his skin,
the plug is pulled,
and your dog is set on fire.
Let's choose:
and scream for capital punishment,
burn a cross
or better yet a hospital.
Find a doctor to scrape us into shape
then sue him just for the hell of it.
Hey,
he screwed up not me.
Let's accept that which separates us from animals,
our ability to reason,
and continue to mutilate each other.
Let's accept the imperfection of our humanness
and continue to use it as an excuse to kill each other.
Why don't we just blame God?
Then,
maybe we can talk.
No, better yet.
Let's argue.

Keep up the good work.

Trinidad Sanchez, Jr.
San Antonio, TX

CONGRATULATIONS on the April issue, on dialogue. "Fidelity" [alias Episcopalians United/Canada] has sprung up and this issue will be of particular assistance in that dialogue with them. I appreciate the reprint permission and will send you copies of anything that ends up being printed in *Integrator*.

The theme of "Embracing our shadows" is one that I want to grab hold of with both hands and so I am especially grateful for assistance with the cost of the *Witness*/Trinity video.

Chris Ambidge
Toronto, Ontario

YOU ARE TO BE CONGRATULATED for the magazine's EXCELLENCE! I continually find the articles not only timely — but gripping to read — and useful on many levels. THANK YOU!

Fara Impastato, O.P.
New Orleans, LA

I HAVE JUST DISCOVERED *The Witness*! It's great!

Mary Matthews
Amherst, MA

RECEIVE A WARM EMBRACE from a sister who welcomes each new magazine eagerly as it enters my post-box here in Matagalpa, Nicaragua!

Though sometimes my issues lag behind (i.e. Christmas arrived for the beginning of Lent) I still am *so* happy to catch up on the richness of all your contributors.

As we work here in Nicaragua to find nonviolent approaches to resolving conflict and to responding to the unjust economic situation resulting in part from the U.S.-backed "low intensity" war, I was especially touched by the Dec. article "Holding to the light: Detroiters resist violence" and the continuing work of SOSAD. Movements like this and Detroit Summer are a source of inspiration for us here in Central America.

Warmest Spring/Resurrection greetings to all your readers!

Kitty Madden
Casa Materna
Matagalpa, Nicaragua

DEATH ROW CAN BE a very dark and lonely place. As a condemned man you have been told by society that you are not worthy of life itself. You are deemed too dangerous to be put with the general prison population and are isolated from all other prisoners by being housed in a special unit called death row. And finally this isolation goes further, for many condemned men eventually lose contact and are abandoned by their own families.

How do I know this? Because I'm a condemned man on Connecticut's death row. But I'm one of the lucky ones. I still have contact with some of my family, and I have several pen pals. However, I'm the exception, not the rule. I personally know people who receive no letters and no visits. Many other condemned men are in the same situation.

In prison, letters can bring a ray of light to the darkness of death row isolation. For those on the outside, learning to know just one prisoner can dispel some of the myths, misconceptions and fears about prisons and those locked away there. That's why the Death Row Support Project was started.

Jesus' call for us to visit those in prison is clear. Perhaps correspondence can be your way of visiting. For the name and address of a condemned man, please write to: Rachel Gross, Church of the Brethren Death Row Support Project, P.O. Box 600, Liberty Mills, Ind., 46946. Tell her that Michael Ross sent you.

As a condemned man myself, I thank you. And once you get involved with the Death Row Support Project, I believe that you will thank yourself.

Michael Ross #127404
Death Row — Somers Prison
P.O. Box #100; Somers, CT 06071

Fundraising for *The Witness*

Every reader should receive a letter this month from the *Friends of The Witness* asking for financial contributions to the magazine. The fundraising effort is necessary, but we do restrict it to a once- a-year appeal. We will not hit you with emergency appeals throughout the year. Part of the reason the *Friends of The Witness* can afford to be civil in its request for help is that former editor Bill Spofford left the magazine with an endowment which continues to support our efforts. (Subscription revenue covers only one-sixth of the cost of publishing the magazine.) But that endowment is eroding. Without additional support from readers, the magazine will be on a precarious footing at best.

For those of you who can consider including *The Witness* in your will, our treasurer Bob Eckersley will be happy to work with you. Eckersley has been connected to the magazine since its resurrection in 1975 and was a friend of Bill Spofford's. He's a CPA who travels in corridors of influence but has a quirky interest in socialist thinking and justice issues. He's easy to talk to, has a good sense of humor, is rarely politically correct and is an amateur star gazer. Getting to know Bob Eckersley is reason enough to call. He can be reached at (717) 346-8425.

Classifieds

Positions available

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, New Jersey Council of Churches. A person of vision, lay or clergy, a proven manager/ administrator with strong interpersonal and process skills, capable of dealing with theological, social justice, and public policy issues. Equal opportunity employer. Send resume by July 31 to Frank Gibbs, Chair, Search Committee, 24 Morgan Road, Parsippany, NJ 07054-3322.

THE OTHER SIDE, a Christian magazine of peace and justice issues, seeks a full-time assistant publisher to conduct financial management and planning, plus provide support services. Experience in magazine publishing and-or financial management desirable. Excellent benefits. Deadline for application: May 15, later inquiries appropriate. Contact Hiring Team, *The Other Side*, 300 W. Apsley Street, Philadelphia, PA 19144 (215-849-2178).

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WITNESS CLASSIFIEDS cost 75 cents a word or $30 an inch, whichever is less. Payments must accompany submissions. Deadline is the 15th of the month, two months prior to publication. For instance, items received January 15 will run in March.

When ads mark anniversaries of deaths, ordinations, or acts of conscience, photos — even at half column-width — can be included.

Ad opportunity!

COPIES of the August/September issue which will be distributed to everyone at General Convention and Triennial gathering of Episcopal Church Women will contain a Convention supplement including advertisements. Ads will cost $400 for a whole page; $200 for a half page; $100 for a quarter page; and $50 for an eighth. Classifieds will run as usual, but for longer ads buying by the page is actually cheaper.

Ads must be received and paid for by June 15. Send them to the attention of Marianne Arbogast.

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THE WITNESS
Since 1917

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Back cover: Nelson Mandela *by Helen David Brancato*

Rejecting "normalcy"

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

In preparing this issue I have been struck by how many people have taken time to remind me that the Nazi holocaust began with the mentally ill and physically disabled.

The level of threat that people with disabilities in this culture are feeling is extremely high.

No doubt this stems in part from the arrogance that allowed a Columbia Presbyterian Hospital geneticist to tell my journalism class in 1980 that "any woman who brings a handicapped child into the world today should bear full financial responsibility because it never had to have happened." He was a proponent of the prenatal screening that could anticipate, at that time, 60 different conditions, although the remedy in all but a handful was abortion.

Fortunately for our appreciation of the power and multiplicity of God, birth is as untameable as the weather — the prenatal tests are not all-inclusive, they are not exact, some people forego them and not all disabilities are present at birth. People with disabilities persist.

It is a gift to meet people associated with the disability rights movement, people who are neither sentimental nor long-suffering about their disabilities. They'll say it stinks—but they're quick to add that the attitude of the culture is far worse than the disability. I'm thankful for the people who produce *The Disability Rag* and for members of ADAPT, who are militant about access to public transit and the need for attendant care as an alternative to nursing home residency.

The church is not an easy sanctuary for many of those with whom we spoke while preparing this issue. Apparently it is commonplace for people with disabilities to find themselves surrounded on the street by strangers who, in the name of Christ, chant and pray and then condemn them.

Of course, we are too sensitive to inflict unrequested healing ceremonies on people, but we do attend churches which, at best, break out the champagne for installing a ramp — never acknowledging that since passage of the American Disabilities Act in 1990 most public and private institutions are *required* to be accessible. In fact, the church (as separated from the state) is lagging far behind.

Preparing this issue was an education. In searching for art, I learned that classical artists rarely made portraits of people with disabilities. They just don't appear in the visual historical record. Likewise, classical poets, who struggle eloquently with lost love and death, have little to say about living passionately with disabilities.

Fortunately for our appreciation of the power and multiplicity of God, birth is as untameable as the weather.

Cultural malevolence toward people with disabilities, it seems to me, is rooted in two things: first, a terror that everything may not be perfect and, second, a misplaced conviction that whatever doesn't fit the norm needs to be beaten, cajoled or prayed into the confines of normalcy.

Martin Luther, when asked what to do with a disabled infant, responded, "Beat the devil out of it."

But Stephen Levine, a Buddhist counselor for the dying, says that everything depends on treating one's self with tenderness and mercy. And since some of his patients who found a strong heart connection died, while others who remained closed off lived, he has concluded that healing has nothing to do with whether one lives or dies. Presumably, healing also has nothing to do with whether or not one's disabilities melt away.

"If our habitual conditioning is to overcome our pain, we will have a tendency to feel overwhelmed when things don't go the way we wish," Levine writes in *Healing into Life and Death* (Anchor Books, 1987). "We may even feel a need to 'beat' another's pain. We will find it difficult to connect with them just where they are. We won't be able to touch them with love because if we want anything from somebody, even for them to be out of pain, they will be an object in our mind rather than the subject of our heart. If we can open our own pain and explore resistances and long-held aversions, there arises the possibility of touching another's pain with compassion, of meeting another as we meet ourselves with a bit more clarity and tenderness. We see in such instances how the work we do on ourselves is clearly of benefit to all sentient beings."

editor's note

The healing of community is to know that this is true, to lay down the suspicion that disabilities stem from sin, to lay down the presumption that we can navigate as demigods if we create a society of exclusion, to know our own hearts and to see God's work in all ways of being. TW

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

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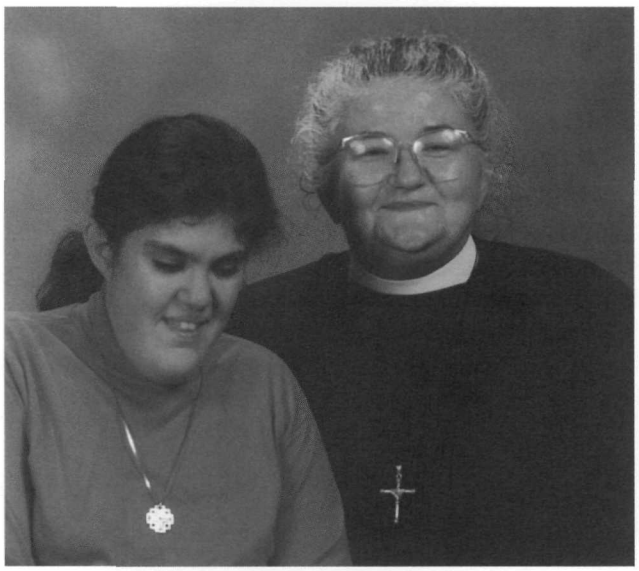
Loving Maggie

by Linda Strohmier

Maggie, my daughter, was born the day she was due — Labor Day, 1970 — in a textbook delivery. Everything seemed fine, until three days later, when she was drowning from double pneumonia in the hospital nursery. No one knew why. Then they began to discover "anomalies" — birth defects. Neo-natal ICUs had not come to rural New England, so the hospital put her in a private room, expecting her to die. Her father and I, dazed and devastated, planned a funeral.

She didn't die, but that began a hellish first year: blind for a week, before and after a neurosurgery to install a shunt from brain to belly to relieve a developing hydrocephalus; then two more hospitalizations for pneumonia. We were frantic, sleep-deprived zombies. At eight months our pediatrician assessed her brain damage and announced that she'd never walk or talk or feed herself. He suggested that we prepare to institutionalize her at about age three. He murmured with gentle pity: what a shame ... such a tragedy ... such bright, talented people ...

Then *we* began to drown — in depression. I got quietly, desperately suicidal. One leaden, despairing, 4 a.m., as I sat up with this frantic baby who never slept, the Byrds' version of Pete Seeger's "Turn, turn, turn" kept running through my head. I dug up a Bible, determined to find the source of the lyrics. When I finally found it, I read Ecclesiastes through to the end, then began again and read it start to finish. It freed me from the hideous, gnawing worm in the belly of my depression: the certainty that Maggie's afflictions must be God smiting *me* — for what? For existing? In any case, Ecclesiastes began my climb out of despair.



Maggie and Linda Strohmier

Maggie is 23 now. She has weathered a lot: hernia surgery at two; a spinal fusion, with a body cast from armpits to knees for eight months, at age six; four months of hospitals and surgeries to rebuild both clubfeet at 16. After years of well-meaning but soul-crushing local school programs, at 10 she entered a residential school run by the Camphill community and bloomed. She now lives in a Camphill-related life-sharing community in Massachusetts. Her father and I wanted for her to have as much independence as she could, and she has flourished beyond our wildest hopes in those early dark years.

Not merely does she walk, talk, and feed herself. At 15, she learned to read, and keeps her household up-to-date on events from *Newsweek* and *People*. Her brain-damage is still considerable, so she can't write. Math is beyond her. She is, however, an articulate and perceptive conversationalist. She works five days a week in a recycling center and empties her busy house's dishwasher and wastebaskets daily. Her bubbling laugh and infectious smile light up every room she enters. She prays with fervor at the Prayers of the People — and has single-handedly loosened up every congregation I've worked in to do the same!

Because Maggie was born before ultrasound and amniocentesis, we were spared the awful dilemma of whether to abort a "flawed fetus." I'm grateful. I would have chosen wrong. Before Maggie, I thought being loved was contingent upon what I *did*. But I discovered that I loved Maggie fiercely, helplessly, not because of anything she could *do*, but simply because she *was*, and *is*. And even when I'm a rotten mother, she loves me too. From her I know, viscerally, the unconditional love of God.

Through Maggie, I have spent a good deal of time in these years with handicapped children and adults. At Maundy Thursday foot-washings I am reminded how blessed I have been to be among "Maggie's people" — to wipe noses, mouths, hands, bottoms and tears. The Camphill community believe that God has blessed the world with handicapped people so that we all might learn what it means to be truly, fully human — to wash one another's feet, to bear one another's burdens, to love one another. Maggie has grown into a woman of simple and profound faith. By her very being, she is a witness of the power of God to heal and to love. TW

Linda Strohmeir, a member of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company board, is canon pastor at the St. Mark's Cathedral in Seattle.

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Reserved for the Handicapped
by Nancy G. Westerfield

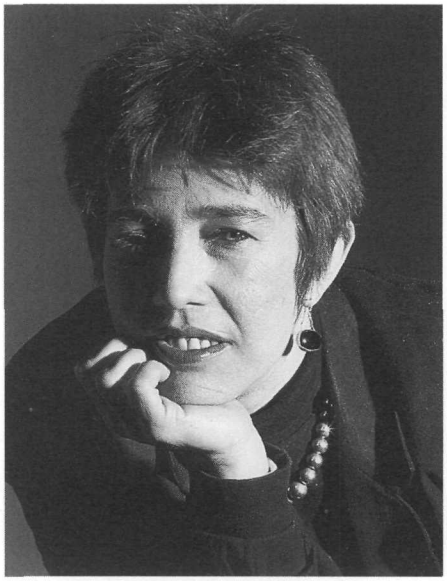
Painted into the pavement, the familiar logo
Of a blue-and-white wheelchair protects
Ease of access to the library for the disabled:
Their own diagonal parking-stall nearest
Self-opening doors. Protected against disabling
Cars by the library's steel bookdrop, a stub
Of tree of heaven recurs here year after year,
Where the self-opening force of a seed
Fractured the cement like sod. Never to be
A dancing girl of a tree like the new maple
Plantings in the library lawn, flirting a swirl
Of bright leaves, never to grow tall, upright,
Straight-limbed, in winter it drowns in snow
Banked by the bookdrop, in summer thirsts
Through baked concrete, thrusting a stunted
Diagonal that survives, sundances, flaunts
Green, transcends its merely being trapped
In a space reserved for the handicapped.

Nancy Westerfield is a pastoral minister at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Kearney, Neb. Westerfield, who lives with clinical depression, has been a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship recipient. Her husband uses a wheelchair.

Poetry

Challenging assisted suicide: an interview with Anne Finger

Anne Finger is a lecturer in creative writing at Wayne State University. She's the author of Past Due: A Story of Disability, *has a novel slated for publication this fall and is poetry editor of* The Disability Rag. *She is co-editing a book on reproductive rights, sexual rights and disability. Her son Max is eight years old.*



Anne Finger

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann: Tell me about you — your work, your involvement in the disability community.

Anne Finger: My involvement with disability started when I became disabled, which was when I was not quite three years old, in 1954. I had polio. I was one of the last of my tribe.

For a number of different reasons people with polio were much more integrated into the mainstream than people with other disabilities. A lot of that was because of Roosevelt. There was this public image of polio as a disability that wasn't totally debilitating. I think another factor is that polio's a disease of good sanitation — in third-world countries, they always say "the polio epidemic will break out when you put sewers in."

The polio virus is endemic and people get immunities to it in their mothers' breast milk or through exposure to it in low levels when there's poor sanitation. Once there is good sanitation, they don't have the immunity to it and epidemics break out. Because of that, polio has tended to be a more middle-class disease.

In many ways integration was advantageous to me, but in other ways it wasn't. I didn't grow up knowing other disabled people. And, in fact, I absorbed a lot of the culture's disdain for disabled people — that's a very *big* thing for a lot of disabled people, especially of my generation. Many of us have been raised to not identify — it's a form of internalized oppression. "I am different than them; they are like this and I am not like that." You know, "I'm not whiny, I'm not dependent ..."

J.W-K.: Because you were mainstreamed you had less identification or less experience with the disabled community. How did that change for you?

A.F.: It really changed for me out of the women's movement. Psychologically and intellectually, my experience as a woman and a feminist brought me into the disability rights movement. It was the early 1980s before I had another friend who was disabled.

J.W-K.: Was that a major shift in your psyche?

A.F.: Was it a major leap? It sure was. When I was 29 or 30, I went to a conference for people who have polio. I felt what it would be like to grow up Jewish, never knowing another Jewish person, and suddenly meet a roomful of Jewish people. Suddenly, I had this enormous cultural, emotional rapport with these people. It was a very eye-opening experience for me to see how much I had been formed by my disability. But it was also very frightening.

Judy Heuman, who is very important in the disability rights movement, was there. She's in an electric wheelchair and there were these plastic chairs in the way. She just plowed through them. It was this moment of seeing this liberatory possibility — if something's in the way, you just get rid of it, even if it's in a socially inappropriate way. It seemed simultaneously wonderful and really shocking to me.

J.W-K.: Was it another step then from meeting with these people to stepping into disability rights?

A.F.: Not really, I think just because I had such a political frame of mind, the two things were pretty much in sync.

J.W-K.: Can you give an overview of what the politically active disability community is like?

A.F.: I would say a couple of things. I think the disability rights movement grew out of the social tumult of the 1960s, but it developed later, in the early 1970s. It was beginning in a period of reaction and so the disability rights movement has tended to be less activist in its orientation. People focus on legislative change or using the judiciary. It's also a physical fact that in order for disabled people to achieve grassroots change, there needed to be a basic level of accommodation and access that didn't exist.

In the last 10 years, a group called

Artist **Frida Kahlo**, who used a wheelchair, produced colorful, vivid paintings which rivalled the work of her husband Diego Rivera.

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ADAPT (Americans Disabled for Accessible Public Transit) was formed to get access to public transit. They've now changed their name since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to Americans Disabled for Attendant Programs Today. They're a group that has very radical tactics. They have done a lot of organizing against the American Public Transit Association which opposed mainline accessible public transit.

I think they've been a little too trusting that passage of the ADA means transit is going to become accessible. But I think ADAPT is exciting because they *do* have a grassroots orientation and they draw from a broad spectrum of the disabled community. Since the ADA passed, they began to work around issues of attendant care, to give people alternatives to nursing homes, so people could stay in their homes with attendant care.

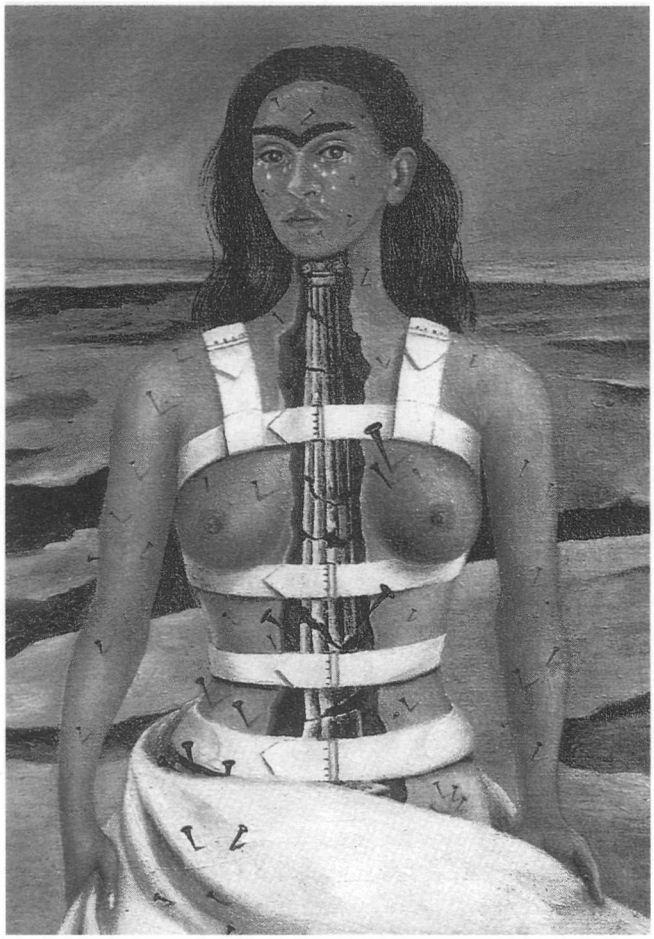
J.W-K.: Do African Americans, Vietnam vets, and people who are raised in poverty have a higher instance of being disabled?

A.F.: Most disabled people are poor. I'm sure you're more likely to be disabled if you're raised in poverty, but half of all disabled people are poor and that's also a consequence of disability.

J.W-K.: Do the Vietnam vets fit into the community? Are they vocal?

A.F.: I would say less so. There are issues about masculinity. A lot of men want to see themselves as active, masculine.

J.W-K.: I want to ask you about Christian healing and disabilities, but I want to start by asking you what kind of spirituality you have.



***Broken Column*, 1944, by Frida Kahlo** Dolores Olmeda Found., Mexico

A.F.: I was raised as an atheist. I have always been disdainful of spirituality, but in the last couple months, I've started going to the Zen Center. I'm still an atheist—I'm clinging to my atheistic life — but I really like what Zen is. I like the Zen emphasis on slowness; as a disabled person it's really nice. And I like the meditation. I like the chanting. What I like about religion is the communal aspect of it. I mean, the only time I would go to church would be if there's a piano. I like it when people sing together.

I didn't grow up knowing other disabled people. And, in fact, I absorbed a lot of the culture's disdain for disabled people.

J.W-K.: Your walls are covered with evocative spiritual art.

A.F.: But I feel free to put those up because I'm an atheist. It's all ironic.

J.W-K.: Your art is speaking of some truth beyond what we see.

A.F.: Right, I guess.

J.W-K.: Well, tell me about Christians and healing.

A.F.: It's something you get a lot of if you're a disabled person and it's often very intrusive. People will stop you on the street and suggest a healer that you can go to or tell you that they're going to pray for you or tell you you could be cured if you would believe.

J.W-K.: That's really appalling. I know that people do healing shows on stage in front of huge audiences, but it's a surprise to me that people accost people that they don't know on the street .

A.F.: There's a real sense when you're disabled that people have a right to intrude into your personal privacy. People will stop me on the street and ask me what my disability is, give me advice. People are generally, if anything, too friendly. I think it's an expression of people's discomfort. They'll say, "Hi! How are you?" with this scared look in their eyes. You get a lot of superficial pleasantry that masks a lot of fear and discomfort, so there's a constant double message that you're getting from the world. It can make you nuts real fast.

J.W-K.: And from complete strangers.

A.F.: When I was in Greece sitting in a village square waiting for my partner and son, a priest came up to me and put his hands on my head and prayed over me. I

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don't speak Greek — I couldn't say "leave me alone." Then he touched my legs. It took about five or ten minutes.

J.W-K.: What did you do?

A.F.: I just sat there. I said, "This is going to happen. There's nothing I can do about this." I also felt that this person means well and I had a sense that I was a North American in their culture. I just sat there.

I was in London last summer and met disabled people who had organized against one of these faith healing frenzies. People were demonstrating outside and a few people had gone inside. One woman who has MS told me she was standing inside and people were rocking back and forth and pointing their fingers at her. She couldn't figure out what was going on at first and then she realized that they were saying this thing about casting the devil out of her.

In faith healing gatherings people walk across the stage in great pain. People will fake ability, or convince themselves that they're not disabled anymore. There was a case in England with a woman with epilepsy who had been faith-healed who drowned in her bath having a seizure.

J.W-K.: Tell me your feelings about assisted suicide.

A.F.: I'm really concerned about assisted suicide. I'm concerned that in some ways the women's movement, the abortion rights movement, has talked about choice and control in ways that are very naive and have led us into a dangerous alliance with the assisted suicide movement.

J.W-K.: What is your position in relation to abortion in general?

A.F.: I'm an abortion rights activist. I've worked in an abortion clinic and I've been active in the reproductive rights movement for a long time. But I think radicals within the movement have always seen that abortion happens in a social context. We understand that the notion of choice is politically dangerous.

We *don't* make free choices in this society. Our choices are always tremendously impinged by economics, gender, disability.

We have to fight for the legal right to abortion; we also have to be dealing with a whole range of issues. The "It's a private decision between a woman and her doctor" makes us very atomized individuals. Not to mention that it assumes that every woman has a doctor, which is a profoundly classist assumption. And do doctors have our best interests at heart?

I'm really concerned about assisted suicide. I'm concerned that in some ways the women's movement, the abortion rights movement, has talked about choice and control in ways that are very naive and have led us into a dangerous alliance with the assisted suicide movement.

I think a lot of the rhetoric that some people in the abortion rights movement really believe, and others have adopted as an easy shorthand, has led us into a dangerous alliance with the assisted suicide movement.

J.W-K.: I remember in your book *Past Due* that you talked about being in a room with feminists in New York who were talking about abortion and suddenly feeling, during their consideration of selective abortion, like you were invisible. Can you say a little bit about that?

A.F.: It's *the* issue that we struggle with now in feminism — how do we deal with our history as this white, middle-class, and at the beginning heterosexual, young movement? Our opening move was to create woman as a category, which was a really necessary step. We had to say, we *do* have a community of interest here. Women are oppressed, but it became a movement that excluded older women, disabled women, women of color, working-class women. Now we're dealing with the aftershocks from that.

How do we have a feminist movement that can really encompass enormous diversity and the fact that women's interests sometimes are in conflict?

In terms of abortion rights specifically, there's overwhelming social support for abortion when there's a "defective" fetus.

There was a made-for-TV movie about a woman in Arizona whose husband had been on a trip to Europe and had brought thalidomide back with him. She took thalidomide when she was pregnant and wasn't able to get an abortion in this country. The movie was made by people who saw this as a pro-choice statement.

I have a couple problems with that. First off, it stigmatizes disabled people in order to argue for abortion rights. Also as a feminist I want women to have access to abortion because it's what we need for our lives to control our destiny. Women who have abortions because of rape or incest or fetal "defect" are a tremendously small proportion of the number of women who have abortions. We're not really arguing honestly and broadly for abortion rights when we argue for these exceptional cases.

I think we need to be willing to put forward a more radical politic. Abortion isn't going to get rid of the problems of poverty or disability.

J.W-K.: Tell me about the relationship between this and assisted suicide.

A.F.: We have a society that fears disease, that fears dying, that acts as if the best thing to do with a painful situation is get to it as quickly as possible. If you're going to die, do it, get it over with.

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So, even in cases where people are terminally ill, I really worry about pressure on people. A lot of the pain and difficulty that people dying of cancer experience is an outgrowth of medical interference. If treatment options are presented realistically to people, a lot of people will not choose it because often all the treatment is doing is prolonging a life in a painful condition that might end more quickly in a less painful condition.

But assisted suicide is not used only for people who are terminally ill. It's being used for people in chronic pain or people who have chronic severe disabilities. When you look at those cases, I think what those people really need is social change, not assisted suicide.

To me it was very significant that the first eight or nine people that Jack Kervorkian helped to die were women. One was a woman with MS who had been abandoned by her husband, which is a very common thing that happens when women become disabled. (Women are much more likely to stay with a disabled husband or partner.) Another was a woman with chronic vaginal pain and, as we know, women's gynecological complaints don't get serious attention. Clearly

Passing the ADA

No covered entity shall discriminate against a qualified individual with a disability because of the disability of such individual in regard to job application procedures, the hiring, advancement, or discharge of employees, employee compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

— Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

— First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

The American Disabilities Act (ADA), signed into law on July 26, 1990, extends civil rights protections to people with disabilities. It guarantees equal opportunity in employment, public accommodations, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

The ADA was supported by ADAPT, a disability rights organization that focusses on issues of transportation and attendant services. ADAPT's methods are nonviolent confrontation and civil disobedience. Its members include a broad range of people with various disabilities.

The law is a victory with people with disabilities partly because it also requires access for people who are blind or deaf.

But religious institutions lobbied hard for exemptions. Consequently observers expect that the law will be interpreted broadly, exempting religious organizations from requirements that their buildings be accessible. This exemption extends to colleges, hospitals and nursing homes operated by religious organizations. (Title III will only be enforced against religious organizations when they receive federal funds or when a secular organization leases space.)



Five disabled demonstrators were arrested in December, 1993, after chaining themselves to a bus in Philadelphia that had a faulty wheelchair lift. Harvey Finkle, Impact Visuals

Meanwhile, public restaurants, hotels, theaters, doctors' offices, pharmacies, stores, museums, libraries, parks, private schools, and day care centers must not discriminate on the basis of disability, and are required to make reasonable changes to avoid discrimination.

New construction and alterations must be accessible. And telephone companies must offer telephone relay services to people who use text telephones (TT) or similar devices.

A strong focus of the ADA is to protect employees. Employers are prohibited from discriminating against persons with disabilities who are otherwise qualified for a job. They are required to provide "reasonable accommodation" — including job restructuring and modification of equipment — to persons with disabilities, unless such accommodations would impose "undue hardship" on business operations, or unless the business employs fewer than 15 people.

Under Title I religious organizations with 15 or more employees will be required to comply. However, given the separation of church and state, clergy will not be protected.

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this woman should have been referred to people who could really help her deal with the issues in her life and help her deal with her pain, rather than being offered suicide.

There was a woman with Alzheimer's whom Kervorkian helped to die. It was very clear that she didn't want to be a burden to her family, that she was used to taking care of them and she didn't want them taking care of her. It's really this female role: "I don't want to be a burden; this will be too hard on my family."

I'm concerned that we're getting told that medicine is supposed to get rid of disabled people. Cure us or kill us, which is an idea that is really deeply rooted in industrial culture. I think there will be tremendous social pressure to "choose" suicide and we'll also have the phenomenon of someone being incompetent and the choice being made for them, or being *seen as* incompetent to make the choice.

J.W-K.: Attendant care comes in here, right? If people had adequate social support, their outlook would be different?

A.F.: Yes. It's not just attendant care, but disability rights across the board. Larry McCaffey, who was one of the people to initiate a right-to-die suit, was living in terrible conditions. He was living in an intensive care unit in a hospital because he was on a respirator and because there wasn't attendant care in Georgia.

J.W-K.: So he could have had other options.

A.F.: Yes. Actually he ended up not dying. He ended up really having people go to bat for him.

J.W-K.: Are the issues that you're listing getting raised?

A.F.: To a certain extent. Unfortunately they're getting raised by people with reactionary politics. The religious right wing raises it. But the reaction of progressives, left liberals, has been really discouraging. They support Kervorkian. I think they don't understand what a tremendously dangerous road this is. The genocide began in Germany with disabled people and it began fairly openly. The first gas chambers were built in the basements of German mental hospitals and they were literally transported to the concentration camps. The first people who were killed in concentration camps were people who were diagnosed as sick.

Protesting the Human Genome Project

Disability activists are voicing concern over the implications of the Human Genome Project, a $3 billion, 15-year genetic research project co-sponsored by the Department of Energy and the National Institute of Health.

Begun in 1988, the project will include study of individual genes to see how they work at the molecular level. Study of genes associated with disability or disease could theoretically lead to treatments or cures. Recognition of such genes could make diagnostic testing possible.

Sociologist and disability activist Adrienne Asch writes:

"Our discomfort arises out of the knowledge that when information about life with a disability is described at all, it usually is a description filled with gloom and tragedy and limited opportunities completely at odds with the views of the disability rights movement and of the legislators and professionals whose work supports movement goals. Rather, the whole genetics enterprise is permeated by the medical model of disability — linking every difficulty to the physiological characteristics of the condition and not to any characteristics of the society in which people with the condition live their lives. ...

"Unfortunately, the ELSI Working Group membership contains neither a person who currently lives with a genetic condition and relies upon services for people with disabilities, nor one closely identified with the disability rights movement who can speak to the consequences of discrimination and of inhospitable social, communicative, and architectural environments. ...

"Here is a list of possible worthwhile topics: What are the conditions that permit some people with disabilities and their families to find satisfying lives at the same time that others with the same disabilities and apparently similar families do not? What actually goes on in genetic counseling sessions to help people make decisions? What do counselors actually say to their clients about the conditions that the tests detect?" (*Disability Studies Quarterly, Summer 1993*)

"Suppose Down syndrome, cystic fibrosis, or spina bifida were depicted not as an incalculable, irreparable tragedy but as a fact of being human?" Asch asks in another article. "Would we abort because of those conditions or seek to limit their adverse impact on life? ...

"In order to imagine bringing a disabled child into the world when abortion is possible, one must be able to imagine saying to a child: 'I wanted you enough and believed enough in who you could be that I felt you would have a life you would appreciate even with the difficulties your disability causes.'

"Instead of thinking of avoiding the life itself, might we think about how the expected problems can be reduced and avoided?" ("Reproductive Technology and Disability" by Adrienne Asch, in *Reproductive Laws for the 1990s*, ed., Sherrill Cohen and Nadine Taub, Humana Press, 1989)

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Throughout the holocaust, doctors decided who was going to go to the gas chambers and who was going to go to the work camps. It always was a quasi-medical decision.

J.W-K.: You've written a short story in which voluntary suicide is being misused, so ambulances are on their way to pick people up who have disabilities but it's not voluntary.

A.F.: Those people are seen as incompetent to make a decision of their own, so they have substitute consent.

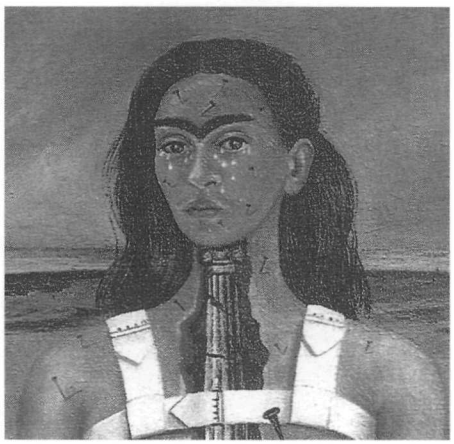
J.W-K.: I was glad that your character found protection in the home of some radical Christian lesbians.

Well, the last question that I have is in the area of sexuality. In the movie *Passion Fish,* however good the friendship between the attendant and the disabled person may be, I've heard you point out that the attendant is the rescuer and at the end, she has sex, while the woman in the wheelchair has a kiss. Is there more to say about that?

A.F.: Our society is profoundly uncomfortable with the notion of disabled people being sexual and this attitude extends even to people who are quite radical about sexuality. If you look at the book *Powers of Desire,* which is one of the first books that came out in the feminist movement talking about sexuality, there's *nothing* in there about disability and sexuality. *Pleasure and Danger,* which is another one of the early texts, *does* have one article, but it has a segregated focus. In the lengthy chapter that analyzed sexual oppression and repressive laws, disability was never mentioned. In fact, disabled people are frequently prevented from having sex if they live in institutions or quasi-institutions.

There are marital penalties for people with severe disabilities who are dependent on government aid that make it virtually impossible for many disabled people to marry. If you marry, you can lose a tremendous amount of SSI, of Medicaid, of Section 8, so people literally can't marry.

J.W-K.: What if you marry someone in



the disabled community?

A.F.: You still lose money.

J.W-K.: Really?! Do you think this is a conscious effort?

A.F.: I think there's a conscious effort to cut costs. There's an unconscious effort to keep disabled people from being sexual. Also, our culture emphasizes that to be sexual is to be physically fit. The whole way sexuality is constructed in our society excludes disabled people. And that has profound social and psychological impacts on people.

Our society is profoundly uncomfortable with the notion of disabled people being sexual and this attitude extends even to people who are quite radical about sexuality.

J.W-K.: I don't want to say this lightly, but the culture has that effect on *everyone* when sex is a high-gloss, high-marketing phenomenon. I think it's responsible in large part for the divorce rate, too. It's like you think you're entitled to ...

A.F.: Unlimited orgasms every time you get in bed. Yeah, that's true. On the other hand, most disabled people get brought up with the assumption that they will never have sex.

It's interesting that on the one hand disabled people are not seen as sexual. On the other hand, the rate of sexual abuse in the disabled community is very, very high. It speaks to the issue of powerlessness. Rape and sexual abuse are power issues and disabled children, disabled adults are easier to abuse sexually because they have less power. So more and more disabled girls are hearing that they'll have sex, but it'll be abusive. How do we deal with that and at the same time talk about sexual pleasure?

J.W-K.: Are there places where that conversation is happening?

A.F.: It's overshadowed by abuse. We're finally talking about the abuse and it's shocking and frightening — pleasure starts to seem secondary.

J.W-K.: Would that have been even more true in previous generations? Since people got closeted so much?

A.F.: Well, to a point. There's a British theorist about disability, named Victor Finkelstein, who really sees a big shift in terms of the treatment of disabled people around the industrial revolution. He says that prior to that time, disabled people were much more integrated into rural, agrarian economies. Where you had scarcity of labor, everybody's labor was needed. Also, in agrarian economies, you don't have the kind of regulation of the pace of work that you have in an industrialized society.

If you're working in the field, you know somebody can work three times as fast as somebody else and it doesn't disrupt production. With the rise of industrialization, there was an enormous increase in people being defined as needing institutionalization. TW

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The Bible and exclusion, bias and prejudice

by Walter Wink

In the popular mind there are two kinds of people: normal and abnormal; normal and deformed; normal and disabled. Some are OK, others are not. But if pressed, we soon discover that everyone has disabilities, and that we are not talking about an either-or, but a continuum which runs from slightly disabled to extremely disabled.

Let me use myself as an example. I have been relatively healthy all my life, so that neither I nor those who know me would describe me as a person with disabilities. Nevertheless, in certain ways I am. My feet have hammertoes, and they have become increasingly painful, so that now I am unable to walk much more than a couple miles. I have had chronic back problems since childhood. I have had irregular heartbeat problems, so I don't drink caffeine. I have hypoglycemia, so I don't eat sugar. Minor things, all, but that is precisely my point: press anyone who looks "normal" and you find, instead, a person with disabilities.

Yet such people do not define themselves as "disabled." They think of themselves as relatively healthy people with certain disabilities. Now, those who are sensitive to these issues are trying to help us see that all of us are acceptable, regardless of our disabilities. The problem, then, is not with those with disabilities but with the idea of "normalcy." There are three sources of this pernicious notion of normalcy: Hebraic cultic thought, Christian perfectionism, and the values of the Enlightenment. The idea of normalcy, we will discover, is not only at the root of the mistreatment of people with disabilities. It is a pathological notion that creates illness, persecution, and the rejection of our God-given uniqueness.

The idea of normalcy is not only at the root of the mistreatment of people with disabilities. It is a pathological notion that creates illness, persecution, and the rejection of our God-given uniqueness.

Blemish in Hebraic thought

In Hebraic sacrificial practice, both the gift offered to God and the priest who makes the offering must be "without blemish." This phrase, "without blemish," does not refer to some standard of perfection, as in later Greek thought. It flows rather from the belief that the gift must be the best one has — not the culls from the herd, not the runt lambs and three-legged goats, but the very best. And the priest making the offering is to be fully representative of the people. Thus, according to Leviticus 21:16-24, the priest cannot be blind, lame, have a mutilated face, a limb that is too long, a broken foot or hand, or a hunched back, be a dwarf, have a blemish in the eyes, an itching disease, or scabs, or crushed testicles. In short, the maimed, diseased and deformed are excluded from priestly service.

The Mishnah, a codification of rabbinic law from around 190 A.D., spells out what constitutes blemish in greater detail. The following deformities disqualified a priest from serving in the Temple: a head that is wedge-shaped, turnip-shaped, hammer-shaped, sunken in, or flat at the back; a humped back; a bald head; only one eyebrow, or eyebrows that hang down; two backs and two backbones; a flat nose; an eye too high or low, or one high and one low, or unmatched or watery eyes, or eyelashes that have fallen out; eyes that are too big or too small compared with his other parts; ears that are too little or spongy; an upper lip that juts out beyond the lower lip, or vice-versa, or lost teeth, or a man's breasts that hang down like a woman's, or a swollen belly, or a protruding navel, or falling sickness; too large a penis or testicles, or a missing or crushed testicle; knees or ankles that knock together, or are bow-legged, or swelling feet, or a swollen big toe, or a heel that juts out, or a sole as wide as that of a goose; webbed fingers or toes; black, red, or albino skin; leprosy; dangling warts. Also excluded are dwarves, deaf-mutes, imbeciles, or drunkards.

And then, at the end of the list, the only behaviors that disqualify: committing murder or being the victim of sexual abuse (Mishnah Bekhoroth 7.1-7).

What unites these diverse items is the notion of abnormality. These are not evil qualities; the person possessed of these disabilities is not cast out of the priesthood into which he has been born. He is still allowed to eat at the Temple table and draw all his sustenance from the Temple

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Walter Wink, a *Witness* contributing editor, is professor of biblical interpretation at Auburn Theological Seminary in New York City. This article first appeared in *Auburn News*. Artist **Ida Mae Sydnor,** 72, lives in Philadelphia. Her life story, which includes spending childhood in an orphanage and being confined in a mental institution for 18 years, will be performed this summer through images, music and dance at a neighborhood school in southwest Philadelphia.

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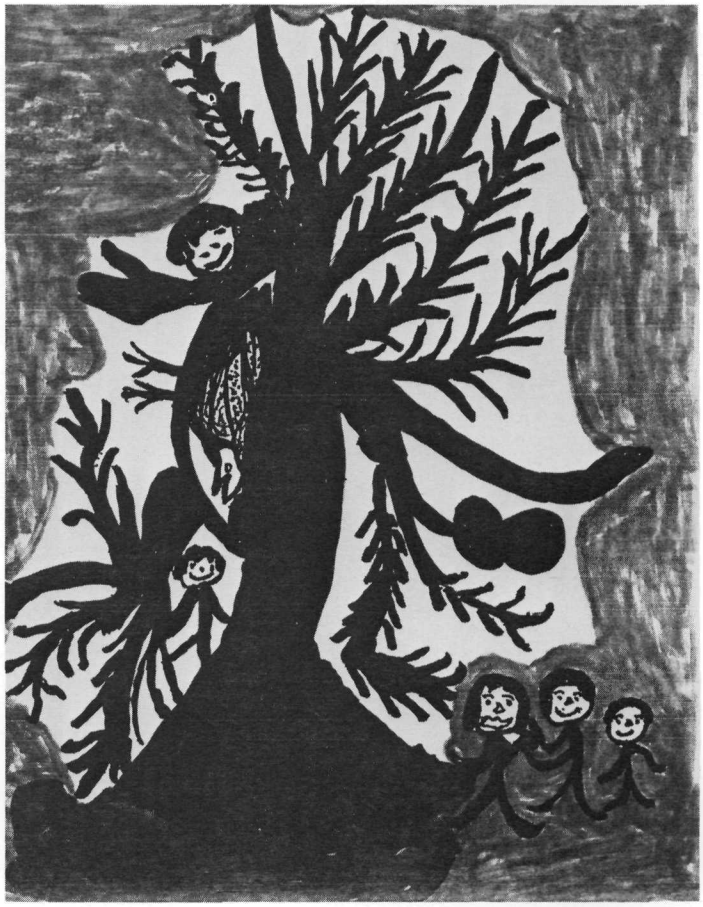
economy. He is simply unable to represent the people of Israel in the Temple before God.

Note also that these are not necessarily aesthetic categories. While a few of the items are explicitly noted as being "unqualified by reason of unsightliness" (such as fallen eyelashes and lost teeth), the rest are simply deviations from the norm.

This demand for unblemished sacrificial beasts and priests arose directly out of Israel's sense of God's holiness. Holiness was like a vibratory energy. Anyone who drew near to God picked up this energy. And this was not necessarily a good thing. God's holiness was like a blazing fire; one had to be protected against it. Ezekiel forbids priests to bring the most sacred sacrifices into the outer court or to enter it wearing their priestly clothing lest they sanctify the people ("communicate holiness to the people" — 46:20; 44:19)! Israel's very separateness as a people was a consequence of its ideas of holiness: God's holiness has fallen on Israel and has thus set it apart from all others. God's holiness must therefore be protected, almost, we might say, quarantined. Thus, the closer one got to the Holy of Holies in the Temple, the greater the holy power one encountered. By the same logic, one avoided everything unclean — anything that might contaminate God's holiness. Therefore, people in unclean trades, like tanners, or people in immoral occupations, like tax collectors and prostitutes, or people outside the covenant, like Samaritans and Gentiles, were to be avoided because they would sully the holiness of God.

Jesus' rejection of purity

Jesus' table fellowship with social outcasts was an acted parable of the dawning age of reconciliation. According to Marcus Borg, Jesus deliberately contravened the entire program of holiness of the Pharisees and other groups in first-century Judaism. He denied the equation of holiness with separation. Instead, says Borg, Jesus offered an economy of mercy that extends to all, especially the outsiders. The laws of clean and unclean were premised on the holiness of God: "Be holy, for I am holy" (Lev.11:44). Consequently, Jesus, by abrogating the laws of purity, defilement and blemishes was announcing a new image of God: a God not concerned with normalcy, who loves precisely the marginalized and rejected.



The bird is a symbol Ida Mae Sydnor uses to depict herself. Recent works present the bird flying free.

Ida Mae Sydnor

Why did the Jesus movement break with the purity system? Surely not because it was found inconvenient or an infringement on their freedom to act. Rather, because rules of ritual purity are what keep the various people and parts of society in their "proper" place. Without purity regulations, there would be a crisis of distinctions in which everyone and everything was the same: women equal to men, outsiders equal to insiders, the sacred no different from the profane. There would be no holy place or holy priests or holy people. Gentile would be no different from Jew. "Clean" people would sit at table with "unclean"; no one would be better in God's sight. Domination depends on ranking. Without such distinctions, how can one know whom to dominate?

In contrast to the traditional view that God's holiness had to be sequestered in a special place and protected against contamination, Jesus regarded holiness/wholeness as outgoing and contagious. Holiness was not a power to be guarded, but a force exploding into the world to bring it more into line with God's purposes. It did not need to be shut up and

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quarantined in the Temple; it was now, through his healings and fellowship with the despised and rejected, breaking out into the world to transform it.

Therefore, Jesus taught when "normal" folks give a banquet they should not invite their friends — that is, other "normal" people of the same class, status, and persuasion, but rather the "poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind" (Luke 14:13,21). This phrase virtually summarizes the lists from Leviticus and the Mishnah of those who are blemished and unable to serve before God. Jesus is not, then, simply suggesting that the well-off practice charity; he is directing them to go out of their way to break down the barriers that have previously excluded those with disabilities.

Christian perfectionism

If Jesus threw out the holiness code with its exclusiveness, why are people with disabilities today still subject to exclusion, bias, prejudice, and discrimination?

Let me suggest at least one cause: the biblical command to be perfect as God is perfect (Matt. 5:48). Matthew had just said that God loves everyone equally (5:45), and then three verses later he springs the demand for perfection on us.

It may come as immediate relief to learn that Jesus could not have said, "Be perfect." There was no such word, or even concept, in Aramaic or Hebrew. And for good reason. The Second Commandment had forbidden the making of graven images (Exod. 20:4). Israel consequently never developed the visual arts. The word used by Matthew, *teleios*, was, however, a Greek aesthetic term. It described the perfect geometric form, or the perfect sculpture. In Israel, the closest thing to the notion of perfection was being without blemish.

In the Christian Middle Ages, Greek and Hebrew thought coalesced, with sin taking the place of blemish. Perfection was negatively defined as not behaving or even thinking in certain ways. But the sense of sin was so profound that moral perfectionism was no factor at all except among the "spiritual athletes," the ascetics, who made it their whole life's task to achieve moral perfection.

It was not until the Enlightenment, however, with its reintroduction of Greek aesthetic norms in neo-classical art and its search for universals, that widespread moralistic perfectionism became really imaginable. The merger of Protestant egalitarianism and Enlightenment rational equalitarianism now for the first time made the achievement of perfection — a heresy on its face — not only a cultural goal but a profound obsession.



In contrast to the traditional view that God's holiness had to be sequestered in a special place and protected against contamination, Jesus regarded holiness/wholeness as outgoing and contagious.

Jesus' alternative

Jesus never commanded this kind of perfectionism. Placed in its context within the rest of the paragraph, his saying about behaving like God becomes clear. We are not to be perfect, but, like God, all-encompassing.

This saying underscores Jesus' rejection of the holiness code as it was interpreted by his contemporaries. Mercy (God's all-inclusive love) is deliberately contrasted with exclusivity and segregation. His hearers could scarcely miss the echo of Lev. 19:2 here, except that its "You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy" has been altered to headline Jesus' new emphasis: "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful," as Luke so much more effectively renders it (6:36).

We today are still living with the curse of perfectionism. For people with disabilities (and who does not have them?), perfectionism is the condemnation we feel for not having an acceptable body. Barbie dolls, Playboy or Penthouse centerfolds, and muscle and fashion magazines all trumpet an ideal figure, the perfect form to which we are all supposed to conform. That seemingly universally held standard ("norm") is in fact an engine of the devil.

The Enlightenment also taught that all people are created equal. If that is so, then it is your own fault if you have a mental or physical disability. The curious result of the Enlightenment doctrine of equality is the worst kind of inequality, built upon a denial of the obvious truth. We do not all begin from the same starting-gate in life. It is an outrageous lie that all people are created equal. It is just another version of blaming the victim.

The gospel teaches not that we are all equal, but that we are all incomparable. All people, regardless of how they score on the popularity ratings of normalcy, are of infinite value, are infinitely treasured, and are infinitely interesting. There is no end, no limit, to the love of God for each one of us. TW

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The healers

by Kathi Wolfe

I will never forget a disconcerting encounter a few years ago, when I was trying to cross a busy metropolitan street. As usual, I held out my cane to avoid bumping into any obstacles and listened carefully to make sure no cars were coming. When the light changed and I stepped off the curb, some people gathered around me. They chanted "Jesus heals! Let him lay his hands on you!"

"Oh, no," I thought, "It's 'the healers' again. How do I escape this time?" For like most people with disabilities, I'm often confronted by those who feel that I will only be "whole" when my disability is taken away. And it seems they always stop me when I'm in a rush, hurrying to work or to catch a train.

"Jesus loves me as I am," I said, trying to get to the other side of the street.

"No," said a woman who grabbed my cane. "Your eyes are bad because you've sinned. If you pray hard enough, Jesus will forgive your sins and restore your sight. Then he'll love you."

"Look, I don't have time to talk. I've got to get to work. I can't call in late due to a 'healing delay,'" I snapped, taking my cane back.

"Where do you work?" asked a man in the crowd.

"I'm a minister and a writer," I answered, quickly walking away. Others called out, "How can this be? Why don't you want to be healed?"

"At last I'm out of their clutches," I thought when I reached my office. "Now I can get to work." Yet, reflecting on this encounter, I see that, despite their intrusiveness, "the healers" had raised some important spiritual concerns for those of us with disabilities. For as we assume leadership roles in the religious community and in society, we are examining such issues as "healing," sin and empowerment in relation to disabilities.

Following the example of women, African Americans and other oppressed groups, we are creating theology out of our experience. We're beginning to tell our own stories, rather than listen to the stories others have told about us.

As we start this work, we turn to the Bible. How can scripture, written some 2,000 years ago, help those of us with disabilities remain faithful, build self-esteem and fight for our civil rights?

In biblical times, many thought that disabilities were caused by sin. People with disabilities were outcasts, ignored by their families and neighbors — often left alone to beg. The Bible generally portrayed disabled people as helpless.

In stories ranging from the healing of the "paralytic" (Mark 2:1-2) to the healing of the man who had been ill for 38 years (John 5:5-15), Jesus offers assurance that repentance and faith will take away disabilities.

Whenever I read these stories, I cringe inwardly. I feel angry and excluded, as I do when scripture tells women to be silent in church or when the biblical accounts indicate an acceptance by the faithful of slavery. For, unlike these biblical writers and present-day "healers," I do not believe my disability was caused by sin or that I would be "made well, if only I had more faith." Many of us are coming to respect and feel pride in ourselves as we are, disabilities included.

Should those of us with disabilities today toss the Bible aside? The answer, surprisingly, is no. For tempted as we are at times to turn away from scripture, it can be a source of hope. Jesus in his ministry broke down barriers of fear and isolation. He acted against the customs of his society, by being present among people with disabilities and listening to them.

He carried out his ministry to "set at liberty the oppressed" and to "preach good news to the poor" (Luke 4:16-20). Interestingly enough, along with stories of passive disabled characters, scripture also contains accounts of active people with disabilities. There is the story of the man who is blind in John 9. In this account, Jesus declares that the man's blindness is not caused by any sin committed by either him or his parents. When people ask his parents about their son's condition, they say, "He is of age, he will speak for himself." Even today, this can seem a radical statement to those of us with disabilities.

And the blind man in this story is not a passive stick figure. He becomes impatient when others don't understand about Jesus' ministry.

The biblical story of Moses and the burning bush (Exodus 4:10-17) presents a model of how a person with a disability can serve as a leader of a people seeking liberation. Many scholars contend that Moses had a speech impediment. When God asks Moses to lead the Israelites, he demurs, saying "but I am slow of speech and of tongue."

God is not deterred by this answer. Instead, God affirms the place of disabled people in the world by asking Moses, "Who has made man's mouth? Who makes him dumb or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?"

When Moses still objects to assuming this leadership role, God says Aaron will become Moses' assistant and will speak his words for him. This is perhaps the first example of "reasonable accommodation." In this way, Moses led the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land.

Affirmative biblical stories can provide the energy to fend off "healers" and continue our journey — to the Promised Land of access and equal rights. TW

Kathi Wolfe is a United Church of Christ pastor in Falls Church, Va. This article is reprinted from *The Disability Rag,* Box 145, Louisville, Ky., 40201.

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Celebrating disabled and minority women

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

I do not know how to convey to an able-bodied person (even the most empathetic) what it means suddenly to have to be cognizant of how your body works, moves — whether it be brain, limbs or internal organs... [but] our greatest obstacles are the able-bodied society's myths and discrimination, not the disability. It stinks to be sick and disabled by it, but it's enraging to be trivialized or patronized.

— Sanda Aronson

This past April, the Disabled Artists' Network (D.A.N.) began its tenth year as a national information exchange of artists with physical, mental, and emotional disabilities. All of its members are disabled, including its founder and executive director, Sanda Aronson. D.A.N. is fully member-supported and receives no outside funding. Unlike other disability self-help support groups, it focuses on confronting problems unique to the artistic profession. Members have created what Aronson calls a "living bulletin board," alerting others to exhibit and grant opportunities as well as contributing suggestions for the nitty-gritty how-to's involved in making art under difficult conditions.

Sanda Aronson was first a wife, then a single working parent — all while engaged in an art career — when in the mid-1970s she began to develop asthma and, later, chronic fatigue syndrome. As her symptoms worsened, she innovatively adapted her artmaking approach to deal with these new realities. Rather than working in clay, handmade paper and woodcuts as she had previously, she began to work more with collage and assemblage— forms that produce less dust, paint fumes, etc. But these are only a few of the issues she has had to face. Aronson is quick to point out the other-than-physical barriers thrust in her way.

"When I became disabled and was no longer able to hold an outside job," she writes in her article, "The Greatest Obstacles in Reaching the Public for Disabled Women Artists," "money (always a problem for artists) became a bigger problem. ... There is a myth that if one is disabled, the government rushes in to give Social Security Disability. False." In addition, she cites statistics showing that women are granted disability benefits less often than men and that they consistently receive smaller checks, since Social Security, unlike welfare, is based upon past earnings. Women (and artists) traditionally hold the lowest-paying jobs.

Both through their art and through D.A.N., Aronson and her colleagues have been tireless in their efforts to create a base of support for themselves and to make their voices heard in able-bodied circles. *American Herstory, Mystory, Ourstory* is a collage that Aronson created in 1988 for a national conference commemorating the 200th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution held at the Atlanta College of Art. The show subsequently toured the country for two years. In it, Aronson celebrates women in American history, especially those excluded from the mainstream: disabled and minority women. Included are Helen Keller, Anne Sullivan, Mary Cassatt, Frida Kahlo and Sojourner Truth, as well as an homage to Aronson's Jewish grandmother who worked a pushcart in lower Manhattan.

"Disabled artists who are women face double discrimination," Aronson writes. There are the pandemic myths that women and/or disabled artists are making art as therapy, or as a nice hobby to pass the time. And when the disabled are portrayed by the media at all, they are presented as inspirational heroes, as "supercrips" in Aronson's words, or as "weepy, telethon types."

She also takes issue with euphemisms like "differently abled" or "physically challenged," which Aronson views as "obnoxious bandaids to make the able-bodied feel better."

The D.A.N. newsletter has branched out to a wide range of artists during the past decade, and the organization has received significant attention in art journals. Consequently, D.A.N. has not only been functioning as a community builder for the disabled, but has developed into a prophetic voice to the able-bodied.

When the gospels tell us that Jesus made the blind see, the deaf hear and the lame walk, it is only too easy for us modern-day Christians to dismiss these individual miracles as the kind of thing that could have been effected by a Son of God. As we come to recognize the social implications of Jesus's actions, however, and to see the church as his resurrected body here and now, we might also come to believe that it is entirely possible to

art and society

Blaise Tobia and **Virginia Maksymowicz,** Philadelphia artists, edit the Art & Society Section of *The Witness.*

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***American Herstory, Mystory, Ourstory,* 1988, collage by Sanda Aronson ©** Photo by Stanley Willard

effect these same miracles on a societal level by *allowing* the blind to see, the deaf to hear and the lame to walk. Physically, this might mean lobbying (and paying taxes) for "talking" buses, close-captioned TV, or cut curbs and access ramps. Spiritually, it means confronting those of us who consider ourselves able-bodied to take the most basic steps to remove the obstacles that prevent the incorporation of all members of society into full participation.

The Disabled Artists Network can be reached at: PO Box 20781, New York, NY, 10025.

Indianapolis '94

Fighting the 'Let's kill 'em' mentality: an interview with William W. Rankin

Last fall, William Rankin was installed as dean of the Episcopal Divinity School (EDS) in Cambridge, Mass., a seminary which has championed the cause of full participation in the church for gay and lesbian persons, especially in the area of ordained ministry.

Julie A. Wortman: There has been a lot of emphasis on the need for "dialogue" about human sexuality within the church. I get the sense that EDS is impatient with that dialogue?

William Rankin: Dialogue in the church always needs to go on around two foundational questions. One is, "Who is God?" and the other is, "What is required of us as creatures standing before the face of God intending to do right and to be good?"

There is no question that there is some impatience at EDS about all of the dialogue on sexuality. We have a lot of lesbian and gay students. They and I are impatient, but you must understand that this impatience is rooted in pain. In the minds of a lot of people here they have waited a long time already. What seems at first blush to be impatience may really be weariness from having allowed people to scorn them and do those hurtful personal things that you see reflected in the cold statistics that indicate, for instance, that gay and lesbian teenagers commit suicide at twice the rate that straight teenagers do. The suffering over time is more than anyone should have to bear. So while we should honor the folks who disagree with us, maybe the people who disagree with us should understand there's a long and awful history of oppression. The problem isn't with gay men and lesbians, it's with an attitude that says, when push comes to shove, "Let's kill 'em." That spirit is still alive and well in our country — and because we are only fallible human beings, it's also alive and well in the church.

J.W.: It seems like EDS would be a



William Rankin

wonderful place to spend three years. I wonder, though, if you are preparing people for the uphill battle they will have to face in the church on this and other justice issues?

W. R.: What I'm after is that people go out of here with the acuity to know the spiritual, moral, theological and sociological realities of the context within which they find themselves so that they can, with authenticity and in faithfulness to the best that's in the Christian heritage, minister competently with people. The point is to enable our students to go out and identify God in the uniqueness of a given situation. And that does not mean banging them over the head with an ideology, nor does it mean not challenging them.

In the congregations where I've been — and in some of these places there was a lot of white male heterosexual money and people who by and large voted differently than I voted — people appreciated it when I had done my homework on an issue that I knew would be controversial and then laid my views out without trying to jam them down their throats. If there's a problem in the churches, it may be that the folks haven't been challenged enough.

There's the mission of the church and there is the mission of God — and the two are not necessarily the same. I want the people who go out of here to be effective in the church concerning the mission of God.

J.W.: I've heard that at EDS there is an unusually high percentage of students who are not seeking ordination?

W. R.: I don't know how we stand on that as compared to other seminaries, but I've been surprised in talking with incoming students to find that if they're not already on the ordination track, virtually all of them want to get on it. The problem is that the church is culturally lagging behind us. When we as a church solve the problem of both misogyny and homophobia, I predict that the great majority of people who are here and have gone through here will end up being ordained. But the church discriminates against them.

J.W.: I met an out gay man at EDS last year who was getting ready to look for a job — he was on the ordination track. I assume that you feel some responsibility for helping gay and lesbian students face the reality that jobs in the church, especially clergy jobs, will be hard to find?

W.R.: We work hard to affect the climate of the Episcopal Church so that it is more gracious and welcoming to all people. If and when we can succeed, it will be better for a number of our graduates. But I should say we are not by any means the only Episcopal seminary with a significant number of gay and lesbian students facing that situation. We're just the only one that is really out about it.

I think the standing of gay men and lesbians at one level or another of the church's life is going to be a hot issue at General Convention — and it *should* be, because that's the particular focus of the justice issue for us in this time and place. I hope the Episcopal Church can summon enough grace to recognize that the two extremes are to welcome folks who are gay and lesbian or to adopt a spirit that says "Kill 'em." And then, perhaps, we can move on.

Vital Signs

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Is there hope for this pastoral?

by John M. Gessell

The General Convention of 1976 resolved that "homosexuals are children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance and pastoral care of the Church." It is time, six conventions later, that the full implications of this resolution be confirmed. But the House of Bishops' "pastoral teaching" on human sexuality (the work of the "A104sa committee," named after the "compromise" resolution passed at the 1991 General Convention which, among other things, directed the bishops to prepare the pastoral) is now undergoing its fourth revision, under the pressure of conservative forces.

It is not clear that the bishops can produce this pastoral given their present disarray. The insistence on "collegiality," a novel source of authority, is a thinly disguised attempt to avoid conflict and to stifle disagreement, debate, and dissent.

When they meet, the bishops appear to be more a human potential group than a legislative body carefully debating and formulating policy. I do not begrudge the bishops opportunities for personal growth and mutual support. But the bishops have specific canonical and constitutional responsibilities. Their main work is shepherding. Yet they seem to have lost the mettle for the debate of substantive issues, preferring to sit around tables for Bible study and prayer. What is needed is a resolve to creativity, to take up the work of the church as a community of compassion and peace, the action which comes out of a life of prayer. This is done by debate and legislation, not by "collegiality."

The bishops also seem unable to deal with the homophobia among their members. Their treatment of Otis Charles (the retired bishop of Utah, who came out as a gay man in September, 1993) at their Panama meeting was churlish and nothing short of scandalous. If the church is to speak a healing and creative word on the issues of human sexuality, acts of repentance and confession are required in order to atone for the tacit and explicit condemnation to self-hatred, self-loathing and death of many gays and lesbians.

A phobic and sexist approach to a report on human sexuality will spell failure. And so the prospect of the report fills me with anxiety. But I also have my hopes.

My greatest hope is that the committee will be able to move beyond the fixed positions of the past in order to lay out the conditions for a healthy community of moral discourse, producing a text to guide the whole church in moral reflection. Such a text could become a model for disclosing the principles of a just society and could point the way to a church which could embrace into full inclusion all of God's children on equal terms. This would be a welcome assertion of faith, and a full realization of the 1976 resolution of General Convention on homosexual persons in the Church. It would be an obedient response to I John 4:20, "If you say you love God and hate your brother or sister, you are a liar."

This church has no magisterium. It is General Convention which is authoritative, whose decisions are reached after debate by clergy, laity, and bishops concurring.

I would hope that the report would also include a careful setting forth of the dialectic between the "tradition" of church teaching on sexuality and the "discontinuities" which church people experience between that teaching and their experience. This could be an excitingly creative process, for this is how theology gets done. Out of such a dialogue we might expect indications of the direction for a dialectical resolution in order that vital theological and moral discourse can emerge.

I would also hope that the report would take steps toward the formulation of a theology of homosexuality in the context of the church's creation faith. At the very least, a basis for the exploration and development of this theology is necessary if progress is to be made in the dialogue within the church on human sexuality.

Finally, I hope that the committee will produce a document which can be discussed and debated by General Convention and be adopted as the church's teaching on human sexuality. The church needs to speak clearly on what has become an obsessive issue in the society at large, and only General Convention can issue an authoritative teaching on this matter for the Episcopal Church.

This would, I know, require an amendment of the process implied for receiving the report. It has been publicly called a "pastoral teaching." Officially (canonically) there is no such thing and no provision for such a thing as a "pastoral teaching." There are pastoral letters from the House of Bishops to the people, to be read in the churches. There are resolutions which, when adopted by the convention in both houses, become authoritative for the church. The former are not debated in Convention; the latter are. In talking with some bishops I get the impression that the report is not to be discussed but simply accepted—not as a pastoral letter from the bishops, but as normative and binding on Episcopalians as if from some "magisterium." But this church has no magisterium and no provision for one. It is General Convention which is authoritative, whose decisions are reached after debate by clergy, laity, and bishops concurring. Without this the report from Committee A104sa will have little value.

Therefore I call upon General Convention to gather itself together at Indianapolis and to speak, not as the scribes, but as having authority.

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The hot-button issue: clergy sexual misconduct

by Jan Nunley

Clergy sexual misconduct promises to be *the* hot-button issue at this year's General Convention in Indianapolis, a topic that will likely make *everyone* squirm — men and women, gay, lesbian, and straight, liberal and conservative, clergy and laity alike.

The focus of the debate will be proposed revisions to the church's canons on ecclesiastical discipline. The topic has commanded growing churchwide attention since shortly after the 1991 General Convention in Phoenix, when the House of Deputies' vice president, Wallace Frey, admitted to sexual misconduct with several older teenage boys in his congregation. Frey resigned his office and his priesthood as well.

Two cases in the last year have also commanded widespread attention. In 1993 allegations of adultery were made against the newly-elected Suffragan Bishop of Virginia, Antoine Lamont Campbell of South Carolina. Campbell was acquitted of adultery in a church trial, but not before two other women emerged — one priest, one lay — charging him with sexual harassment. The Diocese of Virginia's Standing Committee conducted its own investigation of the charges, and concluded that they "could not certify ... that [they] saw no impediments to Canon Campbell's consecration as a bishop in God's church." Campbell consented to withdrawing his name from the election. He was inhibited from the practice of ministry in South Carolina by the diocese's bishop, Edward Salmon, pending resolution of the sexual harassment charges.

Meanwhile, Bruce Newell, now on the staff of Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry, was deposed from the ordained ministry last October following an ecclesiastical trial in Virginia on charges of violating his ordination vows by "ministering in an improper or misleading manner." The charges first surfaced in 1988, when several women complained to the rector of Falls Church about Newell's behavior. As a result, Newell's duties there were terminated and he was ordered by Virginia's bishop, Peter James Lee, to undergo counseling. Four years later, one of the women reported to Lee a more detailed version of the events and the diocese brought a formal presentment against Newell. Bishop William Frey, dean of Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pa., says the deposition will not affect Newell's staff position at the seminary. (Frey has felt the sting of clergy misconduct trials as well, with a $1.2 million judgment levied against the Diocese of Colorado in 1991 for covering up a priest's misconduct while Frey was bishop there.)

"Clergy feel concerned about the possibility of false accusations, or of bishops acting precipitously. That's where the struggles will be on this issue." — Harold Hopkins

In adjudicating such cases, it's important to make it clear that all procedures reflect the standard of "innocent until proven guilty," says Bishop Harold Hopkins of the national church's Office of Pastoral Development. "Clergy feel concerned about the possibility of false accusations, or of bishops acting precipitously. That's where the struggles will be on this issue."

Should an allegation be substantiated and the offender admit guilt, both national and diocesan canons provide some guidelines as to the disposition of the case. When the charge is "conduct unbecoming a member of the clergy," national canon requires consent of the Standing Committee. Some combination of inhibiting the clergyperson and required therapy is a frequent sentence. In tougher cases, suspension or even deposition from Holy Orders is possible.

If the accused denies the charges, things get more complicated. The national canons detail the charges for which clergy may be tried, but it's up to the dioceses to establish the composition of courts and trial procedures. In South Carolina, the president of the Standing Committee who chooses the all-clergy jury. Since South Carolina currently has only one resident woman presbyter, that jury is likely to be all male. Georgia, by contrast, elects its ecclesiastical court to six-year terms at its diocesan convention, and Virginia selects jurors from a 12-member standing jury appointed annually by the bishop.

Charleston, S.C., attorney Howell Morrison, who served as Church Advocate — essentially, the prosecutor — in Campbell's adultery trial, questions the wide variation in trial procedures from diocese to diocese, and the deviation from established custom in secular courts. While the national canons invest the courts with subpoena powers, and the canons state that church members have a "duty" to give evidence, compliance is purely voluntary, and frequently clergy and laity just don't want to get involved.

Confusing, too, are the criteria by which a standard of proof is set. In Campbell's trial, the standard was "beyond a reasonable shadow of a doubt" — a burden of proof usually reserved for criminal acts. Virginia's standard is "clear and convincing evidence," the lowest standard of proof; others use a "preponderance of the evidence" standard.

According to Hopkins, there may be an attempt at General Convention to set "clear and convincing evidence" as a national standard, along with the other proposed improvements to Title IV. But modifying other procedures, such as jury composition, may meet resistance from dioceses already concerned about national church "meddling" in local affairs. The all-clergy jury predominates in most dioceses, the assumption being that clergy should be tried by a jury of their peers. But some lay people, says Episcopal Women's Caucus (EWC) president, Sally Bucklee, question whether the standard of "peer" shouldn't be baptism rather than

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ordination, to ensure that professional sympathies don't get in the way of a fair hearing.

Another concern is the process of inhibiting a priest while charges are pending. Hopkins says proposed revisions to Title IV may give bishops more authority to remove clergy temporarily "without prejudice," to protect the interests of all concerned.

The question of disclosure is also important, especially as victims appeal to the secular judicial system for justice. Texas' bishop, Maurice Benitez, for example, is coming under heavy fire for encouraging a Houston parish to call Campbell as rector without informing them that he had been inhibited by his bishop in South Carolina. Benitez had turned down the parish's first choice for the position, a woman, and suggested Campbell as an alternative. "Bishops must disclose to a parish search committee if a priest is inhibited, and must be called to task if they don't," emphasizes Bucklee.

Particularly of concern to some is the fact that Benitez is up for re-election to the Church Pension Fund board, which oversees liability insurance with regard to clergy sexual misconduct. "This raises questions about his potential stewardship of the assets of the national church, which would be at risk in a civil lawsuit," says Houston attorney and active laywoman Muffy Moroney.

Standards for sentencing are also in question. Newell complains that being deposed five years after his initial punishment constitutes "double jeopardy," since he feels he has demonstrated "repentance and amendment of life" in the five years since losing his job.

But many people are worried that the most serious problems with the adjudicatory system have to do, not with clergy discipline, but with the process by which bishops and dioceses respond to complaints of impropriety. Many bishops and other supervisors trivialize complaints, some women claim. The EWC's Bucklee reports that women complaining about sexual misconduct by male clergy are regularly counter-accused of being "sick, crazy, or menopausal" in some dioceses.

Some dioceses have put procedures in place to ensure fair treatment of both accuser and accused. Rhode Island maintains two "advocates" — one clergy, one layperson — who are charged with investigating allegations and with assisting victims in preparing a formal complaint. Virginia's bishop assigns a "response team" of trained clergy and laypeople to investigate charges, assist both complainant and accused and lead a "process for healing" for affected congregations.

But these policies are not universal, or even widespread. Virginia's comprehensive 32-page procedure was only issued this spring, after a long period of study. "There is a sense of making it up as you go along [in most dioceses]," says Virginia's communications director, Sarah Bartenstein.

Perhaps the most devastating criticism of the clergy misconduct process is that in some dioceses it fails to meet the most basic standard of pastoral care and confidentiality. "I would never recommend that another person go through this," said one complainant who asked to remain anonymous, noting that clergy closed ranks around the priest she accused and her bishop virtually ignored her.

Other issues also swirl about when sexual misconduct is alleged. For example, cultural and regional differences in what's considered appropriate levels of intimacy and touching do occur. Accusations of misconduct against women are rare, but they do occur, and sexism can cut both ways; an accusation by a lay man against a female clergyperson might not be taken as seriously because the "power differential" isn't perceived to be as great as it would be with male clergy. Is there racism involved? Campbell is an African American, married to a white woman. All his accusers are white women as well. Campbell maintains stereotypes about young black men fueled the harassment charges; others say that's a red herring. And homophobia, too, may also muddy the waters in a church where many believe any homosexual relationship, committed or not, is unacceptable.

In any event, the days of a young clergyman being encouraged to court the senior warden's daughter are probably long past. Virginia's policy says "such relationships may not truly be mutual" and advises clergy attracted to parishioners to "seek discernment" with the bishop, colleagues, or representatives of the parish.

In the final analysis, even a thorough revision of the national canons on ecclesiastical discipline and suggested

A call for walking our talk

Clergy sexual misconduct clearly isn't the only sexuality-related issue that will come before General Convention. The Standing Commission on Human Affairs has prepared its report to the Convention, chastising the church for not "walking our talk" with regard to civil and human rights protections for lesbians and gay men and saying it's "like an abusive parent" to many homosexuals.

"The very people who appeal to the 1979 General Convention resolution against the ordination of 'practicing' homosexuals as if it were canon law," says the report, "are sometimes the same people who ignore the resolutions upholding full civil rights for gay men and lesbians and which proclaim that 'homosexual persons are children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance, and pastoral concern and care of the church.' " That "full and equal claim" to Church membership, maintains the report, implies strongly that ordination and blessing of lesbian and gay unions should not be denied unless the Church is willing to rescind their baptism as well. The report also stresses the urgent need for effective youth ministries in the church to provide leadership and mentoring for "youth at risk."

— J.N.

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policy changes for dioceses probably won't clear the air entirely. But despite widespread dissatisfaction with how the Episcopal Church is addressing clergy sexual misconduct, it may be ahead of the curve on this issue when other denominations are considered. "People tell me we are," says Bishop Hopkins, "which may say something about how little is being done elsewhere."

Jan Nunley is a regular contributor to The Witness *and a candidate for Holy Orders in the Diocese of Rhode Island. She is also newscaster for National Public Radio's "Living on Earth."*

Ecu Takes:

United Church of Christ

Bill Hulteen is Executive Director of the Office For Church Life and Leadership, United Church of Christ.

The General Synod pronouncement [on sexual harassment and abuse in 1991] included not only clergy but all members and leaders of the church. Local churches are being resourced to greater sensitivity to the way they recruit, train and supervise their leaders, especially those who work with youth. There are seminars all over the country for clergy, to introduce the nature of sexual harassment.

Committees on Church and Ministry [regional church bodies] are now much better prepared to deal with the discipline questions related to sexual misconduct. We cannot set a policy that is binding locally, but we are in the fifth draft of procedural guidelines for Committees to use in cases of misconduct. We are training response teams to deal with the claimant, the alleged perpetrator, the congregation, and the families of those persons.

[The UCC also recently added a background check and release form to the profile of each minister seeking placement. Ministers are asked to disclose their histories in matters such as disciplinary actions by church-related or professional bodies, criminal convictions and lawsuits, and termination of employment for sexual, physical or financial misconduct. They are also required to sign a release form authorizing response to inquiries concerning their background and character.

The Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society administers a fund for the healing of victims of sexual harassment and abuse in the church.]

Anglican Church of Canada

Vianney Carriere is News Editor of the Anglican Journal.

The case in the Diocese of Ontario is probably the best-known one right now. A choirmaster at the Cathedral in Kingston who was there about 15 years abused dozens of children in the choir over pretty well all that time. It didn't come to light until three or four years ago, largely through the efforts of the local newspaper.

A group of parents of victims took strong exception to how the Cathedral responded. The issue of an apology was a live one from the start. They wanted an acknowledgement from the church that what had gone on was wrong.

The apology was delayed, but the Bishop of Ontario apologized about a year ago.

I think because of the scope of the case and the length of time, and because of the ongoing controversy over the church's response, it had quite an impact on the church getting some mechanisms in the works so it could respond more effectively. Policies are being formulated diocese by diocese.

The way the national church fit in was that the primate appointed someone he called a convener — Mary Wells, one of the national experts here on child sexual abuse, who drafted much of the federal legislation in this area. She was appointed for one year, and worked in the community on healing and reconciliation.

Roman Catholic Church

Francis Maniscalco is director of the Office for Media Relations of the U.S. Catholic Conference.

The actual handling of cases is done diocese by diocese. In some dioceses, like Chicago, this has been delegated to a layperson; in others, it is handled by the priest personnel office or the vicar or chancellor.

The bishops have discussed it at least since 1985 in national meetings. They have enunciated a group of actions that ought to be taken in case of an allegation. When an accusation is made, it should be investigated. If it is well-founded the person accused is sent for evaluation and treatment. There is an extension of pastoral care to the victim. If there are civil aspects they should be cooperated with, and the matter should be dealt with as openly as possible. These principles speak mainly to accusations of current abuse.

For some time now, the vast majority of cases are accusations from the past. It seems like we're dealing with 30 or more years of cases in a very short period of time.

In June of 1993 the bishops established an ad hoc committee on sexual abuse, made up of seven bishop members and some consultants. They are examining what is being done in dioceses in the Catholic Church, and in other cases, to give advice to the bishops. Their first major report is due at the November business meeting of the bishops.

There are questions about ministry, what to do about priests who behave in that way — especially with pedophile behavior, which is compulsive and not curable. Can this person under supervision function in ministry — for example, in a purely administrative position? What happens when the person declines to be part of a process of dismissal from the priesthood? In Canon Law there is a five-year statute of limitations. There are some bishops who have taken this to Rome, to find a way to address the issue in this country.

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Insurrection in Chiapas

by Wes Rehberg

The Zapatista rebellion erupted in Chiapas on January 1 — the day the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was to take effect. My spouse Eileen Robertson-Rehberg and I, human rights advocates interested in insurgency and counterinsurgency, responded by travelling to Mexico and by organizing support in Central New York where we live.

The Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) insurrection arose from centuries of colonial and neocolonial oppression, exacerbated by the certainty that NAFTA would create an influx of U.S. products and undercut Mexican products. Involved in the EZLN's insurgence in January was the temporary taking of several Chiapan towns including San Cristóbal de las Casas, a tourist mecca, and other small localities: Ocosingo, Las Margaritas, Altamirano. They also kidnapped a former Chiapan governor.

The Mexican government, the PRI, read the message of the insurrection and the threat to NAFTA clearly, and sought peace talks, which culminated in an accord that was only partially satisfactory to the EZLN but was to be the basis of continuing negotiations. Basic grievances such as land reforms were deferred and a call for President Carlos Salinas de Gortari's resignation refused, but the government agreed in March to a more inclusive democratic process, including a greater indigenous voice and vote.

Wes Rehberg is a liberation theologian whose predominant cultural memory is of himself as a white outcast, as "white trash." As a result, he is working on "Second-Hand and Third-Class: A Liberation Theology of White Trash," which he hopes will be accepted someday as a doctoral dissertation.

In the course of the peace talks the EZLN released the kidnapped Chiapan ex-governor. Yet government counterinsurgency continued. Despite a cease-fire and the accord, death squads operated more openly and Latino municipal leaders formed municipally sanctioned goon squads. Along with the counterinsurgency, came the labels used to neutralize the legitimate grievances behind an insurrection, labels such as "wild fanatics" and "outdated Marxist revolutionaries," and now even "under the influence of liberation theology."

During Holy Week, liberation advocates such as Bishop Samuel Ruiz García, a peace negotiator under death threat from landowners, climbed into pulpits to continue the call for justice, for conversion, for an end to oppression, for a ceasing of the violence upon which not only Mexico feeds, but which gratifies far too many lusts worldwide. Holy Week culminates in a brutal death, an empty tomb, a resurrection, and astonishingly, in the amazing transreflexive communal moment of the Pentecost, the "Hineni" that explodes in the mutual outcry of human and divine together in the realization that they are one — "Here I am!"

The Zapatistas shout a similar cry — "Here We Are!" — the exploited poor, flawed, yet victimized. The primary symbol of the EZLN is the ski-mask of the spokesperson of the Clandestine Revolutionary Committee of the EZLN, subcomandante Marcos. Mask and eloquence merge, the mask the mark of power, the eloquence the mark of the sophisticated intelligence that defies the indexes of counterinsurgency.

The ski mask is reproduced in the imagination of the oppressed in dolls sold by the indigenous in marketplaces and in the stories that circulate in the currents of the "wind below."

The EZLN has profound depth, and its "wind below," the current of revolution, shudders through the land, rising to meet the "wind above," the colonizing powers, in storms.

In another part of Mexico, the central-eastern state of Hidalgo, we saw a child run out of a mountain rural adobe hut wearing a ski mask, to the amusement of members of a Christian base community. The indigenous base communities we visited, their people a mixture of Mexicas, Otomí and Nahuatl Indians, reminded one of what sub-comandante Marcos suggests when he writes of the "wind below." Marcos writes it "will come from the mountains, born under the trees and conspiring for a new world, so new that it is barely an intuition in the heart which inspires it." This is a "collective wind" born of "dignity and defiance," the "product" of a "long chain of disgraces and rebellions" spread under the poisonous rains of the colonizing wind from above. The wind below has found embodiment, pleasure in political grace, a sense of direction and meaning, and has been made flesh not only in the defiance of the EZLN but also in the shaky survival strategies and reflective practices of Christian base communities.

The EZLN, observing the continuing activity of death squads, suspended key talks it was to hold with indigenous community leaders who were to provide input into the next phase of the peace talks. This suspension in mid-April pushed a full-blown peace agreement further off in the distance, closer to the national presidential election on August 21. The PRI is expected to win, but the ski-mask is a formidable obstacle, a sign embodied in the imagination of the sophisticated revolutionaries in the Chiapas jungle highlands. TW

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Voting for more than pizza

by Julie A. Wortman

Witness *managing editor Julie Wortman was a member of an 11-person Episcopal Peace Fellowship delegation that travelled to El Salvador in March as part of an ecumenical election observation effort. The March 20 national elections for president, deputies to the Legislative Assembly and municipal mayors were the first since peace accords were signed two years ago by the government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN), concluding 12 years of civil war. Candidates represented the full political spectrum, from right to left. No presidential candidate received a majority of the votes cast. The governing Republican Nationalist Alliance (ARENA) party's Armando Calderón Sol won the run-off election held April 24. Sol's opponent was Rubén Zamora, candidate of the Democratic Convergence coalition and the FMLN.*

The first evening of our stay in El Salvador we ate dinner in a San Salvador Pizza Hut. There was a Dunkin' Donuts across the street. The colors of the governing ARENA party, the political faction favored to win the upcoming March 20 presidential election, covered every available pole and rock: red, white and blue. People were sporting T-shirts celebrating the Miami Dolphins, Big Sur and rock music. Exhaust fumes from the traffic outside choked the air and the ground was littered with trash.

I hadn't expected to feel so much at home, nor did I want to.

In part, I admit, I was disappointed that this "foreign" place didn't immediately seem more picturesque and exotic. But as I unhappily chewed on my pizza it was also rapidly dawning on me that, unlike in South Africa, "free and fair" elections in El Salvador would not inevitably lead to profound social change.

The 12-year civil war here had been, in essence, a class war — it is said that 200 families run the country, with 80 percent of the wealth in the hands of two percent of the population. While part of the FMLN's goal was to shift those percentages in favor of the poor, most of those who had fought with the guerillas had hoped for a fundamentally different bottom line than that contemplated by trickle-down economics — people, not dollars. With capitalism so obviously entrenched and with a 100-year history of oligarchic rule and long-term foreign interests to overcome, how could elections make a difference? Many people, especially the poor, would be unable to vote because of problems with the voter-registration process and, even if they could vote, decades of intimidation had conditioned them to believe that it was safer to remain at home. Recent death squad-like assassinations of political figures had only reenforced this perception. The principle of majority rule, it appeared, was undoubtedly going to work in favor of the establishment ARENA party.

"As younger people we really need change and we think we don't need to emigrate to the U.S. to get it."

— Romulo Ramos

But the inevitability of an ARENA victory did not seem to dampen the spirits of the people we met.

Our home base in San Salvador was St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church. Luis Serrano has been the rector there since 1972. During the war, 600 people a month came to St. John's for food. Most were from mountain communities in FMLN-held territory. "The image of the church was of solidarity with the people," Serrano said. When the army bombed the city's poor neighborhoods in retaliation for the FMLN's 1989 offensive, St. John's rapidly filled with frightened people seeking safe shelter. The infamous Treasury Police jailed Serrano and those who were helping him, charging that they were supporting the enemy. Serrano spent 45 days in prison. He still goes nowhere without a bodyguard.

"I think the people after 12 years of war know where they are," Serrano said. "They understand that to work in favor of the poor is worth dying for. To be willing to be killed is a tremendous weapon."

Despite his belief that ARENA's Calderón Sol was involved with the death squads — people say Sol is a furious, impulsive man inclined to using force to get his way — Serrano believes the future of El Salvador is "open."

"Maintaining a good international image means money to the government," he said. "In any conflicted moment ONUSAL [the United Nations observer mission] will have the last word because of the Peace Accords."

In addition to setting the terms for disarmament and free elections, the Peace Accords spell out requirements for replacing the military police force with a national civil police; a land transfer program that will benefit ex-guerillas and others; human rights investigations and monitoring; and reintegration programs for ex-combatants.

Julie A. Wortman is managing editor of *The Witness.*

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"Neither the elections nor the winners define democracy for El Salvador — only the peace accords," Carlos Ramos from Central American University (UCA) told the ecumenical delegation of election observers after the elections. "It is not so important what happened on March 20, but what is the future of the peace accords. ARENA now has the majority of the power, and will have a tendency to eliminate the peace accords through political process. Only pressure from the left and international community will counteract that."

And yet something important did seem to happen on that election Sunday. A portion of our group was stationed at polling stations in the eastern part of the country, in the Department of San Miguel, one of the most prosperous agricultural areas in El Salvador. (We stayed at *Caserio El Mogote*, a small Lutheran church compound lying in the shadow of a volcano just outside the town of El Jorge. Our first night there we dined not on pizza, but on an egg-and-avocado salad, *frijoles*, bread and sausages. Our host, Carlos Maravilla, and his wife, Blanca, had raised most of the food themselves, including our coffee.) Richard Bower and I spent the day at the public school in El Transito, a town where an estimated 12,000 people had registered to vote.

From 7:55 a.m., when the polls opened, until late into the evening after the polls had closed, we witnessed hundreds after hundreds of people cautiously trying on democratic process. In El Transito, between the election officials who staffed the 30 voting stations and the party representatives or *vigilantes* who stood by watching for irregularities, we saw about 360 people from every part of the political spectrum working intently and cooperatively to process the voters and then count the ballots. There was a *fiesta* atmosphere — people had dressed up for the occasion and, after voting, many remained to watch or visit with friends and neighbors. Some had spent two or three hours travelling to the polls on foot. Young men lounged in groups, watching young women who strolled by arm-in-arm.

We saw no overt acts of intimidation, but there were plenty of irregularities and problems that made these elections less than "free and fair." We and other election observers saw people turned away because their names couldn't be found on the voting lists, election officials wearing campaign paraphernalia and *vigilantes* who performed election officials' duties. One election worker later told us of votes being smuggled into the polls in fast-food containers. An estimated 47 percent of the people didn't vote and it was clear that the whole system of voter registration was less than user-friendly, especially in a country with so much illiteracy. Still, people seemed to feel free to point the abuses out (many did to us) and to demand compliance with the rules.

In the end, the FMLN, while not sweeping the elections, secured a political foothold in the national assembly and in two dozen or so towns. "We've worked hard to be a real alternative to the way things are in this country," Manuel Quintanilla, a FMLN activist told us before the election. "We're not fanatics. We will accept a democratic decision. For us the struggle doesn't end tomorrow."

As for my Pizza Hut worries, I was relieved to find a significant number of Salvadorans unimpressed by the lure of U.S. capitalist culture, among them Romulo Ramos, a 26-year-old teacher who had spent time working in the U.S. to support his family. (An estimated 800,000 Salvadorans living in Los Angeles for similar reasons were not allowed to vote by absentee ballots.) "As younger people we really need change and we think we don't need to emigrate to the U.S. to get it," Ramos said. "We need to live like human beings." The Salvadoran way of life is "more natural and friendly," he said. "In the U.S. I lived next door to someone for six months. I never knew his name." TW



Voters in El Transito, El Salvador, thronged the streets leading to the polls on the morning of the March 20 elections. Julie A. Wortman

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Changing public perceptions

by Tari Susan Hartman

In the last 10 years there has been an emerging recognition that there is a disability culture. As that is realized by people with disabilities and they share their collective experience the public will become more aware.

My own relationship with the disability community began in 1979, when I sustained a temporary disability. I was working with abused kids and got kicked in the jaw. As a consequence I had to wear a cervical collar.

The first time I went on an audition with a cervical collar, the casting director dismissed me unfairly. Angry, I went straight to the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and organized the committee of performers with disabilities. The next 1980 SAG contract was the first that included people with disabilities.

Because television has had an obsession with "curing" people with disabilities, I've worked with others to help the media present more realistic images. While I was executive director of the California Governor's Committee for Employment of People with Disabilities, we worked with and pressured the entertainment industry to increase employment opportunities and to improve portrayals.

We set up a casting clearing house for performers with disabilities and helped insure accessibility. For example, we asked studios which were casting a blind or deaf character to hire people with disabilities and to make the sides, the part of the script that actors audition from, available in braille or to have sign language interpreters.

For actors using wheel chairs, auditions had to be accessible, *not* held in the parking lot.

We worked with acting coaches and arranged scholarships to train existing talent.

We also presented awards for good work in television, film, advertising, children's programming and literature.

Realizing that writers, producers and directors get their sense of reality from the news media, I established EIN SOF Communications in 1987 as the only marketing, promotion, public relations and production company working exclusively with the disability community. We are now working with members of ADAPT and other organizations to help them get into the news, in addition to trying to influence the entertainment and advertising industry.

We're working with ILRU (Independent Living Resident Utilization) and the Dole Foundation for Employment of People with Disabilities to present the Associated Press with preferred language for the their stylebook which is produced each year as the "Bible" for journalists throughout the world. Language is critical.

Naturally economics has a powerful role. There's a tremendous incentive on the part of nursing home operators to keep people with disabilities segregated and warehoused. Medicaid makes direct payments to nursing homes (you have to get a waiver to live elsewhere). ADAPT is seeking to liberate 1.7 million people from nursing homes and other institutions.

The disability community is struggling now to have an impact on corporations. Unfortunately their relationship has been limited to charitable contributions, so it's hard to get a foot in the door to explain that they're not asking for charity. The corporations' reluctance is just part of society's unwillingness to relinquish stereotypes about people with disabilities.

But we're attempting to demonstrate to them the untapped purchasing power of the disability community which can yield a substantial return on their ADA-related investments, like increasing accessibility. Corporations should invest in sophisticated advertisements targeting this niche market. The ads, in turn, will help change public opinion.

We're currently contacting all the producers of fall shows and suggesting they include people with disabilities in the background. This will provide a subliminal message that the American scene has changed since passage of the ADA and that persons with disabilities are woven through the fabric of our society. TW

Tari Susan Hartman is the owner of EIN SOF Communications. EIN SOF, from Hebrew Scripture, means "without end" and represents the power that may help us to return to wholeness. She is coauthor of *Making News* (Advocado Press, 1994). The icons on this page are available from the **Graphic Artists Guild Foundation**, 11 W. 20th St., 8th floor, New York, N.Y., 10011-3704; (212) 463-7730.



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Feminism and disability: mother knows best?

by Anne Finger

Feminism and Disability, by Barbara Hillyer, University of Oklahoma Press, 1993, 302 pages, $27.95

Two decades ago, the feminists' proclamation that "The personal is the political" was revolutionary. It demanded that the political was no longer seen only as what happened in the public arena, but also what happened in areas that had formerly been seen as private: not just in legislatures and on the barricades, but also in kitchens and bedrooms. The echoes from that proclamation are still being heard today—not least in the disability rights movement, where problems that had formerly been seen as private and subject to change through psychological adjustment and individual solutions are now acknowledged as ones that need to be addressed socially and politically.

But more recently feminist thinkers have pointed out the difficulties in taking the notion of "the personal is political" uncritically, for a number of reasons. One of them is that we can end up political solipsism — an inability to move beyond one's personal experience and take into account the lives and needs of others. Barbara Hillyer's *Feminism and Disability* (despite its too extensive citations of the works of others) falls into just such a trap. The whole time I was reading this book, I kept sensing the ghost of what could have been a powerful and provocative book haunting the text.

If Hillyer, a non-disabled woman, had written a first-person account of what it means to her as a feminist to find herself raising a disabled daughter — if she had written about her anger, her guilt, her joy, the conflicts that she found within herself and between herself and disability rights activists — this text would have been a valuable and important addition to the growing body of work that explores the conflicts and similarities between the disability rights movement and feminism.

Instead, we get a book that calls itself *Feminism and Disability*, pretending to be in some manner a definitive text, to speak broadly and theoretically. But Hillyer's thinking is sloppy, to put it kindly, and her antagonism to the disability rights movement runs deep. Thus, unfortunately, we get a book that, unless its arguments are answered by disabled feminists and non-disabled feminists who understand what it means to be allies with disabled people, will do real damage to any potential for alliances between feminists and disability rights activists.

Consider, for instance, what Hillyer has to say about the subject of reproductive rights. She patronizingly acknowledges that some disabled women can successfully raise children but then, with language that could have come from the eugenics movement, speaks of "the larger societal problem of persons with seriously impaired judgment *reproducing themselves*."

Marriage gets a scant paragraph. Hillyer writes of "an increasing movement to encourage marriage among retarded people and others formerly considered too handicapped for marriage. ... To advocate marriage for someone whose disability has already defined her as dependent, socially or financially, is then to reinforce that dependence." There's not a word about the outright legal prohibitions against marriage that existed until recently, the deep-rooted repugnance among the non-disabled toward marriage for disabled people.

Hillyer seems not to grasp the most fundamental argument of the disability rights movement: that while impairments may be physical/emotional/mental, disability is a social construct.

The chapter that holds the greatest potential, "Mother-Blaming," is also the most troublesome. She acknowledges that many disabled people feel oppressed by parents as well as professionals, but what she does with this is to make all parents female and then reduce this to "mother-blaming." Our experiences cannot be so lightly dismissed. What does Hillyer make of the studies that show that disabled children are twice as likely to be physically and sexually abused? Hillyer ends up with an outlook that is hardly feminist: instead, it's "motherist." She knows best what her daughter needs, or at least she knows what her daughter doesn't need—disability rights.

For the real analyses of feminism and disability, look instead to works by disabled women: Jenny Morris' *Pride Against Prejudice* (New Society Publishers), the anthology *With the Power of Each Breath* (edited by Browne, Connors,and Stern, published by Cleis Press) and Connie Panzarino's just-published autobiography, *The Me in the Mirror* (Seal Press). TW

book review

Anne Finger is a lecturer in creative writing at Wayne State University and author of *Past Due: A Story of Disability.*

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Finding shelter

by Marianne Arbogast

Sixty-five percent of people with disabilities encounter physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, says Veronica Robinson, coordinator of the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Program at Access Living in Chicago. But although 280,000 disabled persons live in the Chicago area, there is just one fully accessible shelter in the city.

Robinson's own hearing impairment gives her a firsthand awareness of the barriers her clients face. She tells of one client, "a deaf woman with a long history of abuse," who went into a shelter after her boyfriend tried to kill her. But "it was totally inaccessible, not meeting her needs. She went back to her boyfriend and he cut her throat. She's dead.

"The community is not viewing this as a life-and-death situation," Robinson says. "They don't see how many people with disabilities die from domestic violence, how many people with disabilities suffer from their primary caregivers."

A counselor and advocate for disabled women who are victims of abuse, Robinson says that ignoring the needs of women with disabilities locks them into violent situations.

Housing is a critical problem.

"Society is not giving us any option but to stay in abusive situations, because there is no commitment to affordable, accessible housing," she says. "The primary fear is, if I leave my home which is accessible, there is no place but a nursing home. You have agencies that talk about assistance to people with disabilities, but if my client gets $407 from SSI, how is she going to rent an apartment for $425?

"In Chicago, public housing is in high-rises. I don't know how many horror stories I've heard from clients who can't get to their apartments because the elevators don't work, so they sit outside, and again become vulnerable to crime. Some of them first acquired a disability through a traumatic situation or abuse — head injuries, gunshots, stab wounds."

Society is not giving us any option but to stay in abusive situations. The primary fear is, if I leave my home which is accessible, there is no place but a nursing home.



Veronica Robinson

For a disabled person, the logistics of fleeing an abusive home can be daunting.

"I have had clients who have planned escapes, then called the Department of Human Services for transportation assistance. But their policy is that they will not come to the site of the abuse. If my client is a total-care client — quadriplegic or paraplegic — can you explain to me how she is going to get out?"

Those who do leave face formidable obstacles.

"I've had many clients who tried to get emergency medical assistance, and were turned down, not given medical cards, because they hadn't gone through the process of legally separating from their husbands," Robinson says.

"We had a client who was diabetic, a woman with a hearing loss. She got sick and went into the hospital. They had no knowledge of her diabetes, and she died. They did not have an interpreter at any point of her admission into the hospital.

"There are not enough interpreters in courtrooms or in public aid offices. My clients are often told, 'Come back when you can bring someone who can hear.' In fact, the law says it is *their* [the agency's] responsibility to provide interpretive services."

Robinson lost 40 percent of her hearing after a bout with childhood measles. Then, while hospitalized for strep as a college student, she contracted a staph infection and was treated with an antibiotic that induced further, progressive hearing loss.

"I went through a lot of anger and self-pity," she says. "I turned to drugs, I turned to alcohol, and I contemplated ending my life."

She credits her psychological recovery to prayer, counseling, and a supportive

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Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness.*

mother. "I began to think, I am a worthwhile person, and I've got something to give."

For a short time, Robinson worked with a state organization which housed people with disabilities.

"I saw a lot of abuse, from drugging them to the extent that all they needed was to be fed and changed, to workers hitting them. I didn't want to be part of that."

One day, she came across a newspaper ad which asked, "Do you feel you would be a strong advocate for women?" Feeling that it was addressed to her, she interviewed for a position at Rainbow House, a shelter for battered women and children. She was hired immediately. Over the next six years, the agency grew from a staff of three and a budget of $75,000 to a staff of 22 and a half-million-dollar budget. Robinson became the program coordinator.

Now 37, Robinson has been working with Access Living for four years. Her hearing has continued to deteriorate, and she is frank about her struggles.

"The past six years have been very difficult. I have had to seek counseling for myself. It's pretty much 12-step: You deny that you're losing your hearing. But when you stop hearing water running in the bathtub, when you see it flooding your house ... when you have the police breaking down your door because your mother has been calling you for days and you can't hear the phone ... when you have a relationship of about 12 years and he says, I can't deal with this ... I've become a much stronger woman and a more persevering person — though a little less patient!"

Robinson is wearied by the prejudice she encounters, tired of people expressing surprise at her competence.

"People say, 'You're so articulate, you're so smart!'

"The myth is that we can't do it. We can't possibly be teachers or engineers or counselors.

"When you have people with disabilities who are both professionals and consumers, you get more for your money. They should hire architects who have disabilities, so when they build ramps and accessible entrances, they get it right the first time. Would you give a white person money and say, we want you to do a cultural program in an African-American neighborhood? You would find the person most qualified in the community and hire them."

Robinson, a member of St. Sabina's Evangelical Catholic Church in Chicago, says that prayer and meditation arm her against "negativism, discriminatory practices, and ignorance." But she sees a need to better educate faith communities around issues of abuse.

"Churches and synagogues should support people more when they make decisions around separation, and not force marital counseling or mediation. When abuse is involved, the individual needs to deal with it alone first, to understand it's not their problem. Then, only if it is the desire of that individual to restore the relationship, they should facilitate that. And not use the bible as a tool to oppress people. That is clearly not what the word of God is about. It's about freedom, not about bondage."

Robinson tries to live "a life of encouragement," to help others move toward freedom. At Access Living, she works with the first deaf women's support group in the country for victims of domestic violence.



"You need somebody to believe in you and walk with you a couple of blocks," she says. "When I see women come from a passive, submissive life of brutality, and see them walk out with head up, shoulders back, with an 'I'm-here-world' kind of attitude — they are few and far between, but when you get one, it lasts a long time." TW

ECPC dinner!

Order tickets now for our General Convention dinner on August 31! Steve Charleston, bishop of Alaska, will speak. Dinner, which includes transportation from the Convention and hotels, costs $30. It will be wonderful to see each other during this Convention dedicated to honoring women's ministries.

July issue:
20 years with women priests — celebrating women in the church and beyond

Welcome to The Witness!

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" It is the beginning of a new era. We have moved from an era of pessimism, division, limited opportunities, turmoil and conflict. We are starting a new era of hope, reconciliation and nation building."
— Nelson Mandela, April 27, 1994



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The Witness

Volume 77 • Number 7 • July 1994

Women's spirituality:
In the church and beyond

Economic justice

I'M INSPIRED TO WRITE today because of my very positive response of mind and heart to Bill Wylie-Kellermann's article "Spiritual warfare and economic justice" (5/94). What an extraordinary coincidence to have just delivered in the pulpit this morning the Bishop's Pastoral Letter assigned on the "Sin of Racism" and soon after to read Bill's article which takes a very similar approach in analyzing the U.S. economic (virtually unconscious) sin, just as the bishops emphasized the unconscious character by which our culture is caught in the "principality" of racism.

Both of these major sins are carried along with their own momentum. I think our blindness to the economic "mammon" tide is even more subtle and more powerfully dangerous to the spirit and direction of our culture. Of course an economic system which encourages free enterprise has done ever so much for the world, but without responsible human purpose and checks and balances limiting it, releasing it to its own independent value system, as Bill points out, is a true hidden danger for as Jesus puts it: "The love of money is the root of all evil."

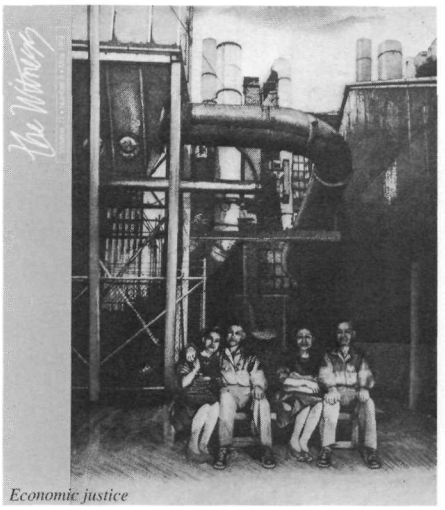
At the time of the race crisis in Virginia in the 1950s and 1960s it was regarded as heresy to the culture to speak out, but now one can do it in most places. To speak out about the economic situation, as Bill does, is clearly heresy to most people who assume the way we do it is right. Bill's article should some day be another Bishops' Pastoral Letter.

David Cammack
Baltimore, MD

Dialogue

THE APRIL DIALOGUE ISSUE IS A GEM. Like in all Anthony Trollop's novels, the STAR's dialogue with the Angel of death indicates that neither has the last word.

Frances Grauman
Watertown, NY



Economic justice

The Left

I ABSOLUTELY LOVED YOUR ISSUE on the left [Feb./March, 1994]. It was the most thought-provoking *Witness* ever. The courage of the writers who were willing to relinquish life-long ideologies and consider new and creative (and very humble) alternatives was so impressive it made me weep. I am in the same camp — ready to discard old patterns of politics and structures, but not able to envision what can replace them as yet. Generally I would say the consensus is to deal with what is in your own backyard!

Deirdre Luzwick
Cambridge, WI

Leaving the church

PLEASE STOP MY SUBSCRIPTION to *The Witness* because I no longer read it. For many years I subscribed and enjoyed the articles. Then last year, I worked on the WomanChurch conference in Albuquerque and experienced institutional religion as a major barrier against women accepting one another. I felt I had done my time in my denomination. I resigned my ordination and left my church.

Thank you for a well-done journal seeking to confront injustice in society and the Episcopal Church.

Alice Brasfield
Albuquerque, NM

Sharing the journey

AFTER READING *THE WITNESS*, I had the following dream which served to remind me that I am not so separated and distanced from my struggling sisters across the world as I had imagined:

I am with the exiled women — Palestinian/Israeli women. We have met, each gathering water at a central well. None of us have food. Our stomachs are empty. As we fill our cups with water, one for another, we verbally affirm our faith, saying to each other that we are filled. There is ritual in this. One woman asks another, "And is your basket full?" with the other responding, "Yes, sister, it is full," and in turn, passing the greeting along.

As observer in the dream, I wonder what can be the meaning in this verbal affirmation of fullness when the women's baskets are in reality empty. But there is in this greeting a powerful affirmation of solidarity as well as commitment. Faithfulness to the Truth and to one another is enough in that moment. We are bread to one another — living bread — manna in the wilderness. It is enough. It *will* be enough. *We* will be enough in our mutual commitment to stand together as one in speaking and living a reality that the world does not recognize. In the world's eyes — in the eyes of patriarchal culture — our baskets are empty of bread and our bodies are famished. And yet, we experience communion, genuine presence, Christ in ourselves, and thus in our midst, the true bread of life.

Discovering the richness of an inclusive journal such as *The Witness* has deepened my sense of community with other concerned, but frequently disenfranchised, Christians.

Leslie Smith Kendrick
Louisville, KY

Witness praise

FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS I have given a gift subscription to a friend. As she definitely wants to continue receiving *The Witness* (her words were: I gobble it up the minute it arrives!), I should like to reinstate her gift.

Alice H. Thompson
South Tamworth, NH

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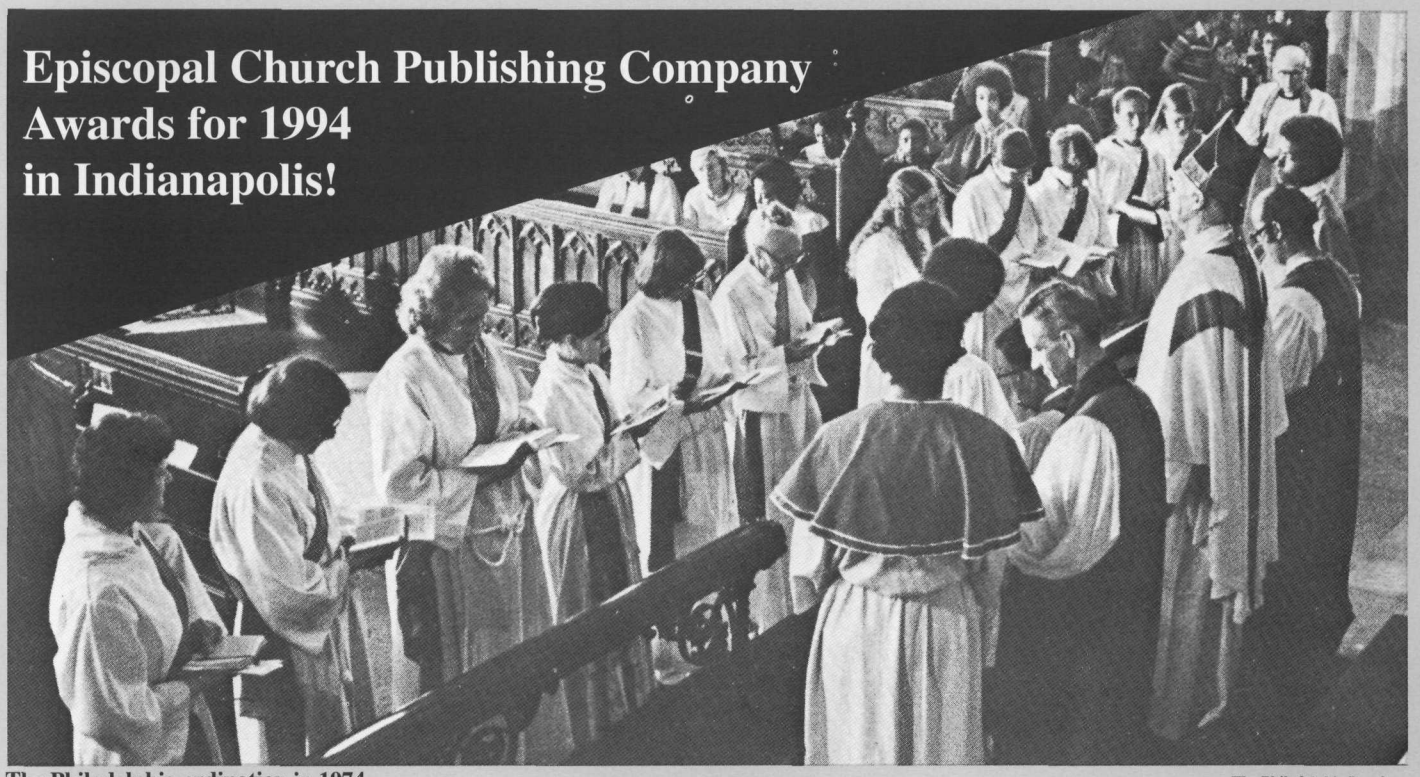
Episcopal Church Publishing Company Awards for 1994 in Indianapolis!



The Philadelphia ordination in 1974 *The Philadelphia Inquirer*

The 1994 Episcopal Church Publishing Company awards will go to the Philadelphia 11 and Washington 4, Hanan Ashrawi, Chung Hyun Kyung and Louie Crew!

The intent of the awards is to lift up people whose work contributes to justice.

The Philadelphia 11 are given the William Scarlett award for their courage in breaking the barriers of gender-bound ordination. This award is given in memory of Bishop Scarlett who also broke down barriers through his work in the Church League for Industrial Democracy.

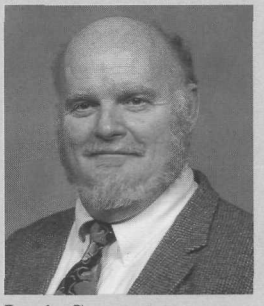
The William Spofford award goes to Hanan Ashrawi, an Anglican woman representing the Palestinians in current peace talks. Given the climate in Israel/Palestine it is unlikely that Ashrawi can claim her award in person, but we salute her work.

The Spofford award is given in honor of long-time *Witness* editor William Spofford who was an outspoken advocate of labor.



Chung Hyun Kyung

Chung Hyun Kyung is to receive the Bill Stringfellow award. Chung is an Asian, feminist theologian who breaks the molds. We celebrate her imagination and vitality. The Stringfellow award is given in the spirit of its namesake who pushed theological and political boundaries with wit and audaciousness.



Louie Crew

Louie Crew, founder of Integrity, is honored with the Vida Scudder award in this 20th year of Integrity's ministry to the church. Crew has worked within the church, through all available channels, to open it to the ministry and presence of gay and lesbian Christians. Similarly, Vida Scudder, a socialist active in the church through many decades, worked for justice and dignity.

The awards will be presented at our dinner on August 31. Steve Charleston, bishop of Alaska, will be our speaker. We will offer good ethnic food for $30 a ticket, which includes transportation to the hall. We welcome early paid registrations.

Any *Witness* subscribers who wish to display books, tapes, cards or similar items (which they authored, crafted or produced) are welcome to display them on a designated table during the ECPC dinner.

Please let us know you are coming. It will be a wonderful occasion to see each other during this Convention dedicated to honoring women's ministries.

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THE WITNESS
Since 1917

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Cover: Celtic Trinity *by Robert Lentz, Bridge Building Images, P.O. Box 1048, Burlington, VT 05402. Lentz writes, "Celtic tradition saw God as a trinity of others." In this image the Masai maiden gives birth to the earth, the Irish mother receives and protects it, while the Plains Indian wise old woman reminds us of endings and renewal.*

Back cover: Water *by Meinrad Craighead, from* The Mother's Songs: Images of God the Mother, *Paulist Press, NY, 1986.*

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Daughters of prophecy

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Twenty years ago, 11 women were ordained priests in an exciting and scary service. They lowered their heads to the hands of bishops with the apostolic authority to ordain in a church that would not receive them.

Today, women are embracing images and words that are fiery, strong and female in pursuit of a deeper relationship with God. Their spirituality is vibrant.

Whether they are singing hymns in harmony or chanting under the full moon, they are claiming their faith in an incarnational way. Many remain within the church and consider Scripture and Jesus integral to who they are, but they are not waiting for mainstream Sunday services to catch up with the breadth of love they feel for themselves, their bodies and God's activity in their lives. Much of the worship that is most important to them happens outside the walls of the church in a friend's house church, in the woods, in the desert.

This issue is a tribute to such women. Women who are learning Buddhist meditation, cleansing themselves with sage and cedar, memorizing Celtic prayers, fasting, or gathering outdoors to dance and cry and sing. Their hearts are strong, their commitments to one another deep and their intent to engage God and learn from the holy spirit impeccable.

A friend who recently engaged in a night of prayer and fasting heard a voice say, "The heart of our women is so strong. When the heart of the women is strong, it is good for the people."

This is true, which is why we present the voices in this issue. The staff does not concur with every voice. For instance, we do not consider scripture "irredeemably" violent (page 22). Nor are we of one mind concerning Chung Hyun Kyung's article (see page 26). I'm not crazy about the prayer to Sophia, which greeted wisdom with explicit references to the entire female anatomy, at the Re-imagining God conference held by women in Minneapolis last fall (page 10).

But the work is important. In this culture women are raised in embarrassment about their bodies. They abuse them, neglect them, preen them, manipulate people with them, sell them.

Consecrating every aspect of our bodies, including the blood flow that makes us distinct from men and which gives life is critical. Offering this flow back to the earth and to God is at the heart of our knowing ourselves as daughters.

Many women artists and poets are weaving these prayers into art. Meinrad Craighead's work in *The Mother's Song* (Paulist Press, 1986) is wonderful. She paints and writes gracefully about breast milk, eggs and blood. Of eggs she says,

"My infant body contained all the eggs which would spill out during the months of the fertile years. So too, some childhood experiences contained the shape of my future years.

"The first picture I can remember coming out of my imagination was of a snake and a bird bound together. My mother recalled a time, one summer in my third year, when I spent each morning rolling balls of mud in my hands. She said I called them "eggs" which were "full of things." I remember the cardboard box I filled with these eggs, the muddy hole I sat in, the hot Texas sun on my body.

"I have never conceived, but whether or not a woman does conceive, she carries the germinative ocean within her and the essential eggs. We have a spirituality, full from within. Whether we are weaving tissue in the womb or pictures in the imagination, we create out of our bodies."

Boundaries are being pushed. Women are celebrating their bodies and their lives in a variety of tongues. In the midst of the celebration, we have to practice discernment to know that we are in relationship to Yahweh, the God of Abraham and Sarah, Peter and Mary Magdalene. We also need to approach our faith with courage and acknowledge that God is more alive, greater and more demanding than we imagine. Settling for Sunday services is probably inadequate.

The backlash that is greeting this vibrant spirituality is remarkable. Rosemary Radford Ruether writes in this issue of the angry denunciations of the Re-imagining conference (page 8). Ruether puts the question to us clearly, "Are the patriarchal female scapegoating patterns of Christianity essential and irreformable, or are they a distortion that can be critiqued in the light of a more authentic vision of the Gospel?"

If patriarchy is woven irrevocably through the fabric of the church, women should leave. But she concludes that if an alternative vision, rooted in the gospel promise of barriers between people being brought down, can be sustained, then we must fight for the soul of the church.

We offer this issue as evidence that when the heart of the women is strong, it is good for the soul of the church.



Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

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Outside the tradition

by Chude Pamela Allen

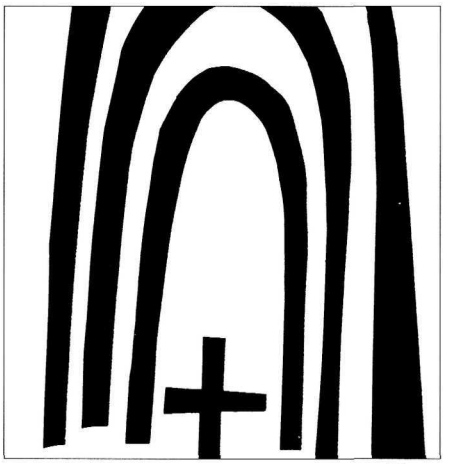
My father's dream was that one of his sons would become an Episcopal priest. Yet the closest he ever came to seeing one of his children preach was a day in early June, 1964 when his second daughter stood before the parishioners of their church and spoke of going to Mississippi.

It seemed such a radical thought when I first broached it to my parents — a young woman speaking in church! Trinity Church was a country parish. My grandfather was one of those who had come to the stone church to preach and serve the sacraments. But the Episcopal Church didn't allow women to be priests and we seldom heard a woman's voice during a service.

I was 20 that summer, about to go south to be a freedom school teacher in the Mississippi Summer Project, part of the campaign to end the racist terror in that state. I needed to raise $450 and I also wanted their prayers. My minister gave me permission to speak.

I stood not in the pulpit but in front of the pews, grateful our minister would allow even that. I spoke of my reasons for going to Mississippi. I asked the parishioners to pray for me and for the people in Mississippi who would welcome us, and for my own family, living through the summer with the strain of worry about my safety.

I stood with my back to the altar, facing my neighbors, my parents' friends, people I'd known almost all my life, and I shared my heart. I allowed that energy which I call God's love to flow through me, sharing my commitment and my love, and they responded, giving me the money I needed.



Mignon

Throughout that summer my parents circulated copies of my letters from Mississippi. But when I returned at the end of the summer I was not invited to share what I'd experienced.

There were other speaking engagements and articles to write. Yet the people who had supported me, financially and in their prayers, never got to hear how my relationship with God sustained me through that summer of terror, loss and grief. I had no opportunity to share with the community that had nurtured me my anger or my confusion about how to keep loving violent and even apathetic white people. It was the beginning of a separation for me between social activism and spirituality.

In 1966 I left the Episcopal Church because women were not allowed to be priests. A year later I joined the Women's Liberation Movement. However, in leaving the church I also turned away from my own spirituality. The political movement I helped to build was secular and, as such, it was a movement that could not nurture my spirituality.

Women are now being ordained in the Episcopal Church and I sometimes grieve that I am not among their number. I have wondered what my life would be like if I'd gone to seminary as I once thought of doing, prepared myself for ordination and become a priest, perhaps one of that first group of women who forced the question in the Episcopal Church. During my radical activist days I considered myself lucky that the Church's sexism prevented me from choosing a socially acceptable way to serve the cause of justice and equality. But now in middle age I am aware of the cost, of the deep hurt I sustained because of this schism between social activism and spiritual community.

I know there are those in the Episcopal Church and the larger Christian community who believe as I do in the cause of justice and a world free of greed and exploitation. I read their writings and sometimes listen to their speeches. I have been nurtured by their spiritual depth as well as heartened by their work in the world. Sometimes I cry in gratitude and mourning.

Middle-class protestant and of Anglo-Saxon heritage, I once knew the privilege of belonging. With my rebellion against white supremacy and then patriarchy, I began to live a life marginal to the institutions I was raised to serve. I do not challenge those who have chosen to work for change from within. Nor do I question the difficulties and isolation they face.

I embrace that girl who spoke with such passion and conviction in the country church. My reclaiming a spiritual life, however, has necessitated an exploration outside a traditional framework. I have not found a home. TW

Chude Pamela Allen, a *Witness* subscriber in San Francisco, is interviewed in *Freedom is a Constant Struggle: An Anthology of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement,* Cultural Center for Social Change, 3133 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Suite 432, Washington, D.C. 20008. Artist Mignon lives in Chicago, Ill.

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Those Who Come After

will never say of us:
what wonderful myths they had.
There will never rise, dripping, from our midst
figures whose wings open, dry in the sun,
completed by being
more us than ourselves; what we leave
is all that can be
dredged up from wrecked harbors –
history's debris. So
in the end, it is not the beautiful figures
draped in the white silk togas of dream
nor the muscular thoughts stalking the peaks
in the golden proportions of Greece
with the lightning clenched in their fists,
nor the animal-gods with the eyes of hawks
and the delicate fingers of girls,
no, only what broke in our hands
when our voyages – like the stick in the paw
of the monkey, extending the grasp –
ended in the slow grip
of possession, as a continent's shore is
swallowed by sea, making an infinite
coastline, the in and out of an edge
endlessly nibbled and gnawed. That
is the line we leave behind us,
the infinity of rat-tooth,
the posterity of loss ...

But when they say of us
what we have done, perhaps they will speak
kindly of those who, near the century's
end, pried open the hand;
of the way the wind lifted the lovely
gray spirals of ash, until our hands
were empty as the cloudless sky,
empty as altars whose offerings
have been acceptable; perhaps they will
say that there were those
who took down the harps
hung in the sorrowing trees, having lost
the taste for conquest and revenge,
and made a song
that rose in the air
as smoke rises –
at first a line, and then,
slow eddies, the spirals
endless, unwinding
the sky's blue
spool.

by Eleanor Wilner

Eleanor Wilner lives in Philadelphia.



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Can women stay in the church?

by Rosemary Radford Ruether

When we discuss women and Christianity, we are faced with a contradiction. At least since the 1880s, western Christian culture has seen women as more naturally pious than men. Demographic studies of the church have shown that at least since the 1500s, perhaps for all of Christian history, women have outnumbered men practically two to one as the active members of local congregations.

Today ordained ministry is opening up to women in mainstream Protestantism and women are flocking to attend theological seminaries in close to equal numbers with men. Yet, many feminists, deeply committed to Christianity, suspect that Christianity is still the major cultural force in our society justifying the subordination of women and that perhaps women will never be allowed into its top leadership in more than token numbers.

Their suspicion is reinforced by major expressions of backlash in the churches today against feminist theology, against the slightest possibility that the presence of women as ministers and theological educators might effect a real transformation in the patriarchal symbols of "God and man," or in the way in which male and female are symbolized and organized in the Christian churches.

Christianity was shaped from its earliest years by patriarchal social, political, legal and cultural systems. Patriarchy is defined as basically being the rule of the father, the rule of the male head of the family, over the subordinate members of the family — wife, wives, children, servants, slaves, animals and land. This is the way that *pater familias* was defined in Roman law.

The religious symbols for God that we have received have been deeply shaped by patriarchal relationships. We have modeled God after the patriarchal lord and master, and modeled the earth, the community, after those subordinate under that *pater familias*. So we might say the wife, the sons, the daughters and servants become the major metaphors for the community relationship to God.

This kind of patriarchal symbolism has functioned as a deep theological, cultural and psychological ratification of female subordination as the order of creation and the will of God. Male headship comes to be seen as naturally the way things should be, the basis of right order in society and family. Women are defined as both naturally subordinate and naturally insubordinate: It is within their nature to be subordinate to their husbands, but they also have a built-in sinful resistance to this subordination and thereby have caused sin and the fall.

Many feminists, deeply committed to Christianity, suspect that Christianity is still the major cultural force in our society justifying the subordination of women.

From the second generation Christianity, one had a Christianity that made central to its doctrine of both sin and salvation what I would call a scapegoating view of women.

The key question for women in the church generally is whether this kind of patriarchal female scapegoating is essential to Christianity. Is there a genuine alternative tradition that is a more authentic view in the light of which the patriarchal scapegoating patterns can be rejected as a distortion? It seems to me that the very possibility of a feminist Christianity that is healthy, liberating, and redemptive for women, and for male/female relationships, rests on the possibility of saying yes to this question.

Otherwise, Mary Daly is right: the post-Christian is the only alternative for women. "Christian feminism" becomes a contradiction in terms. If this is the case, then get out of Christianity and look for some really healthy, liberating, and redemptive religion for women and for men and for male/female relationships.

If there is an alternative liberating tradition in Christianity, it must be rooted in biblical points of reference. The first of these is the affirmation that in the authentic order of creation, men and women share equally in the image of God. Secondly, that equality in the image of God is restored in Christ. This is suggested in the Galatians 3:28 passage where it said that in Christ, all the hierarchies of male and female, slave and free, Jew and Greek have been overcome for the new humanity of shared worth in Christ. The third point of reference is Pentecost, the liberating birthday of the church, where the Spirit of God has been poured out and has overturned all of the patriarchal hierarchies. "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your menservants and your maidservants."

For scholars such as Elizabeth Fiorenza, the earliest Christianity was a

---

Rosemary Radford Ruether is a professor at Garrett Theological Seminary. Her reflections were central to the 1974 issue of *The Witness* on the ordination of women. This article is drawn from a recent talk in Philadelphia, the first in a series celebrating the 20th anniversary of the ordination of women. Artist **Eleanor Mill** is syndicated from Hartford, Conn.

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prophetic egalitarian counter-culture. She speaks of the earliest church as womanchurch, as a female-identified community of men and women who were counter-culture to the dominant patriarchal society. In her view, there was a gradual marginalization of the prophetic Christianity by a patriarchal Christianity that regarded the patriarchal pattern of the family as the order of church government and identified with patriarchal imperial structures of the dominant Roman society. Here one has the thunderous voices of 1 Timothy, 1 Peter and others, seeking to reinforce not only patriarchal but slave-holding society: Women, keep silence! Wives, obey your husbands. Slaves, obey your masters. Children, obey your parents.

And yet, in spite of this gradual marginalization, repression and silencing, a more liberative Christianity never entirely disappears. It is driven underground. It is driven to the margins, but it never entirely disappears. And it is resurgent again and again in renewal movements. It is resurgent in mystical traditions — particularly in female monasticism, where you also have a vision of women's spiritual authority and a vision of a Sophia-understanding of Christ.

There's also a counter-cultural tradition that constantly rises up in what I would call the popular prophetic tradition, from the Donatists in the second century on through the Waldensians of the twelfth century and then to Anabaptist counter-cultural movements during the Reformation.

In this regard, I am very fond of the Quaker tradition. I see the movement of the Society of Friends in the 17th century as a resurgence and new formulation of this prophetic egalitarian tradition by some very extraordinary women leaders who developed a biblical, exegetical base for this vision. For Quakers, there was a sense that the patriarchal, hierarchical system of the church was not the authentic order of creation or the church. The authentic church was the prophetic counter-cultural community.

From the 18th century to the present time, we've seen a fusion of two egalitarian traditions, which have begun to bring women into the mainstream of the church. One of those traditions is the counter-cultural Christian tradition. The other is Enlightenment humanism. In Enlightenment humanism in the 18th century and early 19th century, you have a reworking of the idea of the order of creation. The traditional view was that the order of creation was hierarchical, but in the Enlightenment view the original order of creation is egalitarian.



Women clergy Eleanor Mill

It's in that period, when women demanded the right to vote and full equality in society, that the first ordination movement begins. In the Seneca Falls Declaration in 1848, the final statement was brought forward by Lucretia Mott, demanding an overthrow of the male monopoly of the pulpit.

In 1853, Antoinette Brown was the first woman ordained in the Congregational tradition. The Congregationalists, Unitarians, Universalists, some Methodist Protestants began to ordain women. Then, after 1878, there's a long period of repression of women's ordination. Mainstream Protestants marginalize the issue, judging women to be weak and delicate. Rather than allowing women to be parish ministers, Protestants sent them to the inner cities and to distant mission fields. They founded the deaconess movement as a way of giving women an alternative ministry. But, in due time, there's a new struggle for the ordination of women after the Second World War.

So there's quite a long period of struggle between the first women's ordination movement in the 1850s through the 1880s and the 1950s to the 1960s, when women begin to be ordained in the Lutheran churches and the Reformed

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Churches in Germany and Scandinavia , and then in the Methodist Church, and the Northern Presbyterians in the United States (Presbyterian Church USA), until you come to the present time. We now have enough women in ministry to begin reconstructing the patriarchal pattern of ministry itself. We might think of the minister more as a kind of animator of the ministry of the community rather than monopolizing the work of ministry. This raises questions of language for worship and style.

Much development of women's ministry has taken place in the last couple of decades, but we also see a backlash. We have a Protestant backlash in the fundamentalist movement. Much of the stuff about the "family" in American society is essentially an effort to revive the patriarchal family as normative.

We also have the Catholic or Vatican version of backlash, which is a broad-based backlash against all the democratic and liberationist movements which have been unleashed since 1965. The Vatican backlash is expressed in the decree against the ordination of women of 1976, that amazing piece of theology and biblical exegesis which declared that women could not be ordained because only men image Christ.

The Vatican has also tried to force

Trashing the Re-imagining God conference

Members of the Institute for Religion and Democracy are urging mainline Christians to withhold money from their denominations and to purge their churches of "heresy" in the wake of the Re-Imagining God conference held in Minneapolis last November.

In ubiquitous pamphlets and mailings, IRD members (whom you may remember for their virulent support of the Contra war against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua) criticize the women who spoke as if they represent the convictions of all who attended. They are outraged that Delores Williams considers the atonement bad theology and Melanie Morrison believes lesbianism should be celebrated. They are confused that women would make tobacco offerings and recite a Native American prayer. They are upset that Chung Hyun Kyung believes that when one feels depleted one can "go to a big tree and ask it to 'give me some of your life energy.'" They are unsettled by feminist theologians' denunciations of the patriarchy and their focus on the immanence of God.

Perhaps the most radical moment of the conference, which was attended by 2,200 women, occurred during a worship service when women raised cups of milk and honey and proclaimed, in part, "Our sweet Sophia, we are women in your image; With nectar between our thighs we invite a lover, we birth a child; With our warm body fluids we remind the world of its pleasures and sensations...."

Katherine Kersten, an attorney and member of the board of the IRD and Lutherans for Political Freedom, observed that "The Re-Imagining participants were happily engaged in that most modern of enterprises: worshiping themselves, right down to the "bodily fluids" that figure so prominently in their prayers.

"Clearly, Sophia is the answer to the prayers of a multi-cultural, therapeutic world. She is 'tolerant' — she does not judge, nor does she recognize any sin but the corporate transgressions of racism, sexism and classism." She goes on to condemn "pow-wows" like this.

Since critics interpret women's attempt to find something of themselves in God as self-worship, one wonders why the corollary — that a God defined as only male may involve idolatry — is less obvious.

The fallout is significant. Mary Ann Lundy, a Presbyterian church official who helped plan the conference, left her job July 1. The Presbyterian Church, which contributed $66,000 to the conference — the largest donation, anticipates a $2.4 to $4 million loss due to withholding.

Parker Williamson, executive editor of *The Presbyterian Layman,* recommends that all staff members be "placed under scrutiny" and desires a "method to determine" their beliefs on issues of faith.

Retired United Methodist Bishop Earl G. Hunt says "No comparable heresy has appeared in the church in the last 15 centuries."

But a United Methodist communications director, Laura Okumu, says the UM Women's Division, which helped fund the conference, is better insulated from the attacks. Its members are not alarmist. They are in communication with the Division, she said. Likewise, the denomination is protected from the current furor because it convenes nationally only once every four years and isn't scheduled to meet again until 1996.

Robert McAfee Brown insists that the backlash against the conference is organized by "a tiny, militant faction that will not be appeased until it can remake the church in ways that destroy it." — *J.W.-K.*

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women's religious orders to return to traditional hierarchical patterns and to force them out of political and social leadership. There is the effort to exclude women in Catholic seminaries, both as students and as teachers. And there is the attack on women's reproductive rights, on abortion, birth control, and on homosexuality. All this has led many Catholic women to conclude that ordination is not only not imminent, but was probably not a very appropriate thing to be looking for anyway.

The new way of attacking Christian feminists is to say that they're pagan. And if you're pagan you're also a witch and a devil-worshipper.

Since the 1970s and 1980s, women's spirituality has become a very feminist, creative base-community movement operating outside the edge of traditional Christianity, communicating with Christian symbols but also in dialogue with post-Christian symbols.

This also means that the new way of attacking Christian feminists is to say that they're pagan. And if you're pagan, it is assumed that you're also a witch and a devil-worshipper. So literally a witch persecution movement has become quite typical of the assault — both from Protestant Evangelicals and from right-wing Catholics.

It's interesting that these people don't bother with goddess people themselves. They're not really interested in those people. What they go after is well-established feminists in the church who are said to be not really Christian but actually witches, worshiping pagan goddesses under the cover of church.

There's a Catholic expression of this in Donna Steichen's book, *Ungodly Rage.* She plays on conspiratorial and paranoid fears, and virtually every leading feminist, including some fairly mainstream male theologians, are named as part of the conspiracy. You get a similar version of that in conservative Protestantism — the Methodist "Good News" group, and the counterparts among Lutherans and Presbyterians. There has been a concerted attack on all the Methodist seminaries as hothouses of "paganism." We should be so interesting! All of this plays on fear and ignorance.

Now, this kind of attack has come in the assault on the Minneapolis Re-imagining conference. A group of Lutheran women seminarians report that this is becoming a litmus test for women who are looking for jobs — Were you at the Re-imagining conference? This is extremely upsetting. I got a call from a Presbyterian woman from Seattle who told me that a lot of the concerted attack on the conference was coordinated through the Institute for Religion and Democracy, led by Richard Neuhaus and Michael Novak. This raises questions because there has been a high-level effort to negotiate an alliance between this kind of right-wing Catholic and conservative Evangelicals.

The question is whether feminists in the churches will be silenced or will they see this as the critical teaching moment, the time to struggle for the soul of the church?

What I'm suggesting here is that we do not face spontaneous responses. We're facing an organized effort to smear Christian feminists, to drive some established leadership out to the margins and to make it very difficult to even talk about basic issues, such as inclusive language.

The key question is whether feminists in the churches will be silenced, lower their profile, feel that they can only survive by appearing more conventional. Or whether feminists will see this as the critical teaching moment, the time when it becomes essential for feminists to bond together across denominations, to organize some very well-done, clear, pastoral communication that would go out both to church leadership and to ordinary parishes? In other words, to enter the struggle for the soul of the church?

We must ask, what is the essential vision of this community? Is its essential vision that of patriarchal hierarchy in which women are subordinate members of the Christian community, or is its essential vision that of a liberating, transformative, healthy and redemptive community? And if the Christian community isn't about being a healthy, redemptive community, then what is it about?

So that brings me back to what I see as the critical question. Are the patriarchal female-scapegoating patterns of Christianity essential and irreformable, or are they a distortion that can be critiqued in the light of a more authentic vision of the Gospel?

For me this question cannot simply be answered by some kind of examination of the earliest history or by *a priori* theological assertions. This question will be answered in praxis, in the actual doing. Will those who have deep faith and courage of their convictions, both men and women who have caught an alternative vision of the church, be able to communicate, to organize, and to sustain an authentic understanding of the true vision of Christ, the true spirit of the good news, as one in which we are indeed all transformed into a community of mutual flourishing? TW

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The spirit on the move

by Anne Cox

My mother tells me that when I was 14 she took me to hear one of the controversial Philadelphia 11, Carter Heyward, preach at Chapel of the Cross in Chapel Hill, N.C. But while I remember other events from 1974 — such as Nixon resigning from office — I don't remember what Heyward had to say or even hearing her preach.

Perhaps I don't remember this experience because it occurred during the "I-hate-going-to-church" phase of my life when I was especially resistant to sermons of any kind.

But I also think the occasion probably did not mean very much to me because I didn't consider it so very unusual to see an ordained woman in a church pulpit. This was the era of the Equal Rights Amendment, Roe v. Wade and "You've come a long way, baby," a period when many all-male bastions, such as military academies, private clubs, and a variety of professions were opening to women. As a result, I assumed that being female would not limit my — or anyone else's — vocational choices.

And, indeed, 10 years later, when I decided to pursue ordination to the priesthood, I encountered few difficulties either in the ordination process (in the Diocese of Michigan) or in later obtaining my first job (in the Diocese of Newark).

Maybe it is because of this background that I never thought I had much of a place in the history of women's ordination, a history characterized, I know, by a profound and painful struggle for acceptance. But I have been well aware that as an ordained woman I belong to a group of people — deacons, priests and bishops — who are making a difference in the church just because we are women serving in the ordained role.

What kind of difference have we made?

"There are two primary differences," said Meredith Potter, a priest in the Diocese of Chicago, at a recent gathering of ordained women from the church's midwestern dioceses held in honor of the 1974 Philadelphia ordinations. "One is the fact that we still have a church *at all* — witness those women — and men — who are leaving the Roman Catholic church in droves. The other is the fact that the church is becoming healthy — particularly as we deal with the old secrets of sexual abuse and harassment."

A number of other women attending the conference immediately agreed, adding that ordained women have shown leadership in putting matters of sexuality before the church.

"In the last 10 years I have heard sermons mentioning sexual abuse, homosexuality, etc. — not so the previous 50," said Jo Gillespie of the Episcopal Women's History Project, one of the conference speakers. "Surely the presence of ordained women has something to do with this shift."

We ordained women also know we have been able to minister to other women in ways men might not. Cynthia Black, from Western Michigan, tells about a woman who, for various medical reasons, was facing an abortion at the end of her second trimester of pregnancy, and who wanted to have the child-who-would-not-be-born baptized. She went to a woman priest because, she told Black, she felt she could not trust that a male priest would understand or be willing to respond to this request.

And I have worked with women and men encountering the pain of incest and childhood sexual abuse who feel free talking to me because I am a woman, but who feel unable to go to male clergy because the abuse they suffered was inflicted by men.

Women in the priesthood also seem to give lay women a greater sense of belonging to the church. Ginny Hiber, a member of my congregation, has told me, "The difference ordained women in the church makes for me is that I no longer feel like a second-class citizen."

I've talked with at least two dozen other women who echo this new feeling of belonging, especially the first time they experience a woman celebrating the eucharist.

Maybe, in addition, what women bring to the centuries-old role of priest is that the way we live out this role has not yet been solidified, so people still see us as people, as individuals, and not as symbols of power or church hierarchy.

Nancy Wittig, also one of the Philadelphia 11, says women are having a profound effect on the life of the church because "We're being human in our roles."

In this vein, I remember hearing that Penelope Jamieson, the Bishop of Dunedin in New Zealand, once said that the thing she's noticed about being a woman in the episcopate is that people tend not to mistake her for God.

This sign of humanity that women bring to the ordained ministry seeps through and has its effect in little ways. Obviously, "father" is not an appropriate appellation for women (though I was once called "Miss Father Anne"); "mother" offers a connection to Roman Catholic tradition (Mother Superiors,

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Anne Cox is rector of Nativity Episcopal Church in Bloomfield Township, Mich. She was ordained to the priesthood in 1988. Artist **Claudia Bach** lives in Sarasota, Fla.

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etc.), which is problematic for many people.

In addition, I find that male parishioners do not feel comfortable according me parental-like authority. Maybe in our fumbling efforts to address ordained women, we'll finally realize how patronizing and infantilizing the title "father" can be.

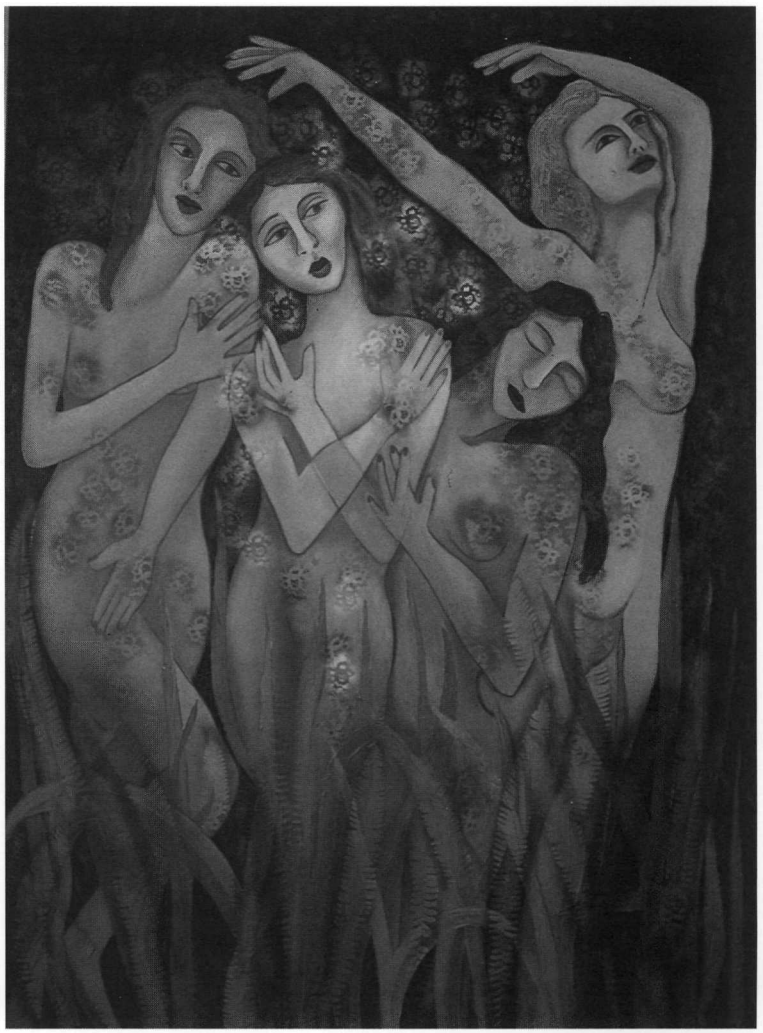
Sartorial decorum is another simple way in which ordained women are humanizing the face of the "official" church. At my first clergy day in the Diocese of Newark seven years ago, only four of the 60-70 clergy there were women. They were easy to spot by their jackets: bright green, hot pink, red, and a bright plaid, all immediately visible in a sea of black suits and grey tweed.

Women, it is clear, do not fit readily into the existing expectations for male clergy and, as a result, we are more able to raise questions about those expectations and even about ordination itself.

I once wrote an article in our parish newsletter about the dilemma that surrounds wearing a clergy collar (this reflection had been prompted by the fact that I had misplaced my collar one Sunday and found myself feeling uncomfortable showing up at church without it). I acknowledged that I wear my collar particularly when I know I will be around my male colleagues, occasions when power and authority seem to be an issue.

I got phone calls about that article from several of these men who took issue with my observation that the clerical collar is a symbol of power and that they as clergy have any ascribed power (one man said he wore his collar as a sign of humility and vulnerability, not power). I think it takes women to recognize and name what men have taken for granted or ignored for all of these years.

Our church needs significant numbers of ordained women so we can truly know who we are as an institution. And now that we comprise at least 12 percent of the ordained leadership of the church and close to 50 percent of the seminary population, we have a certain level of credibility as we begin to encounter the challenges ahead of us.



Dance of the Soul
by Claudia Bach

The challenge now is not so much to gain access to ordination (although in a handful of dioceses this still is an overwhelming challenge), but to deal with the issue of ordination altogether. What difference does ordained leadership — period — make in the church? Do we need it? Are there better ways of structuring ourselves and taking seriously the ministry of all the baptized?

In my experience, women — lay and ordained — are asking these questions. Perhaps we are the only ones who can ask them because we have had less time to become comfortable in our institutional roles.

While ordination itself was not a painful struggle for me personally, I now know that I am part of the ongoing struggle that women in our church have been pursuing.

The struggle I am part of is that of reforming the church, an effort that promises to be no less painful now than it was when those first ordinations took place when I was 14 years old. TW

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The Philadelphia 11

by Ariel Miller

Twenty years ago on the Feast of Mary and Martha, eleven women stood before the altar at Philadelphia's Church of the Advocate. Facing them was a little band of bishops who had resolved to heal the church's paralysis by ordaining women to the priesthood even though General Convention had not yet voted it "legal." With them in body or spirit were thousands of witnesses ready to say AMEN as women with a vocation to be priests were affirmed for the first time in the history of the Episcopal Church in America.

The Philadelphia ordinations on July 29, 1974 were a crest in the tide of justice which continues to surge and ebb in a church still deeply ambivalent about the role of women, as it is about homosexuals and people of color.

And each of those groups have shared each other's pain and struggle. White Episcopal women had gradually become aware of their own disenfranchisement in the church, as they worked side by side with black Episcopalians through the civil rights movement. Each of the ordinands was white, but it was a black parish, the Church of the Advocate, which offered itself as the sanctuary for their ordinations. Barbara Harris, a black laywoman who would eventually be elected the first woman bishop in the Anglican Communion, was the senior warden. Many of the women ordained then and since have spoken out in defense of the dignity and rights of gay and lesbian people, and they have suffered for it.

The prophetic act of the Philadelphia 11, their sponsors, and the ordaining bishops had come in the wake of two successive General Conventions of the Episcopal Church that had failed to legislate the ordination of women priests despite a majority of yes votes in both houses. It had taken a quarter century of campaigning before the first women delegates were seated in General Convention in 1970. When approval of women priests failed passage by only a handful of votes in 1973 to meet the required super-majority, retired bishops had begun meeting with women deacons to discuss an "irregular" ordination to break the impasse.

Within a month of the ordinations, the House of Bishops met in emergency session and declared them not only irregular but invalid. Five more women would be ordained in Washington in 1975. All 16 would endure years more of controversy and rejection approaching psychological excommunication until and even after General Convention recognized their ordination in 1976. Not until 1977 were women "legally" ordained to the Episcopal priesthood.

As Suzanne Hiatt, a leader of the struggle, points out, ordination was only the beginning of the work. Many of the first women ordained have been called to aid and hearten others whose gifts are shunned or disregarded. Two have decided for compelling reasons to work outside the institutional church. But equally vital is the unique ministry each has developed and given to the community of the faithful.

Scientist Jeannette Piccard, ordained at the age of 79, is the only one of the Philadelphia 11 who has died. The others, ranging in age from the forties to the early seventies, are vitally engaged in ministry in contexts as varied as their own unique gifts. Intellectually and spiritually robust, canny, compassionate, seasoned, and wise, they are spiritual mentors at the height of generativity.

What follows is a sojourn — far too brief! — with each of these remarkable women, who shared with *The Witness* a glimpse both of their current work and of their concerns for church and society.

Merrill Bittner

Merrill Bittner declined to be interviewed but sent this message:

"Going to Philadelphia was a natural extension of saying yes to the call to ordained ministry: Here am I. Send me. It was a profound experience of the community of the faithful rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

"When I left the Episcopal Church as an active priest in March of 1976, it was like leaving my homeland. The pain of that loss remains with me. It is a part of my personal landscape, a wound that will always inform my life.

"I have no more patience with the Episcopal Church's reluctance to affirm the gifts of all of its members. The Episcopal Church still abides by what I call the WWHAMM Factor: White Western Heterosexual Ablebodied Middle-class Middle-aged Males define what is acceptable. All others must wait for permission.

"My joy today begins with the fact that the institutional church no longer stands in my way of doing ministry. I work with our local adult education program as an educational and vocational counselor. I'm doing what I love: working with people in vocational crisis, encouraging them to honor who they know themselves to be as they make vocational choices.

"My faith is nurtured now by the Maine woods where I live and tend the land, by the love of my partner of 17 years, Nancy Noppa, and by the community of people who grace my days. For all of this, I am most truly thankful."

Ariel Miller is an Episcopalian and freelance writer in Cincinnati.

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Left to right: Nancy Wittig, Alison Cheek, Betty Schiess, Betty Powell, Carter Heyward, Marie Moorfield Fleischer, Alla Bozarth, Suzanne Hiatt, Alison Palmer, Antonio Ramos, Emily Hewitt, Merrill Bittner, George Barrett, Lee McGee. Not pictured: Katrina Swanson, Diane Tiehill, Jeanette Piccard (deceased), Robert DeWitt, Daniel Corrigan, Edward Welles (deceased).

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Alla Bozarth

Poet, contemplative, companion of bee, bear, and tree, Alla Bozarth describes herself as "the soul-tender in residence" of Wisdom House, a spiritual community she founded in Oregon. Clients come to her for spiritual counsel and refreshment in the afternoons; she sets aside the night for contemplation and creative work until just before dawn. Writing, dance, yoga are at the heart of her prayer and ministry, with her thirteenth book to be published later this year. Five of those books are poetry — an art of soul insight which, as she points out, the culture devalues. But "poetry is my true vocation, even as a priest," she says in her gentle, merry voice. "As a poet I understand the language of the soul in dreams."

Bozarth's poem "Transfiguration," together with work by an artist-collaborator is enshrined at the Peace Memorial Garden in Hiroshima.

Alison Cheek

Born in Australia, Alison Cheek has been midwife to the struggle of women for equality there as well as here, serving as a consultant to the Australian women's ordination movement. Now, to her great delight, she is working as director of Feminist Liberation Theology Studies at the Episcopal Divinity School. "What I try to keep alive and well is looking at issues with a systemic analysis," she reports. "There is wonderful work being done by students here, pushing the boundaries. Women are working at spirituality not with a narrow focus, but doing very integrative work."

Contrasting her two homelands, Cheek says, "In the church in Australia there hasn't been raised consciousness as in the U.S. Going through the civil rights movement sensitized people to oppression here."

Marie Moorefield Fleischer

Marie Moorefield Fleischer, then working as a chaplain, sought ordination in 1974 "in response," she explains, "to what I understood to be my call to the priesthood and out of concern for the hospital patients in need of pastoral care who turned to me for Word and Sacrament." Since then her vocation has taken her to West Virginia, Maryland, and New York, providing pastoral care to individuals and congregations. Today she is a canon and Deputy for Ministry in the Diocese of Western New York, her work focusing primarily on congregational development and leadership training.

Carter Heyward

A professor of theology at Episcopal Divinity School since 1975, Carter Heyward teaches feminist liberation theology, Christology, ethics, and healing from abuse and addiction. She speaks joyously of the chance to teach and nurture seminarians. But prejudice and exclusion continue in the church. "So many of our students who have the deepest connection to the Spirit get turned down for ordination," she says, "either because they are gay or lesbian or because they express their faith in ways that don't sound orthodox." She points out that inclusivity saves Christology from being a caricature of Christ. Women's ordination is a case in point, Heyward makes clear: "If the priest is a woman the power of the Risen Christ in history cannot be confined to fathers and sons. The power is not just from his masculinity but from his humanness, which women share."

Emily Hewitt

Emily Hewitt took her law boards two days before she was ordained, graduated with honors from Harvard Law School. At the peak of a thriving law career she was appointed general counsel to the General Services Administration last summer. Looking at the growing backlash against women both in the church and in the wider culture in 1974, she had concluded "the church was going to have a little trouble with those who did this shake-up." Hewitt went into law as a way to be a good steward of her abilities,

which would probably have been underused in the church. She has relished her career. "Though I'm temporally retired from institutional service in the church, that changes nothing of my basic interests. 'Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with your God' — there's nothing more than that," she says firmly. "The job description is to humanize the world wherever you are."

Suzanne Hiatt

Suzanne Radley Hiatt entered seminary in 1961 "clear about my vocation even if the seminary and the church were not." In the ensuing years she earned a master's in social work as well as the M.Div., well aware that she would need a way to earn her livelihood. Emerging as a seasoned community organizer through the civil rights and peace movement, she went on to lead the long struggle to bring the Episcopal Church to affirm women's vocation to the priesthood. Hiatt is now John Sealy Stone Professor of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology at Episcopal Divinity School, where the majority of the students today — as at Protestant seminaries in general — are women. But once out of seminary, women continue to be marginalized. Hiatt warns against the complacency of the church, which would like to gloss over past and present inequity. "Don't be lulled into thinking that the struggle is over," she warned women in England as their ordination drew closer. "The radical women who fought injustice will be shunted aside — there's an enormous urge to soothe the pain of the boys who have been 'hurt.'

"Remember the history!" she urges. [See profile on page 38.]

Betty Bone Schiess

"I take the church very seriously, and its potential to influence society very seriously," says Betty Schiess. She has served as a rector as well as chaplain at Syracuse and Cornell, but "ordination was *not* a career move," she says with a rueful laugh. "The vocation I felt called to was to change the way the church sees women." Now officially retired, she continues to labor hard for that goal through work like her advocacy as member of a state bioethics task force. She sees this work as virtually invisible to a complacent church where the shaky gains made by women are eroding. Women clergy, she points out, are still less well paid, serve in more marginalized congregations, have fewer resources to deploy.

"The church has not yet decided that sexism may be the most horrible oppression in the world today," she says. "The ordination of women made it so that our fathers in God could lick their chops and say, 'Aren't we wonderful!' and not deal with the fact that so much sexism is unresolved."

Katrina Swanson

Katrina Swanson has been rector of St. John's, Union City, N.J. for 16 years — long enough to see children grow into adulthood. A small, non-affluent church, it is richly multinational: members come from England, India, and Latin America. "It has been wonderful to be able to be in the same congregation for so long, to have the privilege of celebrating the sacraments and sharing people's lives in a meaningful way," Swanson says. "That continuity also makes me more effective as a community person, and more effective mediating the community to the parish." The small congregation — so marginalized in the church — has much to teach, she points out: "In such a church we can know each other and be intimate, even though the American culture is trying to divide us."

Nancy Hatch Wittig

Rector of St. Andrew-in-the-Field in the suburbs of Philadelphia, Nancy Hatch Wittig has been named a dean, the honorary canon of a cathedral, rector twice over, and Fellow of the College of Preachers. But this utterly unstuffy minister recognizes "the ladder of success" as a distraction from some real treasures. Ordained women, so often working in marginalized congregations, have shown the church "that valid ministry can occur on those fringes," Wittig explains. "They have been willing to take on hard ministry without the sense that 'I'm going to move on.'

"Parish ministry will continue to be valid, but it must change for both men and women," she predicts. "One reason is economic. We can't depend on parishes being able to afford full-time clergy. The outcome will be both the clergy taking up healthy leadership but also empowering laity to be about ministry, not just by reading lessons on Sunday but taking their faith into the workplace." TW



Alison Cheek, Carter Heyward and Jeanette Piccard celebrating the eucharist at Riverside Church in defiance of a House of Bishops declaration that their orders were invalid. Religious News Service

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***Bone Woman*, etching 18" x 24"** **Judith Anderson**

Within us is the old one who collects bones.
Within us there are the soul-bones of Wild Woman.
Within us is the potential to be fleshed out again
as the creature we once were. Within us are the
bones to change ourselves and our world...
You wish psychoanalytic advice? Go gather bones.

from Women Who Run With the Wolves, *by Clarissa Pinkola.*

Judith Anderson is an artist in East Lansing, Mich.

I've always been intrigued by bones. They are inside and hidden. The great paradox is that we cannot see and appreciate bones and their functional underpinning of life except in a confrontation with dissolution and death. In this etching, Bone Woman is not preoccupied with death. This is rather a meditation on life, on the debris and compost and the past from which life arises continually.

Bone Woman is an archetype, and yet she is of course myself, as is the child beside her blessing the image of the mother and three children in the swirling of her head. The image is from a photograph in 1967 when Sam was three years and two months, Jessica was 15 months, and Laura was two months old, a time for me of great preoccupation with mothering. Life was then full of interruptions and busy moments, leaving little possibility of time for reflection and meditation. It is curious to be still holding that memory now when the children are away from me, grown and thriving.

Bone Woman is calm and at rest in her contemplation. In this half-light of dawn or dusk, or of dreamtime, there is a great silence.

— Judith Anderson

The second circle

by Jane Soyster Gould

Every Sunday of my life my mother took herself and her girls to church. For most of my early years we attended St. John's Church in McLean, Virginia where my sisters and I sang in the Junior Choir, attended Sunday School, and were confirmed. My mother worshipped, only occasionally showing her annoyance with the conservative Southern clergy, and voted all-women slates for the vestry. No woman ever won but my mother maintained her silent protest.

At home we never talked about church or God. We never said grace before meals and prayers were not part of our bedtime ritual. The 23rd psalm and a UTO box sat on my mother's bureau and I suspect that prayer helped her through many dark nights and difficult days. For her, I guess church provided time and space for quiet reflection and connection with the divine. But for me, church simply was something I did.

When I was 12, my mother decided that she could no longer tolerate our parish church. It was 1968; change was happening in our world, our nation, our church and our family life. St. John's in McLean responded to none of these changes, so we left. We spent the summer visiting every Episcopal church within a 20-minute drive of our house. We made a scorecard for the churches on which every member of the family rated each church on such items as hymns, preaching, clergy, congregational participation, decor and munchies after the service. At the end of August we tabulated the results of our survey and transferred our membership to St. John's Church in Georgetown.

On September 7, 1975, the Sunday before I was to head back to college for pre-season hockey, I went to church with my mother. My sister, Elizabeth, walked up from her house in Georgetown. The rector was in the hospital, so John, his associate, was in charge of the service.

As John entered the sanctuary we all could feel a powerful passion and pain in him. It was clear he had been crying and that he had not had much sleep. We wondered what had unsettled his spirit. The tension in the church was palpable.

When he delivered his homily, we learned what was troubling him. John had agreed to present a friend, a woman deacon named Alison Palmer, for ordination in the Episcopal Church at an irregular service of ordination that was to take place that afternoon at St. Stephen and the Incarnation in Washington. On July 29, 1974, 11 woman deacons had been priested in a tremendous celebration in Philadelphia. In a storm of protest, praise and media hysteria the Philadelphia 11 had spent the year attempting to live out their prophetic priestly ministries. By the first anniversary of Philadelphia, the ordaining bishops had been chastised and the validity of the women's orders denied; the institutional church had not changed and no more women had been ordained. Many had begun to believe — either in hope or in fear — that the storm would subside. But that would and could not be. People were gathering in Washington to ordain four more women dea-



From left: Lee McGee, George Barrett, Alison Palmer, Diane Tickell and Betty Rosenberg.

Jane Soyster Gould was ordained a priest in 1987. She will begin work as chaplain at M.I.T. in Cambridge, Mass. this fall.

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cons to the priesthood.

Before coming to church I'd known nothing of the plan to ordain Lee McGee, Betty Rosenberg, Diane Tickell, and Alison Palmer as priests. Excitement filled me as I contemplated more women priests and my own minister standing with them. Distracted by my own joy, I almost missed the words that followed. Only John's cracking voice and halting speech brought me back to the sermon.

From his hospital bed the rector, who had come to the church five years earlier as a very hip and cool young associate, informed his associate that if he attended the ordination, he would not have a job when he came back. John told us that he knew that presenting Alison for ordination was what God intended and wanted him to do. Yet, he had to think of the security of his family. He needed his job; he would not go.

In my flash of 19-year-old anger and idealism I knew that the rector was wrong; the bishop was wrong; the whole church was wrong. The true church was gathering that afternoon at St. Stephen and the Incarnation and I would be there.

As he spoke, I knew that I would go. The warden's reading of a letter from the bishop, asking that we all stay away from the unauthorized service, merely confirmed my intention. John's tear-filled eyes had opened mine. Being Christian was not a benign activity safely confined to the sanctuary on Sunday mornings. It meant speaking out, taking risks, standing for something. In my flash of 19-year-old anger and idealism I knew that the rector was wrong; the bishop was wrong; the whole church was wrong. The true church was gathering that afternoon at St. Stephen and the Incarnation and I would be there.

My sister Elizabeth and I didn't know what to expect as we walked up the steps of the church later that day. Would there be diocesan guards trying to prevent us from attending? Would there be people protesting the ordination? We encountered no opposition as we entered the rapidly filling church. Women and men, old and young, black and white; we were a community of the faithful gathered to sing and pray and celebrate that day. John was not there but his wife was; we were; God was. As the crucifer led the long procession up one aisle and down another while we sang "I Bind Unto Myself This Day," I experienced the power of the Holy Spirit in a way I had never felt her before. I sensed that the power of God was going to burst out of the building just as Christ came forth from the tomb. The feeling was so potent it seemed that the church could not possibly contain it or us and that its walls would crack.

St. Stephen and the Incarnation stood firm, but it does seem that the edifice of the church cracked a bit that day. Philadelphia was not an isolated event; women were called to be priests, and bishops and congregations would gather to ordain them. Out of a sense of order, if not justice or faithfulness, the institutional church had to respond. The patriarchal walls were far from crumbling, but cracks weakened them and bits of light could shine through.

I could no longer confine God to the sanctuary. I returned to college where I encountered Robert McAfee teaching a course on liberation theology. I began to know Jesus as the one walking with me as I joined protests against reinstitution of draft registration, apartheid in South Africa, U.S. involvement in Central America, nuclear proliferation; as I registered voters, lobbied for women's rights on Capitol Hill, taught and counseled adolescents; worked with homeless people. For the first time in my life I felt connected to the source of my being and knew why I did the work I did.

There is no doubt that the life-giving spirit of God moved, filled up, and burst open the church on that Sunday afternoon in September 19 years ago. In the midst of it all the cross stood secure, showing our pain and challenging us to go forward. There it stands — inviting us not to squeeze through the cracks but to open up the walls.

TW

Water Women by Alla Reneé Bozarth

We do not want
to rock the boat,
you say, mistaking
our new poise
for something safe.

We smile secretly
at each other,
sharing the reality
that for some time
we have not been
in the boat.

We jumped
or were pushed
or fell
and some leaped
overboard.

Our bodies form
a freedom fleet
our dolphin grace
is power.

We learn and teach
and as we go
each woman sings;
each woman's hands
are water wings.

Some of us have become
mermaids or Amazon
whales
and are swimming for our
lives.
Some of us do not know
how to swim.
We walk on water.

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Winds of change

by Sally M. Bucklee

The crusade for women's ordination over the past 30 years has been a unifying force for women across the Anglican Church and beyond. At the numerous ordinations of women in England this past spring, for example, people came from every nook, cranny and denomination to be in celebrative solidarity with their English sisters, just as they came for Barbara Harris' consecration as suffragan bishop of Massachusetts in 1989.

Increasingly, many who show up at such events know each other. Not only has the reduced time and expense of international travel made face-to-face meetings more feasible, but communication systems are also linking women by FAX, telephone and a computer network that includes international, ecumenical and denominational subgroupings. While scholarly males continue to debate what issues should be discussed by ecumenical councils, women long ago simply started to meet and work together — at first through the ecumenical Church Women United and more recently through such international events as the worldwide Anglican Encounter held in Brazil in 1992 which attracted women and men from 52 nations and 25 tribes to celebrate "the voices, truth and song of women."

An exercise I learned in Brazil demonstrates what is bringing Christian women together around the globe. It involves forming a pyramid in which one person stands on the top, two people stand in the next row and seven people form the base. When ten crackers are distributed among them, the top person, a white-skinned English-speaking male, gets seven, the next two each receive one, and the remaining seven must split one cracker among themselves.

Much of the world is ordered according to this triangle of inverse relationships. The global economy and the distribution of food are the most dramatic examples. But women and persons of color know that churches are also ordered according to this pyramid, with Number One controlling the Bible and the prayer book. And because the top chaps have been interpreting Scripture, God and worship forms for so long, the Eurocentric, white-male perspective is deeply rooted and sincerely sexist. Combining androcentrism (a male-centered ideology and vision of how everything should be organized) with the pyramid structure institutionalizes a male-centered, patriarchal view of the whole organization.

Studies have shown, for example, that persons under 50 want worship language that at once enhances their understanding of God and encompasses more people and their cultures. So do women and non-Anglo ethnic groups. And they will wait no longer for legislative bodies to lumber on for years revising prayer books, hymnals and lectionaries. They are creating, praying, singing and reading what is meaningful to them now. Yet, according to the 1994 report of the Episcopal Church's Committee on the Status of Women to the General Convention, "a full third of diocesan bishops did not authorize or encourage use of the [1991] Supplemental Liturgical Materials or use inclusive language in diocesan publications." The worship of the church in the West has trapped God in a tight little triangle, restricting people's vision to how the man with seven crackers imagines God. But women know that if they are created in God's image, God has some feminine characteristics, too. These images can be found in the Bible and are celebrated in the Eastern church. Women know the central themes of Scripture are not about domination or oppression. The common denominators found in all Jesus' parables about the Kingdom or Household of God are inclusivity and equality. And so the 10 people trapped in the triangle must find a way round to soften that structure's angles and round them into a circle, a structure that has neither top nor bottom and which embraces all.

Forming circles of faith, in fact, is what Christian women across the globe have committed themselves to doing, despite hierarchically imposed barriers.

Patriarchalism oppresses all women, all children and some men, especially those of color. It came as a shock to many at the Anglican Encounter in Brazil to learn that domestic violence lives in the homes of affluent North American women and children. We, in turn, learned how others experience violence and sexual exploitation and how deeply entrenched both are in our religious and secular cultures. We discovered how little interest male church leaders have in these offenses against women and children, except as they affect the financial stability of the church, collegiality among male leaders or the reputation of the clergy. The system is so daunting and uncaring that it inhibits the victimized within the faith community from coming forward.

Violence against women is, in fact, the most common, pervasive and universal human rights violation there is. Violence is woven into social institutions like the

Sally Bucklee is president of the Episcopal Women's Caucus, a deputy to the General Convention and a member of the Episcopal Church's national Executive Council. She was an organizer of the International Women's Witnessing Community at the 1988 Lambeth Conference of Bishops. Artist **Patricia Lay Dorsey** lives in Grosse Pointe, Mich.

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family, ensuring cover-ups for incest, marital rape, dowry burning, mental and physical abuse and neglect. In Asia, where male children have long been preferred, the discarding of daughters both pre- and post-natally happens regularly. Very young Asian girls are sold by their families into the international sex market. In Latin America and many other parts of the world the girl child has lower status and less food, health care and education. Fewer boys worldwide die of measles, malnutrition, diarrhea and dysentery — more receive immunizations.

With little control over their own bodies and little health care, half a million women die in childbirth every year, leaving over one million motherless children. Two-thirds of the world's illiterates are women, the greatest number being in Latin America and the Caribbean.

During the Ecumenical Decade of Church in Solidarity with Women (1988-1998), violence has become a priority concern. The World Council of Churches (WCC) is holding consultations around the world to enable women to form networks and develop strategies for joint action against the myriad forms of violence concretized in economic, sociocultural, political and religious structures. A January 1994 meeting of the WCC's Central Committee recommended that the WCC member churches commit themselves to reexamining basic theological formulations that have legitimized the violence against women; setting aside resources to support women in their efforts to build a just and violence-free world; and using their moral and spiritual resources to help men deal with male sexuality and male violence.

Just as violence has brought women together across denominational and national boundaries, women in many places are learning to hurdle barriers of race and ethnicity. Anyone who has known what it is to be powerless, to be the victim of physical, economic, religious or political power, shares a common cause with others who are powerless. People of color and women have this bond. As provinces



Patricia Lay Dorsey

in Africa, Latin American and Asia voted to ordain women it became clear that this was not simply a Western or white women's agenda but a universal leading of the Holy Spirit. At the diocesan and national levels of several denominations, multicultural coalitions have formed to elect persons supportive of the agendas of people of color and women.

These alliances have brought new voices into church leadership, but empowering them to speak out has been gradual. The Center for the American Woman and Politics at Rutgers University determined that a lone woman among 10 men speaks differently than she does when in a room of 10 women. But as more women come into the group and some men depart, it is the men who start changing the way they talk — whether they know it or not. A majority of women is not required. The Center also found that if women hold fewer than 10 percent of the seats in a legislative body, laws serving women, children and families often fail to be passed. Once a legislative body is 20 to 30 percent female, a new awareness of being a significant subgroup hits women and they are more likely to organize across party lines on issues that affect women and their families.

If any more than 25 percent of the membership is women, males will not value participation. It is not surprising, therefore, than in most organizations — including the church — there is a glass ceiling that subconsciously limits the membership of women.

In 1987 across the Episcopal Church the percentage of women serving in leadership capacities averaged 22 percent nationwide. Within the 90 dioceses participating in the survey, percentages ranged from 11 to 41 percent, with the median at the same 22 percent as the national average. By 1991, it had inched up to 24 percent, despite women constituting a majority of the active membership of the church since its inception some 200 years ago. That same 1987 study showed that congregational vitality is also reported as higher in dioceses supportive of the ministries of ordained as well as lay women.

The Old Testament commentator, Walter Brueggeman has noted, "The world as we have known it is falling apart ... the great pastoral task now in our society is to help people see that the great white, male, western colonial agenda is over with" and help them pass "through the valley of the shadow of death into a new valley." Women have been dynamiting highways into that new valley year by year as they build a viable base in secular and ecclesiastical politics, in seminaries and on judicatory staffs; as authors, liturgists, denominational leaders, theologians, scholars, and pastors. The tidal wave they are creating is being hailed as the Second Reformation of the Christian church. TW

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Misogyny in Scripture

by Lesley A. Northup

In the fall of 1993 the Episcopal Church's Committee on the Status of Women held the last of a series of consultations on women and violence in New York. Lesley Northup, an Episcopal priest who is Assistant Professor of Religion and Culture at Florida International University in Miami, Fla., made a presentation on the culture of violence in the church's lectionary. This piece is based, in part, on that presentation. We present it here because it helps illustrate the frustration that has led many women to consider themselves post-Christian.

"[The Israelites] warred against Midian as the Lord commanded Moses, and slew every male. ... And Moses was angry with the officers of the army ... and said to them, 'Have you let all the women live? Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has known man by lying with him. But all the young girls who have not known man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.' ... Now the booty remaining of the spoil that the men of war took was 675,000 sheep, 72,000 cattle, 61,000 asses, and 32,000 persons in all, women who had not known man by lying with him ... of which the Lord's tribute was 32 persons."

— Numbers 31:7-40 (excerpted)

We would be shocked and shamed to hear this read aloud in our churches. Over the years, as the lectionary has been formed and revised, we have grown careful to exclude this sort of thing — Scripture that wounds, degrades, or incites. We have shaped our readings to reflect a modern view of the dignity of human life, the essential equality of all persons, the scandal of our inhumanity to each other.

Lectionary committees have taken pride in their efforts to sanitize the Bible for liturgical use, a practice fundamentalists and other traditionalists are quick to condemn, but which feminists have until recently generally endorsed. When scholars like Mary Daly and Rosemary Radford Ruether first wrote on Christian patriarchy, they began by identifying passages that reflected primitive cultural attitudes toward women and contributed to their oppression, then urged their omission from sets of public readings. A second wave of interpretation, articulated by women such as Marjorie Procter-Smith and Jean Campbell, has focused on restoring to liturgical reading the stories of strong, chosen women: Judith, Esther and Mary Magdalene. In the current phase of feminist biblical work, scholars like Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza and Phyllis Trible have attempted a new approach: instead of regulating lectionary selection, they seek to reimagine the role of women in the untold biblical story, recovering a lost, suppressed history.

These various attempts to reconsider the Bible bespeak an almost desperate effort to derive enough meaning and validity from Scripture to give women room to stay within the church. And, indeed, the stories of strong biblical women like Esther and Judith and the absence of passages reflecting the worst of ancient culture have given hope to some women and prolonged their struggle to remain Christians. But in that struggle, they must inevitably come face to face with a painful and horrifying reality: the Bible as a whole both narrates and preaches an irredeemably abusive stance toward women — a stance that is difficult, with any intellectual or spiritual honesty, to explain away, despite centuries of theology attempting to do just that. No amount of lectionary tinkering, historical revisionism, or tiptoeing interpretation can ameliorate the culture of violence — physical, social, psychological, symbolic and theological — so long taught by the Bible and accepted by its believers.

The Bible as a whole both narrates and preaches an irredeemably abusive stance toward women.

The persistent refrain of women's abuse pervades the Hebrew Scriptures. There is, for example, the story of Tamar (2 Sam. 13:1-22), the daughter of King David: Raped by her own brother, counseled to keep quiet to avoid a family scandal, rejected by a father who does not rebuke his rapist son, she lives the rest of her life "desolate." Dinah, Jacob's daughter, is also raped, an act which ends in terrible slaughter (Gen. 34). God does not step in to stop these horrors; indeed, God often contributes to them. Jephthah, for example, murders his only daughter in fulfillment of a deal with God for military victory.

Most of these "texts of terror," as biblical scholar Phyllis Trible calls them, are not read from the lectern. While decisions to avoid these stories have supposedly reflected sensitivity to women's concerns, many women see the omissions as an attempt to revise history, and to minimize what little record remains of the tradition's sordid treatment of them.

But even in the texts that remain, women, good or bad, never achieve the status of full personhood. Women may be divorced, but may not choose divorce; if widowed, they have no identity; if they

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fail to bear surviving sons, they are outcasts; if they take another man, they may be stoned. Or perhaps, as in Numbers 31, they are mere booty to be counted among the spoils of war, fit only for rape or mass extermination. Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Leah are mentioned solely because they are married to important men. Ruth is bartered and sold along with the rest of her father-in-law's property. Rahab, who bravely saves Joshua and his companions, escapes physical injury, but is always referred to dismissively as "the harlot," while Israel and Jerusalem, in their most wicked and godless periods, are likewise referred to as fallen women.

It would be comforting to assume that, in the New Dispensation, Jesus rejects this grotesque attitude and restores women to full partnership in the human enterprise. And indeed, the Gospel witnesses to his calling of women as friends and disciples: Mary Magdalene, the first apostle; strong, competent Martha; Joanna and Susanna, "who provided for [Jesus and the twelve] out of their means." But against this we must also cite Jesus' repeated dismissal of his mother ("Woman, what have you to do with me? [John 2:4]; "Who is my mother?" [Matt 12:46]) and his dire eschatolgical predictions that single out women: "Alas for those who are with child and for those who give suck in those days!" (Luke 21:23).

Again, while we recognize Paul's egalitarian manifesto in Galatians 3:28 ("In Christ . . . there is neither male nor female"), we cannot ignore the androcentric bias that perpetuates the model of male ownership of women and has been consistently used over the centuries as a biblical warrant for domestic abuse: "Wives, be subject to your husbands" (Col. 3:18); "The head of a woman is her husband" (1 Cor. 11:3); "For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man" (1 Cor. 11:7).



Dierdre Luzwick

Behind these selective stories and sayings read in our churches lies a conceptual framework even more lethal to the aspirations of women for unbattered wholeness — the biblical story of our relationship with a supposedly salvific God, a story we are reluctant to gaze upon in its obvious, plain-sense fullness.

For the Good News seems to be that we are in thrall to a God whose prideful anger is appeased only through blood sacrifice — worse yet, only through infanticide. Indeed, the Bible teaches that only the death of Jesus, the son of God, could satisfy the Deity's requirements for reconciling Eve's sin (see Mark 10:45, Matt. 26:28, 1 Cor. 15:3, Col. 1:20, Rom. 3:25). The Divine Parent, who mandates this arrangement, is not held responsible; rather it is Eve, the first woman, whose disobedience forces God into the role of child abuser. And the death of the divine child was not all that God required. The son had to suffer in the process. It is precisely this aspect of the life of Jesus that Christian theology has traditionally emphasized. The savior brings salvation through suffering, willingly and without question. We are enjoined to follow his example, bearing our crosses in silence with an eye to heaven.

This "suffering servant" model has been used most consistently in Christian tradition to characterize the expected role of women. As Mary Daly has said in *Beyond God the Father,* "The qualities that Christianity idealizes, especially for women, are also those of a victim: sacrificial love, passive acceptance of suffering, humility, meekness, etc."

Theologians have, of necessity, rationalized the image of a barbarous male God, magnifying the concept of human (female) guilt to counterbalance the more horrifying story to which the Scriptures testify. The process of lectionary selection has continued this tradition. But the underlying theme, and its power to perpetuate the violent oppression of women, is ineradicable. Theologically, the ugliness of liturgical scripture that reflects the pain of abused women should call Christians to repentance and conversion, and thus to the radical rebuilding of society. Practically, it has often served merely to confirm patriarchal security in the warrant of biblical history. The question is not whether the Bible tells a tale of abuse, but whether there is any way for Christian women to live with that witness and remain faithful. TW

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Post-Christian women

by Donna Schaper

The Women's Theological Center in Boston has been slowly moving beyond a position of dissent on the edge of Christendom towards one of providing a post-Christian alternative.

"You can only protest and try to get in for so long," says Donna Bivens, co-director. "Then you start thinking about what you can do and how you can live without the institutional church."

At an April, 1992 conference sponsored by the WTC, Emily Culpepper, who teaches at the University of the Redlands, described her experience of calling herself post-Christian as unsatisfying.

"I have struggled with how to come to terms with my Christian past," Culpepper said. "Something wimpy like post-Christian or post-Protestant or any of those white-bread terms — that doesn't do it for me."

Culpepper landed on the term "compost" to describe her theological mood and moment: "Christianity is not just my roots. The roots are integral with the tree and it doesn't do justice to the fact that I choose to sever myself from my tradition. It's become compost, decaying and dying, once alive. So the first faith that I had, which I loved like a best friend, has died and I am seeking to compost it in ways that are useful to myself and to us all."

Meck Groot, on the staff at the WTC, distinguishes between cultural Christianity and believing Christianity. Raised in the Christian Reformed tradition, Meck had just returned from her grandfather's funeral. "I know my people by how they worship. We are linked by ethnicity. But the problem is, religion with them is a package deal. It means being heterosexual. It means believing that you can't change the world because people are bottom-line bad. I can't buy that any more."

The program at the Boston center raises all but $46,000 of its $172,500 budget. Its board is complete with Christian and post-Christian professors of theology, artists and therapists. Its class each year is composed of about 12 people. WTC describes itself as half institution and half experiment.

Alice Walker says that feminist is to womanist as lavender is to purple; making those politics personal is what makes the WTC unique. Race gets as much concern as gender, joined by class. The most popular workshop at the 1991 annual gathering of women was a workshop on blue-collar feminism.

> *The first faith that I had, which I loved like a best friend, has died and I am seeking to compost it in ways that are useful to myself and to us all.*
>
> *— Emily Culpepper*

Ever since the clash at Canberra in the World Council of Churches 1991 meeting, where the WTC's most famous graduate, Chung Hyun Kyung, a Presbyterian theologian from South Korea, addressed the 3,500 delegates from 100 nations, the WTC has grown increasingly popular with Asian women. Last year's Study-Action, a year-long intensive internship, had 12 students, six of whom were of Asian origin.

Chung brought down the wrath of the World Council conservatives when she invoked spirits beyond the spirits of Jesus Christ. Reading at Canberra from a rice-paper scroll, Chung invoked the spirits of women and men oppressed through the ages. "Come, spirit of Hagar, Egyptian black slave woman exploited and abandoned by Abraham and Sarah, the ancestors of our faith. ... Come, spirit of the Amazon rain forest, come earth, air, water, raped, tortured and exploited by human greed." She did not leave out Jesus. "Come," she concluded, "spirit of the Liberator, our brother Jesus."

Has it been hard to stay alive institutionally on the edge of the church?

"You bet," says Nancy Richardson. "We are the only organization I can think of that provides a credentialed, excellent, experientially based theological education, especially for women — who are, after all, the growing constituency within seminaries — that has never been able to get a grant from the Lilly Endowment." The Lilly Foundation is the chief funder of theological education and its auxiliaries.

Richardson believes that the answer to this discrimination lies in institutional fear of the kind of revelations women experience when they worship outside rather than inside the church. "When we read our own bible, and experience our own God, people don't like to hear what is revealed to us. Like the possibility that there is more to the Godhead than Jesus, like the possibility that God loves homosexuals and heterosexuals, like God being larger than what the institution has discovered."

Donna Bivens calls WTC "our place by the water." Others are ready to call for a name that doesn't look back. TW

Donna Schaper is pastor of First Congregational Church, Riverhead, NY.

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Haitian trauma

In Haiti it is common to see naked male children. The heat is oppressive, so the fewer clothes the better. However, even in the sweltering slum of Cite Soleil, the genitals of female children are covered. According to students of the culture, this practice honors the "birth part" of females as the "pathway of life." Such respect, they say, was largely responsible for there being so few rapes in Haiti.

But that's changed. Since September 1991 when the democratically elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted by a military coup, incidents of rape of women and female children have increased alarmingly. And these rapes have a specific purpose. My research confirms the May 19 statement of the UN/OAS International Civilian Mission that "rape has emerged as a tool of political repression in Haiti."

I just returned from Haiti where, with the help of an anthropologist who has worked in Haiti for 10 years on women's reproductive health, I was able to enter neighborhoods and videotape the testimonies of some of the women. All were assaulted by members of the military, the police or the newly formed anti-democratic political party known as FRAPH (in Haitian creole, "to hit"). Many were told during assaults that they were being raped because they or their male partners participated in democratic activities.

The women who came forward took an enormous risk. They knew I could not help them to leave Haiti. They understood they would not be financially compensated. Because of the constant presence of FRAPH in these neighborhoods, I went in as a health care worker with a camcorder hidden in my bag. Women guarded the doors. When FRAPH members appeared, the women would sing, signaling us to turn out the camera light and be quiet.

In one account, Jacqueline's husband was a pro-democracy activist who refused to remove Aristide's poster from his wall. When the military came after him, he went into hiding. Jacqueline was living with her aunt when seven members of the military broke into their tin and cardboard shack. They accused her of knowing where her boyfriend was, voting for Aristide and being in the resistance. Then each man raped her. They told her they would return. Her aunt, afraid for her own safety, will no longer hide her. Jacqueline seeks shelter each night in the shacks of others.

As unimaginable as the living conditions are for the poor in Haiti, the fear that engulfs them is worse, especially at night when the military takes to the streets in its trucks.

— Anna Hamilton Phelan

A member of Artists for Democracy in Haiti, Phelan is the screenwriter of "Gorillas in the Mist."



Cellist Vedran Smailovic played with the Sarajevo Opera. After the national theater and concert halls were destroyed, Smailovic played, in full concert dress, in the streets, commemorating those who had been killed. He is pictured here playing at an anti-handgun vigil in Detroit. He has also played in Ireland.

Racketeering and C.D.

On January 24th, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in National Organization of Women v. Joseph M. Scheidler that the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt organization Act (RICO) can be applied to activities of various anti-abortion groups even though no financial gain is involved.

Contrary to assertions made by NOW's Legal Defense Fund, the impact of expanding RICO will not be limited to violent activity. It can and will be applied to a broad spectrum of non-violent civil disobedience. The application of federal racketeering laws against protestors is a frightful assault against First Amendment guarantees of free speech.

Signers include: Bernice A. King, Ramsey Clark, Henri Nouwen, Daniel Berrigan, Liz McAlister and Wendell Berry

— excerpted from New York Times ad 3/27/94

Land mines

It is estimated that right now there may be as many as 120 million live landmines deployed around the earth, mainly in 21 developing countries. They have become third-world weapons manufactured by and purchased from first-world companies. Some remain from World War II; in fact, every year 30-40 people, mostly children, are killed in Poland. They represent the killing of wars that have no end. Now, in addition to battlefield use, landmines are used for refugee control and long-term terrorism.

Advanced technology makes the mines extremely difficult to detect and remove. The "bounding type" of mine bounces up and explodes at a height of five feet. Plastic fragments in a wound are invisible to x-rays making treatment of injuries very difficult. The indiscriminate effect of landmines on civilian populations is one of the reasons countries have sought to limit their use through the 1980 U.N. resolution on conventional weapons, which has not been ratified by the U.S.

— Lester Hartman,
Massachusetts chapter,
Episcopal Peace Fellowship

Short takes

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Re-imagining God

by Chung Hyun Kyung

I want to share about my image of God, because when we talk about image of God, it is basically talking about who we are in relation to ourselves in this entire cosmos. Speaking of God is speaking of the unspeakable. Sometimes I feel stupid. I talk about God, even though I cannot see God. I cannot name God. Why do I still speak about God? Speaking about God is affirming our meaning of life. Speaking of God is coming to terms with why we are here at this very moment in this place. Therefore, speaking of God is asking where we came from, where we are and where we are going.

As an Asian, feminist, liberation theologian I always ask this question: "What's God got to do with this reality of the third world? What's God got to do with the reality of Asia? And what's God got to do with the reality of being a woman? When I raise this question, the language of God — God's language — becomes highly charged political language and highly charged metaphorical language.

What does it mean to talk about God when the world is full of suffering, especially when I read of Asian women's struggle in this world and this whole 500 years of western colonization and the whole tradition of foot-binding and wife-burning and using comfort woman and using Asian woman as a last paradise of feminine women? What does it mean to talk about God? What does God have to do with this brokenness, this oppression, colonialism, capitalism?

Also, I am asking another question: what does it mean to talk about God as an Asian? I was educated as a Christian theologian, but every Asian Christian theologian must come to terms with what it means to be an Asian 100 percent and to be a Christian 100 percent, because when I look at our history of religion, we have more than 5,000 years of shamanism and 2,000 years of Taoism and almost 2,000 years of Buddhism and 700 years of Confucianism and only 100 years of Protestantism in Korea. Therefore whenever I go to the Buddhist temples and look at Buddha, I feel so young. I came from the youngest family of this whole community.



Chung Hyun Kyung

I'm not doing just an interreligious dialogue with Buddhists, Confucianists and Taoists, because all of them are within me. As my friend introduced me I feel like my bowel is shamanist, and my heart is Buddhist, and my right brain is Confucianist and my left brain is Christian. I need an archeology of spirituality within me because at every layer I can see all these people screaming and shouting at each other. This is like a symphony of gods. I call it a family of gods.

In Asia, the population of Christianity is only less than three percent. Therefore we are talking about 97 percent of people in Asia who do not articulate their faith in Christian language and metaphors. In this setting, what does it means to do theology with Asian sensitivity and Asian heart and Asian body? Can you really get out of this cultural imperialism so I can be fully Asian to celebrate divinity within our people?

And a third question is: What has God got to do with my reality of being a woman? Many Korean churches still do not ordain women and the reason they do not ordain women was "See, Jesus was a man." And "Women, you menstruate and when you menstruate you are not clean, so how dare you stand up in the holy altar and talk about God's words?" We have a pastor — a very brave pastor — who responded to these male ministers. They said when a woman minister gets pregnant, her stomach will be so big everybody will know she had sex. But this minister stood up and said "Brother, listen! Many of you, the pastors of big churches, because you are fed so well by your congregation, all of you have a big stomach hanging there, and when we see your big stomach is just mere fat, is it Okay? But when you see a woman's big stomach with light, with a baby, it isn't Okay? What kind of thinking are you having?" So we all shouted and screamed and left. But that's the reality of the

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Christian church.

The Christian church has been very patriarchal and that's why we are here, in order to destroy this patriarchal idolatry of Christianity.

To talk about God we really get into the place of mystery. God is in the silence. That's why I have a problem with a personalized God, even the best images — God as friend, God as mother, God as lover — they are still persons. But many Asians, we see God in the wind, in the fire, in the tree, in the ocean. We are living with God. It's energy — life-giving energy. And I also learn much from Zen Buddhists. They say God is pure emptiness, so you cannot talk about God. When I look at Christian tradition like Meister Eckhart and Thomas Merton, Catherine of Sienna, they also talk about God as silence, God as nothingness and God as pure emptiness. Therefore talking about God is like writing poetry. In the depths of the poetry, we meet the aliveness of life and what it means to be human.

I want to share with you what we are doing in Asia, especially in the women's theological community.

This is a book I brought from Korea. You can see the shamanistic mother-God image in the cover of this book. This is a new book published by the Korean Association of Women Theologians. This is our post-colonial, post-patriarchal, post-western project. What we do here is feminine theological reflection on goddesses in Korean folk religions.

Trinity of Asian goddesses

So we look at all these images of goddesses in order to find our relation to the world, our relation to nature, and our relation to ourselves and problems of the world through these images of goddesses. I want to share three images of God so striking in Asia and how these three images of God transformed my Christianity and my theological understanding of God.

The three goddesses I want to share with you this morning are *Kali*, *Kuan-yin* and *Ina*. These are my new trinity: *Kali*, *Kuan-yin* and *Ina*. I got to know about their presence through my participation in the Asian women's movement. I wanted to know in what situation I encountered these goddesses. Two years ago, I went to Sri Lanka. Many third-world theologians gathered to name the spirituality which is based on the cosmos — not just patriarchal spirituality, but spirituality based on our everyday life and our cosmos.



Kali **Ramgarh, 12th century**

I claim Kali *as the goddess of justice. She is fierce. She's uncontrollable. She is fiery. She is wild. Her power is not acceptable power, but she used this power to claim justice, to do justice.*

Kali and revenge

Our conference center was in front of the *Kali* temple. One day I witnessed 3,000 Sri Lankan mothers marching toward the temple. They all wore white dresses and I asked, "Who are they?" And they said "There is a real, big racial conflict in Sri Lanka between the majority government and the minority. Many young men got killed by the government. These are the mothers of the slain young men — 3,000 of them." They marched toward the temple, so I marched with them. My heart was right there with them. And they had this ritual which was very simple and very striking. This representative of this young man's mother, she read all the names of the government officers who are considered to have killed their sons, they researched their names and they called all these men's names and after calling all these names, she said only one thing. No more elaboration, she said, "*Kali*, punish them." Then what happened after was, these 3,000 women bring coconuts — one coconut each — and in front of *Kali* they smashed the coconuts on the ground. And I asked, "What is this? Why are people smashing coconuts?" A woman answered, "This is an offering to *Kali*." But as an outsider, when I look at it, I really witnessed all these men's heads smashed there.

People say revenge is bad. In Christian tradition, we talk about forgiveness and reconciliation. I like forgiveness. I like reconciliation, but I want to know who says forgiveness and who says reconciliation, because when there is no change in power and oppression, talking about reconciliation and

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forgiveness is so superficial. So these poor women, what they needed was the strong justice of *Kali*. They really wanted their sons' deaths not to be in vain. They want justice done to their sons' deaths and to their own life. Therefore, I claim *Kali*, usually located in India and Sri Lanka, the Hindu image of goddess, as the goddess of justice. She is fierce. She's uncontrollable. She is fiery. She is wild. Her power is not acceptable power, but she used this power to claim justice, to do justice.

And then I dreamed about myself breaking coconuts in front of the IMF [International Monetary Fund] and the World Bank and the Vatican. So I thought all these women should go to these places and 3,000 of us should bring our coconuts and smash them in front of them and say, "Let them be punished!" so this 500 years of colonialism can have a real meaning of jubilee, not just a metaphorical meaning.

Kuan-yin and compassion

The second image I encountered in Asia was of *Kuan-yin*. *Kuan-yin* is the Buddhist image of goddess located in northeast Asia, like China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Sri Lanka and those places. The literal meaning of *Kuan-yin* means "one who hears the cry." And when I look at *Kuan-yin* she is a beautiful woman. She is riding a dragon. The dragon is a very wonderful symbol in Asia, not like here — you call a bad woman a dragon-lady here, right? But in Asia the dragon is a very holy object.

Kuan-yin is riding a dragon. She is riding the very, very turbulent ocean, but she is very calm. She has this branch of a tree in her left hand and in her right hand she has this medicine box — real healing potion. So when she drops this potion, people get healed, get whole again. But *Kuan-yin* is a *Bodhisattva*. *Bodhisattva* in Buddhist tradition is an enlightened being. She or he can go to *Nirvana* any time, but they refuse to go because they say there are so many people suffering in this turbulent water, not just people — mountains, water, air, animals — they are suffering. They rather want to stay here in this turbulent water in order to get enlightened with us. *Kuan-yin* prays for abolition of Hell itself! It's a very different kind of spirituality, but when I read more about *Kuan-yin* — especially from Chinese folklore — *Kuan-yin* is a woman, just an ordinary woman. And because of her wisdom and compassion, she becomes this level of goddess.

So in Asia, in many parts of Asia, incarnation always comes from the bottom to top. God's son or daughter never just drops in here and becomes God. Rather, it's a very organic process. You come and you experience all the things in this world and because of the way you lived, the way you shared your life, you become god and goddess one day. So Korean-Asian feminist theologians, especially Korean feminist theologians say, "We don't believe in Christology from above. We only believe in Christology from the love."

Ina and earth

The third image I got came from the Philippines. Her name is *Ina*. *Ina* means mother and *Ina* means earth. So she is an indigenous goddess of the Philippines. Now when the Spanish government conquered the Philippines and they converted Filipino people, they emphasized this docile, very obedient image of Mary who looks at the sky and says, "Thy will be done. Do whatever you want to me." What Filipino people did, they started to call Mary *Ina*, so when they go to the Catholic Church they call Mary and they say dear *Ina*. So from the Spanish perspective they say "Oh, finally we've converted the Filipinos." But what they did is, they converted Christianity into their

Witness debate

The Witness staff debated Chung Hyun Kyung's theology at length before recommending her for the Episcopal Church Publishing Company's 1994 Stringfellow award.

Marianne Arbogast and Marietta Jaeger feel that the demonstration outside the Kali temple is essentially violent. They are concerned that her account of the smashing of coconuts will contribute to a spirit of vengeance already dominant in our culture which allows people to pray for mercy for those they love and cruelty or execution for those with whom they disagree.

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann and Julie A. Wortman, on the other hand, feel the women's actions released their rage (rather than turning it inward) and offered the final vengeance to God, in whose hands it belongs. They find the anger within the trinity reassuring, liberating and humbling.

An irony was noted by Bill Wylie-Kellermann who observed that many feminist theologians have dismissed the angry father God concept, but Chung is restoring an angry parent to the trinity. It may be that, while the atonement poses some potentially bad theology, anger mixed with compassion is a necessary component of God.

Mary Carter, who typed Chung's article, believes Chung can't be called a Christian and probably shouldn't be designing her own trinity.

In recommending Chung, the staff is raising her up as someone whose faith is alive and engaging, breaking our faith out of complacency. We welcome her voice in the theological arena.

— *J.W.-K.*

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own religion. I can see in this the peoples' *active* resistance.

Ina is very meaningful for us today because this earth itself is Ina. So we are not taking care of the earth, the earth is taking care of us. So when we have this JPIC (Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation) conference in Korea, Korean theologians made it very clear that when we do theology we have to remember that the earth is fine without us, but we cannot survive without earth. We're visitors to this earth and earth is welcoming us and taking care of us. So what we are emphasizing — there is a new tongue coming out of this theology, geo-piety.

We need a piety to the earth. What many Korean theologians try to do nowadays is to make a connection between the spirit of earth and our Christian theology. There's a philosophy behind the land in Korea — we call it the theory of philosophy of wind, mountain and water, because you don't just live everywhere. You have to find the exact place you should live. Your energy, your personal energy must suit this land energy. If you have too much *yang* in you, you have to live in yinland and if you have too much *yin* in you, you live in yangland, so you cannot make war. You cannot go crazy. You cannot be so greedy. We say if you have the brokenness of your energy balance, you do all kinds of bad things. So you have to be very careful where you live. But you know what they said? It's very interesting. According to this philosophy of wind, water and mountain and how to discern the energy — we call it *chi*, energy of life — the best energy of land comes from the land shape, but that land shape is the womb shape and the powerpoint is the vagina of that land. The people really try to find this opening of the womb in many lands, because we know the sacred power resides in the land.

When you live with this kind of awareness, it is very hard to destroy the land.

What does it mean to bring in this trinity of goddesses in my Christian tradition? What does *Kuan-yin*, *Kali* and *Ina* have to do with my Christian theology? I have asked this question. After learning about their qualities, imagination and creativity comes with these fusions of different horizons. The more radically different it is, the more imagination, the more creativity you could find in it. You have to struggle with it, because conflict is so high. Therefore what I discovered after studying all these goddesses is I start to look at a different image of God in Christian tradition. In Christian tradition we say, we all come from the earth. It means we all come from *Ina*; we have that tradition, but suddenly it becomes so clear to me. About *Kuan-yin*, this human being with her compassion and wisdom, I can find in John's gospel. Jesus said "I will go, but the Holy Spirit will come, but when the Holy Spirit comes, you will do something greater than what I did." I think we forgot about it totally. I don't think many of us think we can do something greater than Jesus did.



***Kuan-yin*, goddess of Mercy** National Palace Museum, Pai pei, Taiwan

And what is this tradition of *Kali*? I can see in Acts where there is in the Christian community, some people hiding a sum of their money and they didn't give it to the community. They perished! So those kind of images I reclaim in Christian tradition.

The other God who is not connected with our life, who just sits there and controls us, must go. That kind of God doesn't empower Asian women throughout history, so we need to find a God who is actively present with us. What I discovered from all this search is a God/goddess, who is *not* power over us, this power of domination, the power of this military and the power of this capitalism, but God of healing, God of caring, God of persistence, God of resilience and God of affirming life. Therefore I want to invite all of you to find in your own tradition these ancient and new and future images of God who will enable us to be together and to heal this earth and to heal ourselves and to heal this world. And we participate in her body and in her spirit. Therefore we all can share in her divinity in our everyday life. TW

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Challenging the canons

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

art and society

The term "canon" is one that is common in both ecclesiastical and art circles. From the Latin *canon*, meaning measuring line or model, and from the Greek *kanon*, meaning rod or rule, the word is used to signify "that which is institutionally approved" (presumably measured against a set of standards). "Canon" may refer to a set of religious rituals, beliefs and regulations, or, in a different context, to the central group of artists who have come to be included in the pages of art-history text books. The acceptance of a "canon" relies upon an acceptance of the standards upon which it is based; in recent years, and with women at the forefront of the inquiry, the issue of just who it was who created those standards—in both religious and artistic contexts—has been called into question.



At least partly as a result of this inquiry, the canons of Christianity are being revised, albeit slowly. While the first Episcopal women priests were ordained in the United States 20 years ago, it is only this year that the Anglican Church has voted to admit women as clergy. The Roman Catholic Church still has a long way to go. Groups such as the Women's Ordination Conference struggle to keep the issue alive.

In much the same way, the canons of art are being challenged . While "feminist" art engendered some excitement among the artworld's "powers that be" (museums, galleries, art dealers, art publishers) during the 1970s, it seems less attractive to them today. As The Guerrilla Girls (an anonymous coalition of artists that monitors sexism and racism in the artworld) have pointed out, the number of women having solo shows in major museums has been steadily decreasing.

Mary Beth Edelson is an artist who has been challenging both canons for two decades. Her early performances and photographs were set in natural surroundings and

Blaise Tobia and **Virginia Maksymowicz,** Philadelphia artists, edit the Art & Society Section of *The Witness.*

The Witness wins praise

The Witness captured 16 awards at the recent Episcopal Communicators and Associated Church Press conference held at Kanuga in North Carolina.

The magazine took first place Polly Bond awards from the Episcopal competition for: editorial, "Transforming despair" [12/93] by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann; news, "Coalminers' cause goes to Canterbury" [9/93] by Jan Nunley; in-depth coverage, In defense of creation [6/93], the entire issue; interview, "Living into ambiguity with Verna Dozier" [3/93] by Julie A. Wortman; critical review, "Beyond the New Deal" [4/93] by Danny Duncan Collum; reader response, "The Word in our hearts," [12/93] by Craig Smith; humor, "Lift the ban?" [5/93] by Julie A. Wortman; theological reflection, articles by Ched Myers and Bill Wylie-Kellermann [4, 6, 11/93]; original graphic, "Midwives" [11/993] by Doris Klein; and for photography, "Holding to the light" [12/93] by Jim West.

We were awarded a second place prize for feature writing, "Living water of the Eno" [6/93] by Marianne Arbogast, and two honorable mentions for cover design [6/93], our rubber stamp environmental cover by Julie A. Wortman, and layout, "Caesar and the orphans" [4/93] artwork by Dierdre Luzwick.

From the ACP, which fields many more competitors, we won second place prizes for editorial (same as above); biblical exposition for Ched Myers' "In the courtyard with Peter" [4/93]; and for "Liturgy on Trumbull" [12/93] by poet Michael Lauchlan. The judges described *The Witness* as well-written, friendly and as using the format well. One judge added, "The enjoyable aspect of *The Witness* is its unpredictability."

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***Some Living American Women Artists/Last Supper,* 1972 by Mary Beth Edelson**

transformed the artist's own body into mythical and goddess-like beings.

"The Catholic Church's argument . . . for not allowing women to be priests rests on the idea that, because Christ was a man, priests should also be men, so that people can relate to their priests as literal stand-ins for Christ," she has written. "In using my own body as a sacred being, I broke the stereotype that the male gender is the only gender that can identify in a firsthand way with the body, and by extension, the mind and spirit of a primary sacred being."

Edelson's work, *Some Living American Women Artists/Last Supper,* grew out of a meditation project involving a number of invited artists and her Jungian study group. The resulting alternative version of Leonardo Da Vinci's famous fresco encapsulated the artist's reaction to male domination in both art and religion. Edelson replaced the heads of Jesus and the twelve apostles with photographs of women artists (who at the time were still living; a number have since died). She placed painter Georgia O'Keefe in Christ's central place of honor, and portrayed sculptor Louise Nevelson as St. James. She used photographs of other women artists to frame the historic event. And by choosing an artwork with an overt Biblical reference, she hoped to defy "organized religion's penchant for cutting women out of positions of authority and power, and their widespread assumption that because of their gender, women do not have direct access to the sacred."

"In using my own body as a sacred being, I broke the stereotype that the male gender is the only one that can identify in a firsthand way with a primary sacred being."

— Mary Beth Edelson

The image, first shown in 1972, has been reproduced widely, both in magazines and as a poster. The poster found its way into one of the "cathedrals" of the artworld—New York City's Museum of Modern Art—when, in 1988, it was included in the exhibition "Committed to Print." It has become a familiar sight to a new generation of young women artists, as they begin their own battles with the canons of their profession.

"The rituals I performed in the 1970s," Edelson said recently, "still occupied mythic space in order to pull up their power . . . but another transformation has taken place, a transformation away from mythic space into real time." Edelson's current work is trying to blend what is both "mythical" and "real" about women in light of contemporary feminist concerns: questions of nature and culture, power and violence, and the standards of "male" and "female" behavior. TW

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The cost of integrating

by Mary Sudman Donovan

Over the last 25 years, the dramatic events of the women's ordination movement in the Episcopal Church have obscured a quieter revolution occurring concurrently: the change in laywomen's position in the church.

Thirty years ago, the Episcopal Church was an institution rigidly segregated by gender. The church's governing body, the General Convention, was closed to women, as were most diocesan conventions. Some parishes were beginning to elect women to serve on vestries in the 1960s, but those were still the exception rather than the rule.

Denied access to this government, women built for themselves a parallel organization, the Episcopal Church Women (ECW) with a local, diocesan and national representational structure. Though the ECW had committees similar to those of the national church — Christian Education, Christian Social Relations, Communications, Missions — the two committee systems functioned independently. Women's work and men's work intersected only on the Executive Council where six women, representing the ECW, served alongside 39 men.

The advantage of this segregated system for women was that they were able to control their own organization. Having existed for over a century, the women's network was finely tuned. Officers knew their responsibilities; the chain of command was well-established. Women leaders emerged from the local parish and made their way into the diocesan and national structures. Support for the church's mission remained the ECW's central focus, and that support was symbolized by the United Thank Offering (UTO). Advertising the offering, collecting it and then deciding how and where to distribute the funds took countless hours of woman-power — and tied the women together with a strong sense of common purpose.

However, by the late 1960s, many women felt that the advantages of being able to control one phase of the church's life were far outweighed by the disadvantage of having to operate within an overall system they had no power to change. At every General Convention from 1946 until 1967, a resolution to open membership in the House of Deputies to women was introduced; finally, in 1967, the measure passed. The constitutional change was validated by a second vote at the beginning of the 1970 General Convention, and 29 women took their seats as deputies.

The advantage of a segregated system was that women were able to control their own organization.

The ECW leaders at the 1970 Triennial enthusiastically affirmed the decision to dismantle the organizational structure of the Episcopal Church Women by suspending the Triennial by-laws, *although the Triennial meetings themselves were to continue*. The General Division of Women's Work — the representative council that had governed the ECW between Triennials — was dissolved and the national staff officer was transferred to the office of "lay ministry." Even the selection of UTO committee members was transferred from the ECW to Provincial Synods, and the national UTO coordinator was moved from the women's division to the world mission office.

The ECW leaders envisioned a church in which women and men participated with full equality. That vision, however, was hampered by the fact that most church committees still required equal numbers of bishops, priests, and laity. With women excluded from the first two categories, and vying with laymen for the third, female representation on the committees was far from equal. The experience of serving on such overwhelmingly men-dominated committees helped to transform many former ECW officers into avid supporters of women's ordination. Indeed, once women's ordination was passed, the addition of women priests to the General Convention's committee structure has gradually produced a far more balanced committee structure, and, hopefully, that process will accelerate as more women become bishops.

The acceptance of women's ordination set female aspirants for the priesthood on a path that was purposeful, but the accompanying dissolution of the ECW's structure left laywomen in a sort of limbo, not quite knowing their place in the church.

Some women moved quickly into the leadership structure of local parishes and dioceses, served on vestries and calling committees and worked on a wide variety of church-sponsored programs and projects. Many parishes and dioceses incorporated women's leadership into the overall structure with ease and grace, thankful for the broadened talent pool the women represented. At the coming General Convention in Indianapolis, almost 50 percent of the lay deputies will be women.

At the national level, the attempt to create a lay ministries department failed,

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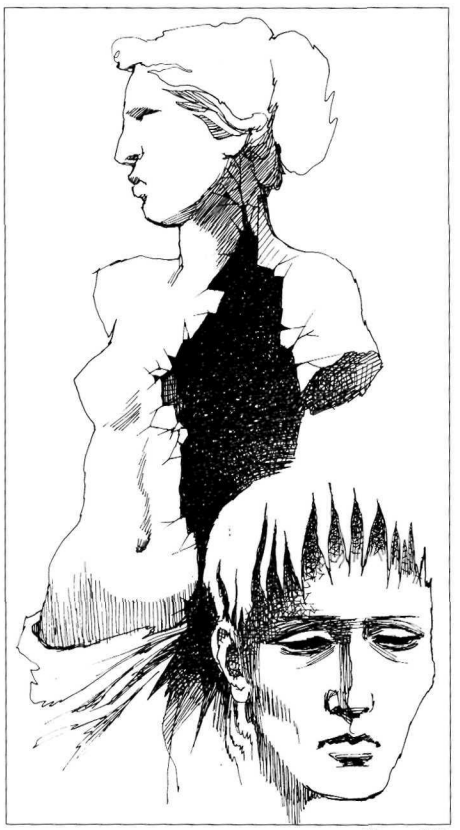
primarily because the church's lay*men* exhibited scant interest in developing lay ministries. Eventually a staff officer for women's ministries was once again appointed. However, without the power base that the ECW had provided, the staff officer's position was seen as programatic rather than representational — she functions as one among many program officers rather than as *the* representative of the majority of the church's members — its women.

Ann Smith, the present director of Women in Mission and Ministry (WIMM), perceived, as she entered the office, that her task would be to prepare laywomen for the tremendous changes that were taking place *vis-à-vis* their role in the church. In conjunction with the ECW, the WIMM office developed a leadership training program called Women of Vision aimed at developing women leaders who, with a strong sense of self-confidence, are willing to work from within the system to challenge and reform that system. The WIMM-initiated Council for Women's Ministries has provided the church's women's organizations with a limited forum for addressing a broad spectrum of women's issues. Finally, the WIMM office has worked to strengthen the ties with worldwide women's religious networks, although meager funding has meant that the U.S. delegations to international meetings have been primarily of women who could afford to pay their own expenses.

Meanwhile, the women of the church groped for a new organizational model that would both validate the reality of women priests and deputies; but also recognize the continuing desire to retain a national women's organization. Finally, in 1985, the Triennial meeting adopted by-laws re-establishing the Episcopal Church Women, though the organization was now without the staffing and funding of the pre-1970 period.

Are Episcopal laywomen better off today than they were before women became deputies and priests? My answer would be "Yes, indeed," with one qualification. In local parishes and on the diocesan and national level, most offices



Eleanor Mill

are open to women and many women are using positions of responsibility to help shape a new vision of church life. Pam Chinnis, as President of the House of Deputies, models such a role with dedication and grace — and has also used her power of appointment to ensure women's presence on all the General Convention committees. Laywomen can choose from among a wide spectrum of women's organizations committed to a variety of specialized purposes. Diversity and freedom of expression characterize women's opportunities in the contemporary Episcopal Church.

To my mind, the resurgence of the Episcopal Church Women has been advantageous. It validates a reality of parish life that we tried to ignore — the reality that there remain, within most congregations, women who find real fulfillment in meeting together and working on common projects. Theoretically, such groups could be composed of both men and women; in practice, they almost never are. I am not sure why this is so. In part, it is a carryover from an earlier generation in which many women had time for such activities because they were not employed outside the home. I suspect, too, as researchers such as Carol Gilligan have indicated, that there is within the psychological makeup of most women, a sense of caring that values interpersonal associations. Also significant is the disproportionately female make-up of the senior citizen segment of today's church which has the most leisure time. And yet there is a strong cross-generational aspect to many ECW groups — mothers with young children who enjoy meeting with women of their grandmothers' ages.

My only reservation is that the reality of a vital separate women's organization is not reflected in the national church office. Because the ECW, still the largest, most representative group of Episcopal women, is not connected by clear organizational ties to the national church, the ECW's effectiveness in communicating national programs to the local congregations is lost and the creativity of the church's women is often channeled to areas parallel to and competing with those of the national church. And the WIMM office, without the power base of an organized constituency, is trivialized and underfunded. My hope is that this is a temporary problem and that as more women take their places in the governmental councils of the Episcopal Church, they will focus church attention more clearly on issues of importance to women. The "silent majority" will be heard. TW

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Indianapolis '94

Second-class priesthood: a matter of conscience?

by Sally M. Bucklee

Research conducted at Harvard University has indicated major differences between the career paths of women and men with the same education and experience ordained in the Episcopal Church between 1977 and 1987 (see *Episcopal Women,* Oxford, 1992). Today a man of color or a woman has a better chance of being elected suffragan bishop of a large urban diocese like Massachusetts or Los Angeles than of being elected rector of a prestigious, well-financed congregation in the same diocese.

In Australia, the Movement for the Ordination of Women (MOW) conducted a survey after "down-under" women had been priests for a year. "Many respondents identified discriminatory employment assumptions and practices by their dioceses which disadvantaged them," the survey report said. "It was often assumed ... that they would work for nothing, for less than the normal stipend, or without standard allowances. Women ... were often offered small, struggling parishes and their male peers had preference in appointments." While almost every woman reported strong affirmation from parishioners, half reported "personal experiences of discrimination or abuse of various kinds, from both clerical colleagues and lay people."

A majority, too, of the first batch of women priested by the Church of England were in non-stipendiary or part-time positions.

As these examples indicate, the church has been modelling and reenforcing the stereotype of women in assisting roles that lack authority, influence and power, a stereotype that prevailed in this and other provinces of the Anglican Communion before women were made priests. In effect, the church has devised a second-class priesthood for women — just as it did earlier for men of color.

Opponents of women's ordination have used startling analogies. A protester at the ordination of the Philadelphia 11 in 1974 said that ordaining a woman is like ordaining "a stone"; an Australian clergyman, in a General Synod debate, said it is like ordaining "a meatpie"; and a letter-writer in a major Australian newspaper said it is like ordaining "a dog." This year an English priest, Anthony Kennedy, said that female priests are "bloody bitches" who should be burned at the stake. As a major 1987 research project across the Episcopal Church found, the ordination of women both defines and reflects attitudes about — and the acceptance of — women in the church. Within the Anglican Communion in general, and the Episcopal Church in particular, access to the ordained ministry is a defining characteristic of full membership. As long as any group's access to ordination is questioned or denied on the basis of the color or shape of their skin, they are not welcome as full members of the Body of Christ.

"The provisions of these canons for the admission of Candidates for Ordination to the three Orders ... shall be equally applicable to men and women," the Canons of the Episcopal Church have stated since 1976. The word "shall" means the canon is mandatory. Twice, in 1976 and 1979, the House of Bishops elected not to propose a "conscience" statement to the bicameral General Convention and in 1988 and 1991 the House of Deputies resisted the bishops' efforts to negotiate with "traditionalist" opponents of women's ordination. Concurrence of both houses is required for any action.

Nevertheless, a "Statement of Conscience" adopted by the House of Bishops on its own in 1977 sanctions discrimination against women while discrimination against opponents of women's ordination is officially outlawed. Intended to apply to both supporters and opponents of women's ordination, the bishops have failed to ensure it is applied even-handedly — indeed, the conscience statement has rarely been used on behalf of supporters of women's ordination.

The Anglican Church of Canada enacted a simple "Conscience Clause" when it approved women's ordination in 1975, but rescinded it in 1986. The 1975 action had been an effective "grandfather clause" to see the church through a major change in its official policy, but by 1986 the Canadians had decided that discrimination on the grounds of sex could no longer be tolerated. A similar decision in the U.S. church is long overdue.

— Sally Bucklee is president of the Episcopal Women's Caucus.

The Episcopal Women's Caucus has produced an 80-page booklet, *"Equally Applicable": Conscience and Women's Ordination in the Episcopal Church, USA 1976-1994,* in an effort to assist bishops and deputies in making well-informed decisions on a variety of resolutions that will be addressing this topic at the church's upcoming 1994 General Convention in Indianapolis. The booklet examines "the issues resulting from the conscientious objection of some Episcopalians to the church's 1976 decision to authorize the inclusion of women in all orders of ministry" and provides a narrative history of the debate (along with the full texts of the relevant documents). Reflections from church leaders involved in creating and interpreting the texts and personal stories from those directly affected by the way "conscience" has been invoked to oppose women's ordination to the priesthood are also included.

Copies have been mailed to all bishops and deputies. Others may order copies prepaid for $7 each (10 copies for $65). Checks should be made payable to the Episcopal Women's Caucus and sent to the EWC at 19301 E. Gawne Rd., Stockton, CA 95215. The price includes postage and handling.

Vital Signs

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In dialogue with an ESA bishop-elect

by Katie Sherrod

Keith L. Ackerman, a priest in the Diocese of Fort Worth, was elected Bishop of Quincy last January. Influenced by the Episcopal Synod of America (ESA), the Diocese of Quincy has no women priests. Since Ackerman is a longtime ESA supporter, many conservatives in the church immediately began positioning the election-consent process as a test of the church's sincerity about continuing to tolerate "traditionalists" opposed to women priests and bishops.

Ackerman had already been on record as opposing women's ordination. Many in Quincy believed he still did so, for letters soon began going out from Quincy's women's ordination supporters opposing his election on the grounds that he would continue the diocese's anti-women priests policy. By April it appeared that Ackerman might not get the needed consents to ratify his election and letters began appearing in various church publications complaining that conservatives were being shut out of the church.

In Fort Worth, the local chapter of the Episcopal Women's Caucus (EWC) was following the Ackerman consent process with interest, for we did not want Quincy to experience the pain and divisiveness our diocese continues to suffer as a result of decisions by our ESA bishops, Clarence Pope and Jack Iker, and clergy to shut out those in the diocese who desire the ministry of women priests. But before formally opposing Ackerman's election, we decided that we should talk with Ackerman directly, to make certain we understood his views on women's ordination.

Several of our members met with Ackerman in his office at St. Mark's Church in Arlington, Tex., on April 13. He affirmed that he was now more open to the ministry of women than in the past and that he acknowledged the validity of the ordination of women. He also said he upheld the Constitutions and Canons of the Episcopal Church in this matter.

Encouraged by this response, we arranged with him to develop a statement of his positions that the Fort Worth EWC would circulate to diocesan standing committees. Ackerman even volunteered to pay for the mailing.

With the consecration of Keith Ackerman, the church will find itself not with yet another ESA bishop, but with a bishop in a state of growth and transition. Ackerman is no longer firmly locked in the ideological camp of the ESA.

Rumors of our dialogue began to surface. Conservatives in Quincy angrily accused Ackerman of "selling out" and allowing the EWC to set his agenda. This affected how specific Ackerman was willing to be on certain points, but in the final statement we worked out with him he agreed to indicate that he recognized the validity of women deacons, priests and bishops and would be as supportive as possible of women seeking ordination in Quincy. He also said he would extend normal courtesies to all visiting clergy and engage the diocese in open dialogue on the subject of the ordination of women.

In the end, however, the statement was never issued. Ackerman's election was ratified by a majority of standing committees in May, which made moot the need for a joint statement to standing committees.

Does this mean the dialogue was a failure? I think not. All who participated in it came to a better understanding of one another. It is clear that Ackerman is doing a great deal of thinking and praying about the issue of women's ordination. Indeed, his acceptance of the validity of women's ordination is more than either Fort Worth bishop has been able to do. We celebrate Ackerman's openness and encourage more such dialogues. With the consecration of Keith Ackerman, the church will find itself not with yet another ESA bishop, but with a bishop in a state of growth and transition. Ackerman is no longer firmly locked in the ideological camp of the ESA.

The truth is, no matter what happens at this year's General Convention, the ESA is dead. ESA Executive Director Sam Edwards himself announced this spring during a speech in Fort Worth that the ESA is dying financially and by August will probably no longer exist as a formal organization. Ackerman has cast his lot with the larger church. It is such attitudes and actions that truly carry out our Baptismal Covenant to "strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being."

— Katie Sherrod is secretary of the Fort Worth chapter of the Episcopal Women's Caucus and a public television producer and commentator.

Women and the church calendar

A proposal to include Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Amelia Jenks Bloomer, Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman in the church calendar will be considered at the 1993 General Convention in Indianapolis. "In the 19th century," says the proposal's champion, Marsue Harris, "believers, particularly slaves and women, heard the message of liberation inherent in the Gospel and applied it to themselves. The women's rights and abolitionist movements began in the churches, but churches both supported and suppressed their goals to end slavery and to emancipate women from white male authority and control." Harris believes that incorporating the witness of these women into "the collective memory of the church" will provide role models for women and men "engaged in church reform and social justice."

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Ecu Takes:

Presbyterian Church, USA

Louise Westfall is pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Mich.
Women have been ordained in the Presbyterian Church since 1956. There are now about 2,000 ordained women and 20,000 men. Right now women students in seminaries are getting very close to 50 percent.

The overall climate is increasingly open and accepting of women, particularly in small-membership churches and associate-pastor positions. But there is still a kind of stained-glass barrier. There are very few women as senior pastors of large-membership churches. I've heard some pretty grim stories — not so much about getting the first call, when you're usually willing to take any position that comes along. But as you gain experience and skill your options may become somewhat more limited.

In the denominational structure there is pretty good parity. There is a strong commitment to equality and inclusiveness, on General Assembly committees and paid staff positions.

Search committees in local churches are required to have affirmative action and equal opportunity policies. They have to look at resumes of women.

Even though there are more and more women all the time, I've experienced comments like, "I've never heard a woman preach before," or "When I was told the candidate being suggested was a woman, I had my doubts." There certainly is still a pocket of resistance. It's a Catch-22 — oftentimes it takes a congregation having the experience of a woman pastor before they come to accept it.

United Church of Christ

Mary Sue Gast is Executive Director of the Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society of the United Church of Christ.
We've been ordaining women since 1953. Right now 18 percent of ordained clergy in the UCC are women (out of 10,142 total clergy). Our ratio of ordained women to ordained men is among the highest, but the placement process is still a difficulty.

Local churches do the calling of clergy. We're now at a point where ordained women just out of seminary do not have difficulty finding a call to a small church or an associate position. But after a few years, if they want to move to a mid-sized church, or a church which offers a higher salary or has more influence, it's very difficult. It's much easier for an ordained woman to move into a national or Conference position than to become a senior pastor in a multiple-staff congregation.

There are currently only eight women in the UCC who are senior pastors in churches with more than 500 members, and a couple more who are solo pastors of churches that size.

For women of color seeking placement it is very difficult. They experience strong difficulties as women finding placement in churches of their own ethnicity, and in other churches because of white racism.

Roman Catholic Church

Ruth Fitzpatrick is national coordinator of the Women's Ordination Conference, an international movement of women and men seeking the ordination of Roman Catholic women to "renewed priestly ministry."
I see hope because I see the whole patriarchal structure absolutely collapsing on our heads. For all the wrong reasons, they will probably be ordaining women and married men much sooner than anyone had in mind. The church is practical. They are closing down parishes, and there is a terrible dearth of male celibate priests.

There have been some positive things that have come out of the repression. We've been forced to the sidelines to do the analysis in a way that we might not have done if we had been ordained.

We've been better able to understand other forms of oppression. The linkage has been made between racism, sexism and classism.

The other good thing to have come out of this is the WomenChurch movement. To me, that is like the liturgical experiments that were going on for years before the pope approved Mass in the vernacular. It is a gift for the whole church that women have been able to ritualize about their experience.

Also, with the growth of small base communities, one of the phenomena that has come bubbling to the surface is women in leadership positions.

We are working for women in *renewed* priestly ministry because right now the system is so patriarchal that women would either get chewed up in it, or they would get the worst jobs.

[We need] a strong systemic analysis that leads to working for justice and peace, the overcoming of all forms of domination, working in mutuality, and a strong ecumenical aspect. When we do eucharists the barriers are lowered, and the pluralism of various denominations is valued.

[Editor's note: Shortly before this issue of *The Witness* went to press, Pope John Paul II released a letter to the Roman Catholic bishops declaring the prohibition against ordaining women a "definitive" teaching of the church. Occasioned by concern that the exclusion of women is "considered still open to debate" or "to have a merely disciplinary force," the declaration does not attempt to further the theological discussion, but to close it.

Rembert Weakland, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Milwaukee, issued a statement expressing "inner turmoil" over the letter. "What effect will this declaration have on so many women and men ... who still see this question as one of justice and equality, all protestations to the contrary notwithstanding?" Weakland asks. "...What effects will this declaration have on theologians who are still concerned about the theological underpinnings of the Pope's teaching? ... What effects will this declaration have on those men and women for whom the issue of the way in which the church exercises its authority is already a problem? ... What effects will this declaration have on ecumenical dialogue?"]

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Cycle of challenge

by Ellen K. Wondra

New Wine: The Story of Women Transforming Leadership and Power in the Episcopal Church, by Pamela W. Darling, Cowley Publications, June 1994.

In a timely and consistently engaging new book, Pamela Darling traces the "cycle of challenge" that has characterized the recognition of women's ministries in the Episcopal Church.

Darling divides this history into three stages. The first (from the mid-19th century through World War II) is characterized by gradual change. During this period, the official structures of the Episcopal Church gave little consideration to "women's place," despite widespread discussion and change in the larger society. Yet the church's lack of interest allowed women to develop powerful unofficial structures. During this stage, Darling indicates, "women's place" in the Episcopal Church changed because of three factors: officially recognized "shadow groups" (notably the Women's Auxiliary), interest and action groups with no official standing in the church (such as CAIL, CLID, and the Companions of the Holy Cross), and changes in the overall ecclesiology and structure of the church itself.

During the second stage (from 1946 to the mid-1980s), a woman was elected a lay deputy to General Convention for the first time, but, by vote of each successive Convention, no women were actually seated in the House of Deputies until 1970. Women's hard-won access to the legislative process of General Convention was bought at a high price: women lost structural access and influence within the national church bureaucracy and women's powerful independent "shadow groups" were brought under greater control by the national church.

In 1976, General Convention authorized the ordination of women to the priesthood and the episcopate, after decades of debate and, finally, direct action that subverted institutional patterns of delay and spurred changes in policy and practice. Darling accurately notes that the struggle did not end there. The priestly ministry of women and the anticipation of episcopal ministry made more evident the symbolic implications of the officially authorized ministry of women, and the struggle widened and deepened to include not only the ordination of women, but issues of deployment, language, authority, and sexuality.

book review

In these times of widespread discussion and reorganization at every level of the church, Darling's book suggests a number of patterns contemporary church members and activists would do well to heed. Among them: Historically marginalized groups are able to exert influence as they are able to organize both inside and outside the "official church." Second, as historically marginalized groups gain influence and develop their own organizations that impinge on the "official" church in various ways, resistance to their influence intensifies; this resistance may find expression as much through "official church" reorganization plans as through direct legislative action. Finally, the Episcopal Church often finds it easier to deal with its diversity by hiding the substance of controversies under concerns for orderliness, collegiality among official representatives, and preservation of conventional authority.

Highly readable writing and generally short chapters in a well-organized sequence make this the ideal book to take along to or purchase at General Convention. All of us would do well to keep in mind the well-known axiom of Miguel de Unamuno: Those who do not learn from history may be doomed to repeat it. TW

"Pamela Darling brings sound sociological considerations to the early debates around women's ordination. Also commendable is her analysis of power, her discussion of the role of the press, her reflections on bishops and collegiality, and her perspectives on authority. One of Darling's major contributions is her realization that the conflict over the ordination of women has changed the way that the church carries out its business."

Fredrica Harris Thompsett

"*New Wine* is a comprehensive and very enlightening survey of the role of women in the life and ministry of the Episcopal Church. Pamela Darling is to be commended for the fairness and objectivity with which she has handled a subject that elicits a wide range of convictions and stirs deep emotions."

James W. Montgomery, Bishop of Chicago (ret.)

Ellen K. Wondra is an assistant professor of theological studies at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School/ Bexley Hall/ Crozer Theological Seminary in Rochester, N.Y.

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Suzanne Hiatt

I realized that my vocation was not to eternally ask for permission to be a priest but to be *a priest.*

Quiet revolutionary

by Susan E. Pierce

Suzanne Hiatt is a dangerous person and has been most of her adult life. Wherever she has worked, change has blossomed—change brought about not through grandstanding, but by calmly and quietly listening, counseling, networking and organizing.

Since 1975 Hiatt has been teaching pastoral theology at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass., a seminary that has a history of pushing at the boundaries of the *status quo*. But her reputation as an organizer and revolutionary activist is rooted in her role in the "irregular" ordinations of the first 11 women (of which she was one) ordained to the priesthood in the Episcopal Church in 1974.

"Though we all played a part and it was a combined effort, Sue was instrumental in those ordinations," says Nancy Wittig, another one of the "11" who is now a diocesan canon and rector of St. Andrews-in-the-Field in Philadelphia. "She was a prime mover."

With characteristic reserve and wry humor, Hiatt does not set too much store by her "prime-mover" status. "I was the catalyst, but my organizing skill was one of the gifts I brought to the process. Each of us brought our different gifts."

A native of Minnesota, Hiatt, 58, received her undergraduate degree from Radcliffe College. In 1964 she received her Masters of Divinity degree from the Episcopal Theological School in Philadelphia, which later merged with Cambridge Divinity School to become the present Episcopal Divinity School. A year later she earned a masters degree in social work from Boston University.

Returning to Philadelphia in 1967, Hiatt took a job working with women recipients of public assistance. "The best way to help the women seemed to be to organize them, so that's what I did," Hiatt recalls. Out of their work together came the Philadelphia Welfare Rights Organization, which became a powerful lobbying group whose impact was felt throughout Pennsylvania and beyond.

However, while her education in social work had paid off in secular employment, Hiatt found the church less eager to benefit from her theological training. When Hiatt first approached Pennsylvania's bishop, Robert DeWitt, about working in the diocese, he told her, "You don't want to work in the church. It's no place for a woman." He believed that a woman would find it "painful and frustrating" to try to work in such a male-dominated institution.

Eventually, however, DeWitt changed his mind and asked Hiatt to join the diocesan staff. "The urban missioner [David Gracie] was so successful that I decided we also needed a suburban missioner," Dewitt says. Hiatt accepted the post in 1968 and held it for the next four years.

One of Hiatt's suburban missions was a very upper-crust church on the Main Line, one of the wealthiest areas bordering Philadelphia. Among the parishioners was Ann Robb Smith, now a priest and curate at the Church of the Advocate, where the Philadelphia 11 were ordained, but then a self-described "suburban housewife."

Before long Hiatt was raising consciousnesses. "Sue was very unassuming, gentle, lady-like and very dangerous," Smith says, laughing. "She was our Bible-study teacher. She got us radicalized. She educated us about civil rights and introduced us to black folks. Then we moved from civil rights to women's issues."

Hiatt acknowledges the connection. "The Philadelphia ordinations wouldn't have been possible without the civil rights movement. Just as the 19th century women's suffrage movement sprang from

Susan E. Pierce, former managing editor of *The Witness*, is a freelance writer based in Philadelphia, Penn.

the abolitionist movement, the women's movement in the church came from the struggle for civil rights."

In 1970, Hiatt approached DeWitt about ordaining her to the priesthood. "He and I were both excited about the prospect of simply processing me like any male postulant or candidate," Hiatt later recalled in a letter to an English friend.

"Canon law did not expressly state that such persons were to be male and we both thought a good case could be made for interpreting 'he' in the relevant canons generically."

But before they could act, the General Convention met and voted down (by a narrow margin in the clergy order) a resolution to admit women to all Holy Orders. The convention did admit women to the diaconate, however, and Hiatt was ordained a deacon in 1971.

For the next two years Hiatt worked to organize support for a measure to admit women to the priesthood at the 1973 General Convention in St. Louis, Mo. "We enlisted sympathetic bishops, priests and lay men, but the major work was done through the Episcopal Women's Caucus," Hiatt says. Still, the opposition was stronger than anticipated and the measure was defeated.

"After the defeat in Louisville I had run into Alice Emery, a widow of a bishop and wise in the ways of the church. She said she guessed that the ordination of women would become the perennial issue at future conventions, just as allowing women to be voting delegates had been an issue at every convention from 1946 to 1970. Instantly I realized she was right — that my vocation was not to eternally ask for permission to be a priest but to *be* a priest."

Hiatt's resolve was further strengthened a few weeks later, at a meeting of women deacons and seminarians and some male mentors. "The men of course advised patience, charm and letting them plan the strategy 'for you girls,'" Hiatt recalls. "We who had worked for the change at two conventions quietly died inside. I decided I would not be part of such a humiliation."

The events of the next months — disappointing confrontations with bishops, an aborted attempt of five women deacons to be ordained priests in New York in December of 1973, and several strategic sermons calling for the immediate ordination of women priests the following June — finally came to fruition in the now-famous July 29 ordination service.

"Sue was very worried, but she still was so solid and so caring about the others," says DeWitt, who served as one of the ordaining bishops.

"In retrospect, to have been ordained 'irregularly' is the only way for women to have done it," Hiatt later reflected. "Our ordination was on our terms, not the church's terms."

Eighteen months of intense struggle ensued. The bishops declared the ordinations invalid. "After that we began functioning as priests whenever and wherever we could," Hiatt recalls. Some of the clergy who allowed them to celebrate the eucharist in their parishes were brought to ecclesiastical trial. In September, 1975, four more women deacons — Lee McGee, Alison Palmer, Betty Rosenberg and Diane Tickell — were priested in Washington by retired bishop George Barrett. In 1976, the General Convention finally approved women priests and bishops.

Since then, Hiatt's involvement in the



women's ordination movement has taken her to all parts of the Anglican Communion. This spring, Hiatt was honored with a surprise ceremony during the Episcopal Divinity School celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Philadelphia ordinations. She was presented with a book of letters from people around the world, describing how profoundly she has influence their lives.

After all the struggle and attacks and roadblocks confronted over the last 20 years, would she go through it again? "Oh, yes. No one regrets having done it, but some of us are still really in pain about it," Hiatt said. "Women are still being turned down for ordination all the time, but at least now they get a chance to be turned down." TW

August/September:
Alternative ways of doing church

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Ma, Amma, Ana, Nu, Mena, Mami, Mama, Mammu — ancient names for the Mother, watery sounds from all the children at her breasts. Sounding so like Memaw, my own name for my maternal grandmother.

I remember those blistering hot summer mornings in Little Rock. Every Monday, despite the heat, Memaw does the wash in the backyard. I do what I can to help her. I support the sagging lines with clothes poles. I fix the sheets and construct a white enclosure. I drag a zinc washtub into the center and fill it from the hose. I carry in handfuls of chinaberries and honeylocust pods and float them in the water. The dogs come in, wanting a drink. I will not allow the dogs to drink from the tub. It is holy water, I tell them. Through the hot afternoon I sit there, enclosed in the drying sheets, while Memaw sleeps on the front porch. — *Meinrad Craighead*

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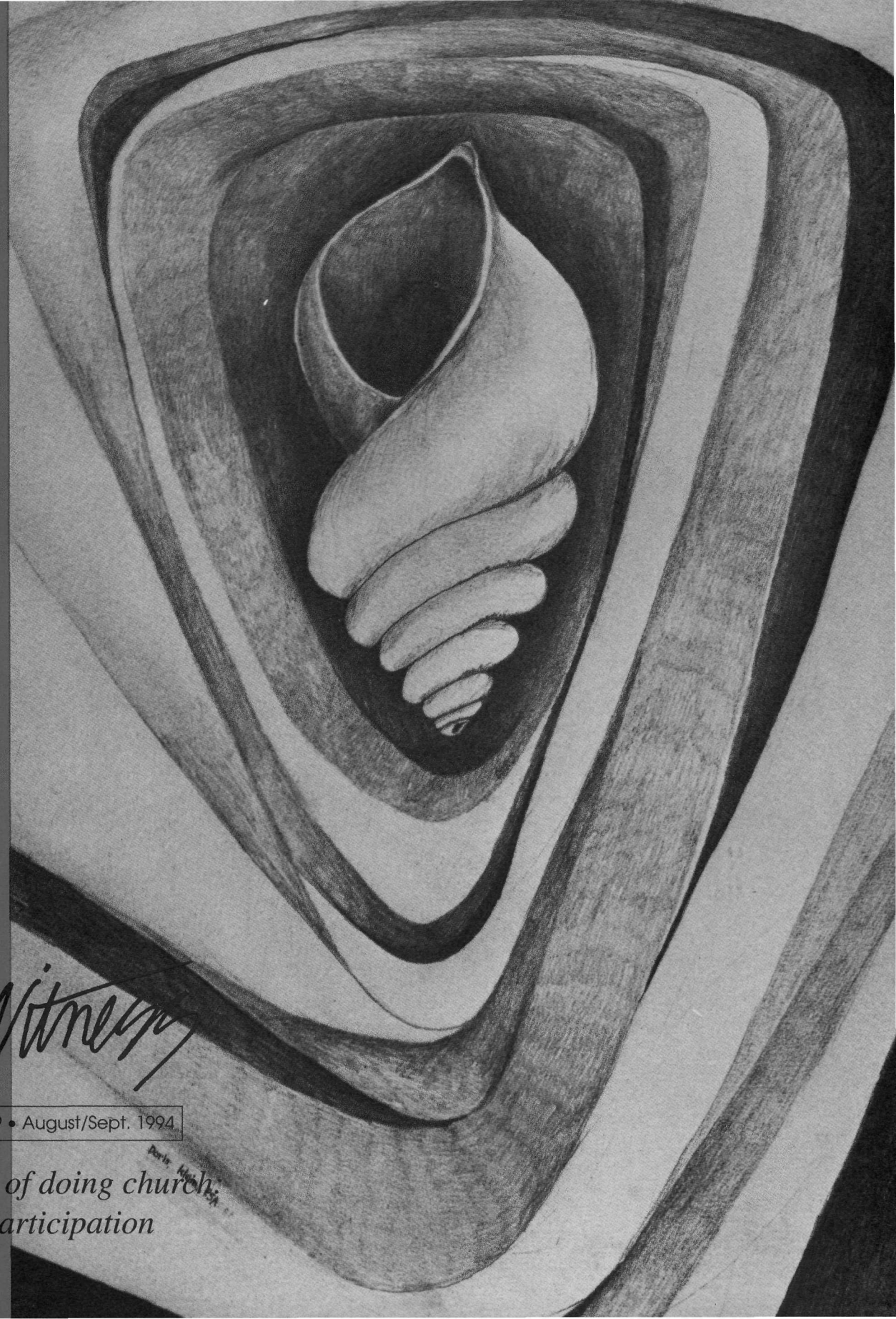

The Witness

Volume 77 • Number 8/9 • August/Sept. 1994

Alternative ways of doing church: looking for full participation

Disabilities

FOR MANY MONTHS I have been unable to finish all the periodicals which I receive. The latest issue of *The Witness* [6/94] has been one that I have been quoting all around. The Walter Wink article is clear and concise. Thank you for your good stewardship and the issues you are bringing to the Church.

Jim Shannon
The Philadelphia Theological Institute
Philadelphia, PA

AFTER BEING A GRATEFUL reader for the past year or so, I finally feel compelled to drop you guys a quick note to tell you what a great job you're doing. I can't tell you how many good story ideas, thoughtful quotes, and interesting strategies I've stolen for use in *Salt*. I can only hope you find our publication half as helpful. Reading the June issue provoked three story ideas alone.

Kevin Clarke
Assistant Editor, *Salt*
Chicago, IL

A PROPHET IS STILL WITHOUT HONOR in her own church. That you could have done the June, '94 issue on 'Disabilities' without contacting Cynthia Jones, Publisher of *Mainstream* magazine, is a serious omission. She is a national treasure in her advocacy role for access and full participation for all people. I trust when this issue is addressed again, one of our most knowledgeable, articulate and committed Episcopalians will be included, greatly enriching your publication.

Mary Eunice Oliver
San Diego, CA

MY FRIEND ANNE FINGER raises many crucial issues in her interview ("Challenging assisted suicide," *The Witness,* June 1994). I believe, however, that she comes down on the wrong side of the assisted suicide debate.

No proponent of the right to assisted suicide, especially Dr. Kevorkian, denies the need for proper regulation to avoid potential abuse. But it seems to me absolutely far-fetched to assert that a personal choice to end what has become an unbearable life has anything at all in common with *state* forced-euthanasia programs as in Nazi Germany. It is also difficult for me to see what the struggle for disability rights has to do with the plight of someone in the terminal stages of ALS — like Sue Rodriquez in British Columbia, who took her case to the Canadian Supreme Court — whose final three to six months of "life" will be spent choking to death; or with a patient suffering terminal incurable cancer, who may not want to spend weeks or months in a stupor caused by massive doses of painkillers.

As Anne says, in this society "Our choices are always tremendously impinged by economics, gender, disability." That means we need to fight for a society that truly expands personal choice through social justice, not to restrict it in the present one.

David Finkel
Detroit, MI

AS SOMEONE WHO USUALLY enjoys the articles and interviews in *The Witness* I find myself compelled to respond to what I can only perceive as hypocrisy, at worst, and severe oversight/insensitivity, at best, in the June 1994 issue. Since the June issue was focused on Disabilities it seems that you failed to "walk the talk" by choosing to use yellow ink on white paper, a combination that becomes unreadable for some of us, on pages 4 and 30. Need I say this was not a good choice either by the editor or by the printer.

Whereas the choice of inks and paper for subsequent issues of *The Witness* is a more or less solvable problem, all of the good intentions, dialogue, and reports/studies on sexuality will not undo the injustice done to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgendered peoples by the vote of the Episcopal delegates against full membership in the National Council of Churches for the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches in November 1992. If you truly accept the resolution of the 1976 General Convention that "homosexuals are children of God who have a full and equal claim with all other persons upon the love, acceptance and pastoral care of the Church" where was the courage of conscience to vote for inclusion of the only denomination (UFMCC) that openly welcomed homosexual, bisexual, transvestite, and transgendered people? While the Episcopal Church has been passing resolutions and engaging in dialogue with itself, those Christians who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered are being made to feel like they are God's step children or quietly slip out of the church and, too often, away from God. Truly it is long past time for walking the talk or ending the talk altogether.

Sharon M. Parker
West Hollywood, CA

[Ed. note: We're turning our attention to the ink-on-paper dilemma — we learned that we have trouble reading yellow on white, too. The rest your concerns we commend to the church.]

Witness praise

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK and excellent articles. Most challenging article this year to date — April issue — "Disrupting the hegemony in God and in us" by Walter Brueggemann. Also tops in that issue was the interview with Steve Charleston.

Elizabeth Vilar
Carolina, Puerto Rico

Correcting the record

AS THE CHAIRPERSON of Saint James's Search Committe (Houston, Tex.) which properly pursued the search process (and successfully, I might add) of the Reverend Antoine Campbell as Rector, I feel compelled to respond to the inaccurate references pointed out in the article entitled "The Hot-Button Issue — Clergy Sexual Misconduct" by Jan Nunley[6/94]. In fact, I personally take exception to the inference that our search process was compromised. Implied was an insult upon the integrity of the Search Committee, the Vestry, Saint James's Family and Bishop Benitez by suggesting that we were uninformed or misinformed of Reverend Campbell's situation.

I won't try to debate the issue of canonical process in such cases. That issue is outside the purview of my concern and should be resolved at the National level. However, the issue should not be resolved or debated at the expense of others, in particular, my Rector,

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Reverend Campbell and Bishop Benitez. Texas Canon 40.6 states in part, "Unless the accused pleads otherwise, a plea of not guilty will be presumed."

To set the record straight:

(1) Bishop Benitez did not encourage our Search Committee to call Reverend Campbell without informing us of *all* the *allegations* and *inhibitives* as Rector in South Carolina. He was in constant communication with Bishop Salmon and he made full disclosure of Campbell's background and the status of his canonical trials.

The Search Committee, by unanimous vote, submitted only *one* name to the Vestry. The Vestry, by unanimous vote, submitted only *one* name to Bishop Benitez. That name was Antoine Campbell. Sure, many names were discussed with the Bishop during our nearly 18 months of "searching"; however, only *one* name was finally approved for submission to the Vestry by the Search Committee. The statement that the Bishop had "turned down the Parish's first choice for the position, a woman, and suggested Campbell as an alternative," is grossly inaccurate. Unfortunately, second-hand information is usually gilded with malicious information and should be treated or dismissed as such.

We believed in Reverend Campbell's innocence then and we continue to hold that position. The bottom line is he was acquitted of adultery by his peers and other charges of sexual harassment were subsequently dropped by the accusers. Such unfounded, unscrupulous accusations, perpetrated by a few who seem to have motivated malice, only fosters the separatism between race and gender and no one really wins.

As a woman, I can sympathize with those who may have been falsely ignored in any sexual harassment situation. Such accusations are very difficult to prove unless there is corroborative evidence and/or admission by the defendant. Neither existed in the Campbell case.

Further, Bishop Benitez's re-election to the Church Pension Fund Board should not be challenged based on the reason stated in the article. I'm sure the energy to remove him could be better channeled in more constructive ways to address the discrimination issues currently existing in our church.

We have followed God's lead in calling Reverend Campbell, not only to rebuild but to envision and build new ministries with our Saint James' community. The trial is over. Any continuation of negative publicity could be construed as defamation of character and such must cease. In this case, God has spoken. Enough is enough.

I would be pleased if you would print my letter in its entirety in the next issue of this publication.

Carole A. Pinkett
Houston, TX

[Ed. note: We apologize to St. James' Church and Bishop Benitez. We have confirmed that Bishop Benitez did supply the vestry and search committee of St. James with information about the charges of sexual misconduct that had been made against Campbell before the vestry voted to issue a call to Campbell on March 12, 1993.

Our reporter, whose calls to Bishop Benitez and to St. James' senior warden and search committee chair were not returned, is sorry to have contributed to the confusion. As are we.

We believe the following to be an accurate chronology:

In October, 1993, Campbell was acquitted of a presentment issued by South Carolina's Standing Committee following his May, 1993, election as suffragan bishop of Virginia. However, based on its own independent investigation, Virginia's Standing Committee unanimously decided to ask Campbell to resign the election on November 1, 1993.

According to St. James' senior warden, Louis McCutchen, who was also a member of the search committee, Campbell had been on the list of candidates being considered for the position of St. James' rector prior to his election as suffragan bishop. His name was restored to the list of candidates after he resigned his election.

A second presentment, based on the testimony of a woman priest, was still pending when Campbell was called to St. James', in March, 1994.

According to McCutchen, the vestry talked with Campbell about the charges that had been levelled against him.

"We were comfortable with his responses," McCutchen said. "We didn't research the matter beyond that because we didn't want to hold another trial. Our overriding consideration was the kind of work we could expect from Tony in the future."

About this time a third presentment was issued against Campbell in South Carolina. On March 17, 1994, only a few days after St. James' had issued its call to Campbell, Campbell was inhibited from functioning as a priest in the Diocese of South Carolina. The ecclesiastical trial to resolve the second and third presentments was scheduled for May, 1994.

Bishop Benitez informed McCutchen of the inhibition and indicated that Campbell could not become canonically resident in the Diocese of Texas until the inhibition was lifted. Benitez also indicated that he saw no reason to take any action to inhibit Campbell's priestly activity in Texas in the meantime. St. James' vestry, McCutchen said, did not entertain the possibility of postponing Campbell's call pending the outcome of the trial.

"I didn't know all the specifics, but we felt comfortable with our decision to go ahead," McCutchen said. "Bishop Benitez said that from what Bishop Salmon had told him he was optimistic about the outcome of the trial."

The vestry chose not to share the information about the various charges with the congregation as a whole. "We wanted to keep things positive," McCutchen said. "I didn't get up in front of the congregation and say anything, although I said that if anyone had any questions about our call to Tony, they could come to me. A couple of people did come to me and ask about the South Carolina cases and I explained what I knew."

In May (after the June issue of *The Witness* had gone to press), the local newspaper announced that the charges against Campbell made in the second and third presentments had been dropped. "Some people (at St. James) were surprised," McCutchen said, because they had not known about the matter.]

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Since 1917

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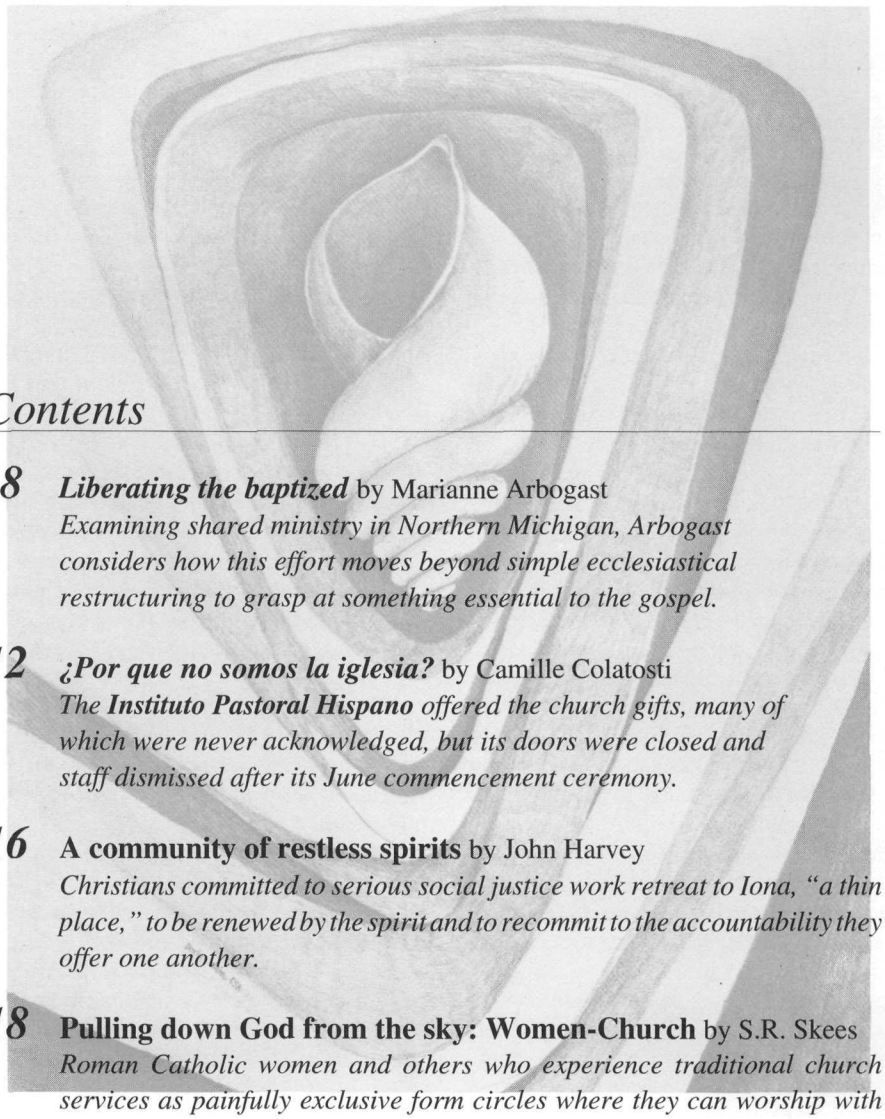

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Cover: Sophia — Wisdom within by Doris Klein, CSA of Milwaukee, Wis.

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Looking for full participation

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

God of grace and God of glory,
on thy people pour thy power;
crown thine ancient church's story;
bring her bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.

As a child, the rhythm of the liturgy held in place a deep conviction that I would live my life for the gospel and that this would require a total commitment.

I would need to forswear those things held up in Scripture as idolatrous: riches, power, an exaggerated enjoyment of my own will. I would have to take risks with my talents. I might die.

But in my twenties, I was appalled by fundraising thermometers that were posted on the chancel wall and the minimal obligations that were asked of us, most tailored to preserve the four walls of the institution. I began to see the church as accomodationist. The flag in the sanctuary seemed only one of the more visible signs.

My college professors gave searing critiques of small-minded Christians who enforced judgements and ill will throughout the community, contributing to racism and homophobia. My political friends couldn't understand why I went to church at all. The ashes on my forehead on Ash Wednesday were hard to wear.

As I grew older and started to overcome my denial about the oppression of women in this culture, I couldn't help but notice the ways that the church most often reinforced that oppression.

Yet the liturgy continued to call to me and I remained within the church. I found the Catholic Worker movement in 1981 and finally was able to bring my concerns about classism and militarism together with people of faith who were trying to live simply, feed the hungry and resist nationalism.

In 1983 I wrote to Coleman McGehee, then bishop of Michigan, from jail where I was held for three weeks because of an Advent anti-nuclear vigil which included praying in the driveway of a company that manufactured cruise missile engines.

His witness against injustice and entrenchment reached into my solitude and assured me that I had heard the gospel when I was a kid. His embrace when I was released gave me joy. His desire to get me involved with the diocesan staff surprised me.

My politics may be more radical or confrontational than some, but my experience is not unique.

The Lilly Foundation funded a study of 500 people who had been confirmed in the 1960s. Half no longer attended church. In the interviews, one woman — a 33-year-old computer programmer and mother — commented, "My Presbyterian upbringing was fine until I got to an age where I thought that Presbyterians weren't being forceful enough. If this is really the truth, if Christianity was really the way that people had to live their lives, then they weren't really pushing it.

"Even though I don't really live it now, I really feel that helping people — giving of yourself — is the value you should strive for. [But] I just hate the thought of ever again going to a group where I felt like I was bad because I didn't believe what everyone there did and was afraid to say what I really believe."

Being a part of the church is an uneasy experience for many people. For reasons of race, gender, political commitments, sexual orientation or ordination status, they feel only partially welcome. A huge piece of their identity is left outside the doors of the church.

This issue of *The Witness* lifts up several communities that are attempting to pull people into worship and a corporate life that allows them full participation. The examples are by no means definitive, but they point in a direction that may allow people whose faith was molded as children to find a way to give their lives to God without reservation.

This issue of The Witness *lifts up several communities that point in a direction that may allow people whose faith was molded as children to find a way to give their lives to God without reservation.*

People within these communities are claiming a freedom to recreate their relationship to the church. An angry edge sometimes accompanies their concerns and efforts, but in our view their openness and their heart-felt desire to worship God with one another and with us is the hope of the church as we enter the next millennium. TW

editor's note

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

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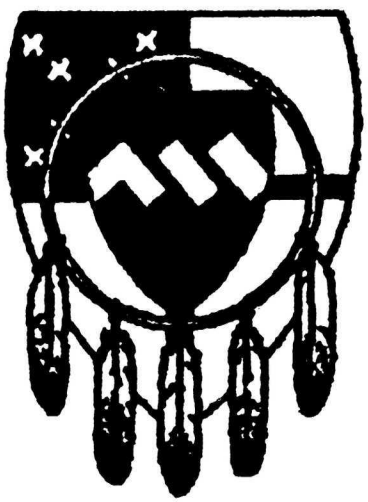
A different communion

by Quentin F. Kolb

Like most kids I knew, going to church was not the first thing on my agenda on a daily basis. I knew that I had a strong connection with whatever made the world go around but I wasn't so sure that anyone had any monopoly on what we were all about.

My mother had carried me off, kicking and crying, to the Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit at Randlett, Utah, when I was about three, and I hated it! There were all those big tall ghostly white figures that stooped and tried to swoop you up into heaven.



At Whiterocks, Utah, at the Indian boarding school, we had to dress up in stiff Khaki uniforms that rubbed our necks red. Then we marched the 500 yards to sit, without moving or turning our heads, on the right side (the boys' side) of St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church. We sat immobile while Father Talbot waved his arms and said something in English in a loud voice.

But as I stood and looked to make my way out of the church there were dignified Ute men with their hats off, and powerful Ute women with their heads covered in silken shawls, standing around the back of the church with resolute looks on their faces.

After I left Whiterocks, I was assaulted with pleas from new white friends(?) to become a Mormon. But they didn't treat me as if I were really a friend, and the most exciting part of their church was the pretty girls, which wasn't the kind of spirituality I was looking for at the moment. It was then that I remembered the men and women that were standing at the back of the church at Whiterocks. There was something showing on their faces that Father Talbot wasn't telling them, something I didn't see in the rather plain walls of St. Elizabeth's.

I wanted what they had! I remembered as a child staying with my grandmother and hearing her morning song as she helped the sun to rise, and reviewed the beauty of the world; she was somewhere else, somewhere I wanted to be. At the Bear Dances, the Sun Dances, I saw it on their faces, I heard it in their gentle Ute voices.

When I lay in the grass watching the cloud plays tell their stories I realized that it was bliss that I saw on their faces. Don't ask me how I knew it. I could tell from the way I felt. My friend and schoolmate, Harvey Natches (who later became a Native American Church Road Man), told me that when he prayed, he talked over his problem with his Creator and then relaxed and waited for his prayer to be answered. Sometimes it would be answered in a dream, sometimes the answer became obvious, sometimes in the working out of his life, but he knew the prayer would be answered.

I think that was it ... the leap of faith. Maybe it is different for everyone; maybe the stories we heard from our uncles and aunts and mothers and grandmothers became real in our lives and gave us a different communion. I cannot fathom all the ways God works his wonders and mysteries in the lives of his children, but I would be amiss if I did not see it and know from whence it came. The heresies we have committed have been done in the name of God when we have been blind to His way of love. Too often we are quick to find evil in other ways of worship in order that we may feel secure in our own.

When I gather with my brothers and sisters in the chapel, the sweet grass, sage, cedar, and tobacco incense we smudge with may start the primordial dreamtime that brings our inner selves closer to our Creator. God is there to listen and Christ is there in the eyes of all who look at me as we count the ways he had taught us both as Indians and as Christians. We pray to Grandfather and share the stories of traditional Indian truths and the parables of Christ. Then we make Eucharist and share his holy meal. We have that holy something that I longed for long ago and we share it with each other. TW

The heresies we have committed have been done in the name of God when we have been blind to His way of love. We find evil in other ways of worship so that we may feel secure in our own.

Quentin F. Kolb is missioner for urban Indian ministries in the Diocese of Utah and a member of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company board which owns *The Witness.*

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Your City

by Carl Dennis

How much would it take for this city
That so far has belonged to others
To be yours as well,
The houses set in rows and each row named
So you can find the garden of your new acquaintance
Long before sundown, just as you promised,
And the talk has time to wander and pause.

How much as you walk home in the dark
For the portly policeman, who now
Stands on the corner for others,
To stand for you by the grocery store
Still open for your convenience,
The lettuce and cucumber planted last spring
For you as well, weeded and watered,
Picked this very week, sorted and loaded,
And driven along a highway where a highway crew
Has worked all month for you digging a culvert.

How much till the book on the nightstand at home
Written now for others be written for you
In hours stolen from sleep and children,
Sweet and bitter wisdom distilled as a gift
As the author guesses you're coming along
In need of encouragement and of warning.

Three weeks till it's due at the local library.
How much would it take for the right
To wander the stacks all afternoon,
Wrested for others from kings and shamans,
To be wrested for you as well,
And the Constitution amended to protect your rights
Against the privileges of the few
And the prejudice of the many.

You learned the story in school, along with stories
Of parents who sold their wagons and farms
And said good-bye in tears to friends and family.
You heard your teacher say they sailed for you,
But you couldn't believe it.

How much would it take for it all to be possible,
For you to walk the streets of a glimmering city
Begemmed with houses of worship and lecture halls
That thrust the keys to bliss into your hands.
A city where for you as well
Mohammud decides to linger at Mecca
And Jesus rides his donkey into crazed Jerusalem
And Moses descends the mountain and loving Buddha
Turns his back on heaven, hearing your sighs.

How much till invisible hands,
That have left instructions for others
In every lonely hotel room, lead you
To lock up evil and coax the good
From whatever corner of your soul it's fled to.
The beleaguered good you've always imagined
Looking for others to deliver it
When all along it's looked for you.

Carl Dennis is a member of the English Department of the State University of New York at Buffalo. He is author of *Meetings With Time* (Viking Penguin, 1992).



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Liberating the baptized:
shared ministry in northern Michigan
by Marianne Arbogast

Yesterday morning, a new volunteer at the soup kitchen where I am co-manager asked me if I was a nun "or just a lay person." (Since I'm Catholic and female, that's the full list of options.) Attempting a smile, I replied that "we shouldn't say 'just' about ourselves." She looked puzzled, and I thought wistfully of northern Michigan, where I spent a weekend in May, where there's a bishop who actually dislikes the word "laity" as much as I do.

When I drove north last spring — past signs advertising "tourist and elk herd information," through miles of pine wilderness denser than any I'd seen — I knew that the Episcopal Diocese there, and its bishop, Tom Ray, were acclaimed for their solution to problems faced by the upper peninsula's tiny, isolated churches. I knew that they were replacing the traditional model — under which seminary-trained priests are called from outside congregations to minister to them — with a model that calls forth ministry from within congregations themselves. I expected to see teams of people in local parishes — some of them ordained as priests and deacons — filling roles that have traditionally been reserved to seminary-trained clergy.

But what I didn't expect to find — there or in any institutional setting — was an understanding and approach to ministry that I could feel at home with. I came away convinced that a lens is being ground in Northern Michigan which could throw critical questions — questions about church structure, questions about the very nature of ordained ministry — into new and sharper focus. Out of the praxis of communities which were oppressed *within* the church, a theology of ministerial liberation is emerging.

A transformation of consciousness

Like many of the churches in the 30-parish diocese, Trinity Church, Gladstone struggled for years simply to keep its doors open. The 40-some members who gathered each Sunday "were poverty-oriented," says long-time parishioner Carol Clark. Never able to afford a full-time priest, they survived by yoking with other churches to come up with a clergy salary. Still, the financial burden was heavy, clergy were underpaid and over-extended, and the congregation frequently found itself between pastors.

"We had a sense of inadequacy," Clark says. "We were always in debt; we owed the diocese so much money that we could never repay, and it never got any better."

> *I have no idea what 'ministry of the laity' means — except that somehow* that *ministry is considered inferior, unprepared, inadequate, inevitably second-class. I think you could wash all day and not clean that word up.*
>
> *— Tom Ray*

Some Northern Michigan churches would go for months without the Eucharist. When Ray arrived in the diocese in 1982, he found on his desk a letter from two of them, imploring him to ordain a lay reader who had helped hold his parish together for many years. Under Ray's leadership, the diocese began a process of exploration which would transform it in unforeseen ways.

Today, Gladstone celebrates Eucharist twice a week. Clark, a retired nurse, and Ellen Jensen, an elementary school teacher, have been ordained to preside. With nine other parishioners, Clark and Jensen took part in a two-year formation process, and have committed themselves to serve as a "ministry support team" for Trinity. Pat Viau, who cares for his two pre-school children at home, is now a deacon; his wife Jan Viau, a special education teacher, coordinates priestly ministry along with Sue Jamison, another teacher. Five members take turns preaching, including Clark, Jensen, Pat Viau, Sue Ray (a nurse and a deacon), and Jan Buchman — who also serves as Trinity's ecumenical coordinator. Church treasurer Jenny Hansen has been commissioned to work with stewardship; pre-school teacher Amy Hall focuses on education; and Betty Kempf is coordinator of diaconal ministry. (Margaret Adams, a second diaconal ministry coordinator, died in June.)

Rayford Ray serves as a regional "missioner" — a seminary-trained resource person — to Trinity and another congregation, each of them contributing 40 percent of their disposable income toward his support.

But what is happening at Trinity is more than the blossoming of "lay ministry" or the establishment of "team ministry," and certainly far more than the ordination of local priests. What is underway — and often overlooked by those outside — is a radical transformation of consciousness about what it means to be church.

Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness*. Artist Therese Denham is a sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet in Los Angeles, CA.

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"The change is so incredible," Clark says. "There's an energy, people are involved. Some of us were active before, but there's an ownership now. It's not only that it's our church — we're responsible for what goes on."

Rejecting clericalism

The language to express it is still evolving, and crucial subtleties can easily be missed. Trinity has a "ministry support team" — *not* a ministry team. The diocese emphatically rejects the notion that some Christians are "providers" and others "consumers" of ministry. The team's role is to develop "mutual ministry," engaging the gifts of everyone in the congregation.

Though the diocese follows church discipline in "ordaining" to some ministries and "affirming" others, there is little practical distinction, and the ordained are accorded no special standing.

The diocese has altered its constitution to grant every baptized member of the diocese a seat and a voice at convention. Clergy are no longer automatic delegates and votes by orders have been abolished.

Local ordinations can be used to "maintain clericalism by saying we can get indigenous priests, and then dumping on them everything we have dumped on seminary-trained priests," says Jim Kelsey, a diocesan missioner who has played a key role in the development of the new model. "That's not what we're talking about in this diocese."

Liberation of the seminary-trained

Rejection of clericalism does not mean a devaluing of theological education and professional expertise. In eight years, the diocese has doubled the salaries of its full-time, seminary-trained missioners, using up its working capital in order to avoid burdening congregations. But the missioners' role is vastly different from that of a priest-in-charge of several yoked churches. For one thing, they are not "in charge" at all; more significantly, they need not even be ordained. They bring not ministry, but ministry resources — background in Scripture, theology, church history, liturgics and spiritual counseling — to local communities. A missioner might be asked for help preparing a sermon, planning an educational program, or facilitating conflict resolution.



Therese Denham, CSS

Manuel Padilla, who grew up in Northern Michigan and returned there after seminary to serve as a missioner, feels that his greatest challenge is "facing and dealing with the destructiveness of the traditional system. The expectation that the congregation could run off the energy of one individual, the belief that someone has to come in and take care of us — overcoming that is difficult."

Parishes have typically dealt with dysfunction through "triangulation," using the priest as a buffer to avoid dealing with conflict, Padilla says. "Without a priest to manipulate, people have to talk to each other. It breaks down all the old power structures in a community."

Tom Lippart, formerly a full-time rector in Escanaba, now serves as missioner to two churches. He has experienced the change as a liberation.

"I felt before like I was filled with all this theological education and no one was interested," Lippart says. Now he is frequently consulted — but someone else is called when the boiler breaks down.

"Right away I could see what was happening for him," Peg Lippart, his wife, says. "We had this team, with people taking responsibility, and it spread things out beautifully. When you're 'the' minister in charge of it all, you can't do it all, but the expectation is that you should."

Congregational liberation

The liberation experienced by congregations is equally dramatic.

With their budget no longer consumed by clergy salary and the upkeep of a vicarage, Gladstone parishioners have discovered a new range of possibilities. "What now goes for outreach — we hardly had that much in the whole budget a few years ago," says Helene Merki, the church's 93-year-old organist.

While others concede that she may be exaggerating, all agree that outreach has increased tremendously.

"This little community does so much in the community, it's phenomenal," Rayford Ray says. Trinity members are involved with Habitat for Humanity, a domestic violence shelter and a prison, where they lead services for inmates.

"It's rare to find someone who just sits in the pews anymore," Clark says. "We're more aware now — we have time and energy to focus on community needs."

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She speaks of an enhanced sense of community within the congregation and with others in the diocese.

"The trust level has grown," Clark says. "We get to know each other on a different level.

"I've grown and been stretched doing things I never believed I could have done, but instead of being a burden, it's a joy. There's support within our community and from the diocese, and nobody has to do it all."

Gladstone parishioners tell of a visiting bishop who implied that their model might be good as a last resort, but asked whether, if they were given $3 million, they wouldn't go back to the old model.

"We told him we'd give it away," said parishioner Maria Maniaci.

"We can't go back," Clark says. "Once there's life, how do you roll over and play dead again?"

Currently, ten of the diocese's 30 churches have opted to pursue mutual ministry development, but others — even some which can afford a full-time rector — are exploring the possibility.

"For many the point of entry is finances," Kelsey says. "But then people get creative, and open to new ideas, and what comes to life is delightful."

He cautions dioceses against doing it to save money; in Northern Michigan, the diocese has increased its spending to subsidize regional missioners.

And he stresses that it is "not necessarily a church growth strategy. Some will say, 'I'm sorry, but I didn't sign up for that.'"

But parish registers and diocesan balance sheets don't measure "the vitality in the life of the community," Kelsey says. "Mutual ministry is getting at the heart of what we believe God in Christ is calling us to do and be."

Few alternative models draw as much attention as Northern Michigan's venture into mutual ministry development. So numerous are the inquiries that the diocese has instituted semi-annual visitors' weekends, encouraging guests to come at a time set aside for hospitality and conversation. Guests at the May weekend included the bishop-elect of the Canadian diocese of Rupertsland, a Saskatchewan priest on sabbatical, the coordinator of the total ministry program of the Diocese of Olympia, an urban vicar from the Department of Missions of the Diocese of Newark and members of a rural Missouri parish.

The weekend was marked by lively discussion of both the brass tacks and the

Lay presiders in Australia?

Former Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie charged that the primate of South America would be fomenting "schism" if he tried to introduce the topic at the Toronto Anglican Primates meeting in 1986, but "lay presidency" at the Eucharist commanded serious discussion this year in the Province of Southern Africa and at the July synod of the Church of England. Anglicans in the Diocese of Sydney, Australia, in fact, have moved beyond the talking stage. They will put the matter to a vote at Sydney's diocesan synod this October.

Although South American Anglicans have seen lay presidency as a way to address the shortage of priests in a province with many small congregations, the push for lay presidency in Sydney stems from a steady growth in lay participation in the church's liturgical life and a strong evangelical tradition, according to Sydney-based Anglican Media spokesperson, George Fisher.

"Proponents are trying to bring into line lay people preaching with lay people presiding at Communion, so that there is no separation between Word and Sacrament," Fisher said noting that the Sydney diocese, which has between 500 and 600 clergy and 270 parishes, currently has about 200 lay people licensed to preach, all with "theological qualifications of some sort."

Although the Diocese of Sydney has been a stronghold of opposition to the ordination of women priests, the lay presidency legislation, if passed, would open the way to lay women and women deacons presiding at the Eucharist.

The process of approving lay presidency must move forward in full consultation with Sydney's Archbishop, Harry Goodhew. "I can see the merits of licensing permanent deacons to conduct the Lord's Supper in certain situations," Goodhew told the diocesan synod last year. "I can agree that there are no theological reasons why lay people cannot be licensed to do the same. My uncertainties lie in the area of order, of what the long term consequences may be for ordained ministry."

Sydney's diocesan synod endorsed the principle of lay presidency in 1985 and a report to the 1987 synod said there were no doctrinal objections or legal impediments. The 1993 synod said there were significant doctrinal reasons *for* lay presidency. A report on the topic is also to be presented at the next General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia in July, 1995.

— *Julie A. Wortman*

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theological framework for what Northern Michigan is doing.

Key for Tom Ray is a sacramental understanding of the world. He insists that the classic distinction between spiritual and temporal spheres — assigned, respectively, to clergy and laity — is "bad theology. Our sacramental theology never, ever distinguishes between sacred and secular.

"I don't talk about lay ministry. I have no idea what 'ministry of the laity' means — except that somehow *that* ministry is considered inferior, unprepared, inadequate, inevitably second-class. I think you could wash all day and not clean that word up."

And he is adamant that ordained ministry cannot be based on "something I can do that no one else can do." In the early church, he says, preparation for baptism was serious and intense; "then, if the community needed ordered, ordained support, they could choose any respected seven from the community and ordain them.

"We have evolved an understanding that has drifted away from our roots and tradition. We've lost the memory of the responsibility of adult Christians, and it will not come back quickly or easily."

But Ray is convinced that Northern Michigan is "being dragged into this relentlessly, inexorably, by the very Spirit of God."

It is a leading of the Spirit that resonates in the hearts of many throughout the church. I returned to Detroit grateful for my own small faith community at the Catholic Worker. It often feels to me like an oasis, a place where everyone's gifts and commitments are supported and taken seriously. But we're at the edge of institutional church life. Northern Michigan feels like an oasis at the institution's center, the vanguard of a church in which all who follow Jesus are "just" Christians. TW

A map for mutual ministry

[These remarks are excerpted from an address by Tom Ray, bishop of Northern Michigan, in November, 1991.]

When anyone wants to go to seminary for ordination, she or he will have to face a rector, a bishop, a vestry, the Commission on Ministry, the Standing Committee. And in some form or other the questions constantly probe, "Why do you want to do this?" Aspirants venture a halting, awkward response and we reply, "But can't you do that now, where you are and as you are?" The aspirant then steps back, rephrases the answer — trying not to perjure himself or herself — and again we respond, "Can't you do that as a responsible Christian now? Why?" The assumption is that the aspirant eventually will figure out how to tell us something she or he can do ordained that no one else in the congregation can do.

My God, that's seductive! And dangerous. The larger you draw the circle for the ordained person, the more destructive. Liturgist, administrator, preacher, teacher, pastor, intervenor, visitor, community leader, brings in the youth. What's left outside this very intimidating circle? Not much.

This is a recipe for paralysis and impotence, for separation, for clericalism and anti-clericalism. This recipe guarantees for the clergy that they will be isolated in that circle, overworked, unsupported, and broken. We break clergy constantly, and clergy families are in deep trouble. This recipe guarantees for the laity that they will be underutilized, undervalued, have low self-esteem; and they will be disappointed in the clergy eventually.

I'm a card-carrying career professional. I'm also a baptized Christian, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. And my profession often gets in the way and I become preoccupied with trivia. For the baptized I worry that my profession not only gets in my way but can get in their way, that some people think Tom Ray or Fred Borsch or some other clergyperson is the real Christian, that their 24 hours count less; after all, they're only lay persons.

In struggling with this dilemma in Northern Michigan for years now, there is another map emerging — and my God, it's something that I knew! Everything is shared with us through baptism. If you want to explore the mystery of baptism, then explore those liturgies in the Book of Common Prayer by which we order priests or deacons or bishops. Think of baptism revealed through the ordered life.

Priestly, diaconal, apostolic ministry — these don't belong to priests, deacons and bishops.

Priestly ministry explores the ministry of reconciliation, inclusion and unity. Where does most priestly ministry occur? At home — in the kichen, the bedroom, the family room. At the workplace among employees. Diaconal serving originates whenever we seek peace and justice and respond to human need. Apostolic ministry explores, among other facets, cooperative oversight. What of the oversight of our environment, on the playground, in business, in our judicial system, or the awesome oversight of parenting?

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¿Por que no somos la iglesia?

Closing the Instituto Pastoral Hispano

by Camille Colatosti

In a small room in New York City, late in the evening, ten men and two women sit in a circle with priests Maria Aris-Paul and Pablo Richard, a reknowned third-world theologian of liberation. They discuss the Bible, ethics and the plight of teens in New York City's *barrios*. The people speak intense and rapid Spanish. They listen carefully to each other and are eager to have their opinions heard.

The conversation is part of the training offered at the *Instituto Pastoral Hispano,* an institution founded in 1977 to offer theological education to Hispanics. Many graduates have entered the priesthood. More than this, explains Aris-Paul, the *Instituto's* executive director, "the *Instituto* has been preparing people to respond to the needs of their Hispanic community. They come to train for a new awareness of being members of the church."

Unfortunately, the *Instituto* closed its doors on June 30, 1994. While *Instituto* board members hope that the closing is temporary, there are no definite plans to re-open.

Founding board member Bishop Douglas Theuner of New Hampshire explains that the board of the *Instituto*, as well as students and graduates, will meet throughout the summer to plan ways to continue education in the Hispanic community.

The reasons for the closure are subject to debate. Some feel that the Episcopal Church simply cannot afford to subsidize the *Instituto* any longer. Others — and especially leaders in the Hispanic community — charge that the *Instituto* is being closed now because key church leaders do not take the needs of minority members seriously.

Purpose

According to Enrique Brown, the *Instituto's* founding director, the school was opened in Connecticut to help clergy in that diocese reach out to the newly established Latino community in Bridgeport and Hartford. "The Diocese didn't have an indigenous Latino clergy," Brown explains.

The strategy of the church up to that time had been to import Spanish-speaking clergy from Latin America, which critics said often meant importing colonial values.

The Hispanic community wanted to train "our own people," Brown says. "We started off training lay people to be leaders — and not just Latino lay people but Anglos also — to work with the Latino community."

Brown directed the *Instituto* from 1977 to 1985. In 1987, he joined the *Instituto's* Board of Directors. During his tenure with the school, he has watched it grow. In the 1980s, the school moved from Connecticut to New York City. It evolved from the project of a single diocese to an independent institution that was financially supported by several large dioceses, including the Dioceses of Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Long Island and Newark. Beginning with fewer than 10 students a year, the *Instituto* doubled in size by its final year, serving 21 students — more Hispanic students than attend all the Episcopal seminaries combined.

Instruction itself addressed the real world needs and concerns of poor and working-class Hispanic people. In addition to studying the courses required for ordination — the Bible, history, ethics, theology, practical theology and contemporary issues — the *Instituto* also focused on Latin American reality. Unlike traditional seminaries, the *Instituto* did not require its students to have a college education. Classes were conducted in Spanish and held in the evenings and Saturdays, to make it possible for working people to attend.

"We use the Paulo Freire method — looking at the whole person, not just academics," explains Aris-Paul, who has been director since 1986. "We deal with students' whole life situation. We Hispanics come with very complicated life histories. It is very draining, alienating, to deal with a society where you don't fit — to try to learn the language and the customs, whether you try to assimilate or retain your own customs." In addition, most *Instituto* students are financially insecure, often working more than one job. "At the *Instituto* we had to address these things together or the students would get stuck and not go on with their process," says Aris-Paul.

> *Here was an institution that could open the door to people who have doors closed on them every day. The rules are set up to exclude poor people from priesthood, from ministry.*
>
> *— Butch Naters-Gamarra*

The four-year program required that,

Camille Colatosti directs the Working Women's Project in Detroit.

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in addition to class work, students be involved in practical experience in their communities, hospitals and prisons. "This action-relfection model has been at the heart of our pedagogy," Aris-Paul says. She adds that since the General Ordination Exams were "not language — or culturally — appropriate for us, we designed our own and they were accepted in several dioceses."

The *Instituto* has also been a key liaison between church people in the U.S. and church people in base communities in Central America through its leadership and arranging trips to Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala.

As effective as the training was in bringing Latino clergy into the church, it wasn't until 1987, ten years after the *Instituto's* birth, that the diocese of New York, under Bishop Paul Moore, deemed the school a viable theological program for training people for ordination. Prior to this time, graduates needed to attend a year or more of traditional seminary before they could qualify for General Ordination Exams.

"This was a big victory," says Aris-Paul. To date, the *Instituto* has prepared seven priests, three of whom are women, and two deacons.

Many speak of the *Instituto's* positive track record. "It is something that people in other denominations have been looking at," says Brown. "They see the Instituto as a model for the kind of training institution they want to develop. It's a model for minority and other small church communities, communities that are isolated and have trouble getting and keeping clergy." Church members in Appalachia, for example, are looking to establish their own *Instituto* of sorts to train people in their community for ministry.

"The power of the *Instituto* was in the sense of community," explains Richard Schaull, emeritus professor of Princeton University, who teaches classes at the *Instituto* and in Latin America. "It was an attempt to make the Gospel incarnate in the language, culture and experience of Hispanic people in the U.S.A., especially in the context of largely poor and marginalized Hispanics. It put students in touch with faith communities in Latin America and therefore you had the connection with the wider struggle of the third-world peoples.



Centro Ecumenico Antonio Valdivieso (Nicaragua)

Los pobres reconstruyen la Iglesia de Cristo. VIII Centenario del Nacimiento de San Francisco de Asis, 1182-1982.

"I don't know of very many other places in which women and men, younger and older — who had not been primarily in the academic world — were encouraged to discover their own ability to think, to provide leadership and to cultivate their spiritual life. The *Instituto* represented a cutting-edge experience in theological education in the U.S. at a time when such initiatives are desperately needed."

Priorities

Why would such a successful institution close? Some church leaders believe that the money simply ran out. "We just simply exhausted our sources of funding," Theuner says. "We used bishops' discretionary funds. And they are all gone. We used one-time seed money grants. We ran out of options to make the *Instituto* viable."

As Richard Grein, bishop of the Diocese of New York, explains, "There is no money in our budget for the Instituto. All the money that I gave them came from discretionary funds. But that ran out." He adds that in his diocese one-half million dollars in block grants are allocated for Hispanic ministries.

Anita Lemonis, communications director of the Diocese of New York, likewise points to the fiscal crunch. She insists that the *Instituto* is not closing. "On June 30, the semester is over and it will be a transition time," she explains. "The Diocese of New York wants to see the *Instituto* continue. We need to find resources to make the *Instituto* viable."

On the other hand, some church leaders, like Butch Naters-Gamarra, rector of *Iglesia Episcopal de San Esteban,* Boston, believe that the budget crunch is simply an excuse.

"The *Instituto* was a closure waiting to happen," Naters-Gamarra argues. "Church leaders talk about diversity, but it's a classist, racist church. We [the Latino community] have supported this school for more than 15 years. Here was an institution that could open the door to people who have doors closed on them

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every day. The rules are set up to exclude poor people from priesthood, from ministry. The rules say that everyone must do four years of college, three years of graduate work in theology and then get ordained. But everyone doesn't have to do it that way. There are other ways. For people with vocations, people for whom English is not their first language, here was another way."

A 1988 graduate of the *Instituto,* Raefela Moquete, agrees.

"I am a priest in charge of two churches," she explains. "I taught at the *Instituto* until last semester. The reality in New York is this: there are 11 Hispanic churches and each one sent at least one student to the *Instituto*. The *Instituto* is the one hope for Hispanic people who want to study in seminary."

She wonders what will happen now? How will the church reach her community? "The leaders of the church didn't support the *Instituto*," she adds, "because it's an alternative. They don't understand what was really happening in the *Instituto* and how important it is to Hispanic people."

Theuner admits that "it's a matter of priorities. There have always been people who felt that the traditional academic program was the only proper way to provide education in church. I don't feel this way at all," he adds. "We [on the *Instituto's* board] feel very strongly that we are preparing people in the best way possible for the kind of ministry they will be expected to do. But there is no money."

The fiscal situation

The dioceses that undertook the support of the Instituto in the early 1980s have experienced financial shortages and reduced their contributions. While each initially gave $15,000 annually, the diocese of Newark ended its support more than eight years ago. This year, the diocese of Long Island gave only $5,000 and Connecticut and New Jersey decreased their giving to $6,000 and $5,000 respectively.

The constriction in the *Instituto's* budget reduced the staff to two: Aris-Paul and her assistant Simeon Lambert. All the administrative work, pastoral oversight, fundraising, some teaching and course development fell on their shoulders.

"We haven't had someone to work on the question of funding," Enrique Brown says. "We haven't had anyone working on development. We left it to Maria and she's had her hands full."

Atkins agrees, saying the primary supporter of the *Instituto* has been the Diocese of New York. In fact, in 1993 when the *Instituto* was in dire straits, Grein agreed to pay Aris-Paul as a one-third-time Hispanic officer.

But in January 1994, Grein terminated the relationship. Grein explains, "We put a lot of emphasis into Hispanic ministry. Some people don't like it because we don't do things the way they like. But when you make tough decisions, some people won't like it."

Anita Lemonis of the Diocese of New York insists that Aris-Paul was not fired from her position at the diocese. "The Hispanic officer position has simply been restructured," she says. "Instead of having one liaison and one person assigned to the job, we decided to make it more inclusive. We have a committee that has been working very well. People on the committee represent different ideas and concerns."

She adds, "I haven't heard any criticism of [Aris-Paul's] work. I have heard that she was treasured in the diocese."

Diocesan racism?

But critics raise questions, including concern about the diocese's parallel decision to "restructure" the *Instituto*, so that it may continue but without Aris-Paul in leadership.

"In the Diocese of New York, Hispanic ministry was not a high priority," Naters-Gamarra states. "When the bishop came into New York, it's interesting that all the people of color are either laid off or they leave. Bishop Tony Ramos, an assistant bishop who oversaw Hispanic ministry, is gone. He gets rid of Enrique Brown. He had three archdeacons: two were white, one black/Latino. They are all wonderful people. He gets rid of the person of color."

"I think the Diocese of New York is in a real crisis in relation to hispanic ministry,"says Henry Atkins, president of the *Instituto* board and a member of the Episcopal Church's Commission on Racism. "They have an incredible amount of work to do to minister to what is now half of New York's population. Many students at the *Instituto* are questioning whether the diocese understands what needs to be done."

Theuner objects. Distressed, Theuner notes that "New York will be the largest single contributor to the *Instituto* in 1994."

Broader issue

The issue is larger than any one diocese. Why is it that one diocese became the major funder and consequently the one in a position to call the shots? Why didn't the church recognize the *Instituto* as a treasure and preserve it?

Answers come from several quarters.

Some suggest the church does not want Hispanic ministers.

"I am concerned whether the church is willing to support theological education for empowering Hispanic leaders, if that education is liberationist," Atkins says. "This model of doing theological education in terms of the Hispanic community is a critical one."

Others say academic elitism is at work.

Some point to divisions within the Hispanic community itself that result in confusion. Some graduates feel that the *Instituto* offers ghetto education which makes them unable to move vertically within the church. Others respond that it is institutional racism within the church,

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not the *Instituto*, which makes Hispanic priests unwelcome in non-Hispanic parishes. These people point out that African American priests who graduate from established seminaries are equally unwelcome in Anglo parishes.

An abrupt closing

Perhaps most unsettling is the way the *Instituto* closed this summer.

The board of the *Instituto* agonized about whether to open for class last February and finally decided to risk it. There were board conversations about the need for fundraising and agreement that Aris-Paul's gifts were in instruction, not administration.

"Maria was concerned about new leadership emerging from the Hispanic community," Atkins says. "She was very effective in supporting that. She was not the best person in terms of relating to the people we had to go to to pay the bills."

In March funds were short and Theuner talked to Aris-Paul about closing the school.

"I was waiting for his call back," Aris-Paul says. "I had ideas about how we could finish the semester."

But Aris-Paul learned that the school was to close the following week, in mid-March, when a student called the office. He had heard of the closing from his rector. It turned out that Theuner had faxed Grein with the news Friday, sending a copy to Aris-Paul that arrived after General Theological Seminary's office was closed.

"I started calling everybody. The bishops were at Kanuga so I couldn't reach Doug at his office." When she finally reached Theuner she explained that she and the other faculty member of the semester, Pablo Richard, were committed to finishing the semester even without pay. She added that she had received assurances from the Episcopal Social Services, the Seaman's Institute and APSO (the Appalachian People's Service Organization) that they would help support the school through June. Several bishops also responded to the emergency.

Theuner approached Grein for help in paying off the school's final debts but has been unable (as we go to press) to raise money for severance packages for Aris-Paul or Lambert.



Simeon Lambert, Maria Aris-Paul and Efrain Alonso at the *Instituto's* 1994 graduation ceremony. Dane C. Bragg

In the meantime, Aris-Paul says she has felt abandoned by those making decisions about the *Instituto's* future. Friends say it feels as though she's being punished, but, all officials related to the school say that what is happening has nothing to do with Aris-Paul's performance. [See profile on page 30.]

Atkins and Theuner insist that they have been accessible and that Aris-Paul has been part of the decisions.

At the *Instituto's* commencement, the students honored Aris-Paul with a plaque but the board made no official mention of the conclusion of her tenure, although they did present her with a pewter plate a month later.

A chilling environment

Some fear that the Episcopal Church is becoming less and less tolerant of differences and is straying from a moral path.

"I have the sense that there is kind of a chilling environment here for me in the church," says Brown. "Once there was more openness, more tolerance for a diversity of voices."

Edward Rodman, canon missioner for the Diocese of Massachusetts, offers perspective. "Clearly, we are in a period of retrenchment and downsizing," he explains. Alternative programs are those most at risk and yet, he believes, those are the programs most needed. By the year 2000, the population of New York City will be over 50 percent Latino. Will the Episcopal church be able to meet that population's needs?

"I'm working in Boston's South End," says Naters-Gamarra. "I'm tired of going to funerals for kids. God has given us authority over evil, over sin. God has given us authority over illness! And God has given us authority over death. Why don't we use it?

"Because we're totally disconnected — from God, from creation. We are disconnected from one another and the power can't flow. Racism and classism are the greatest disconnectors, because they're barriers between us. You distrust me, I distrust you. And that's sad, because together we share a very powerful message.

"Integration means we have to deal with liturgy. We have to deal with music. We have to deal with ecclesiastical polity and with institutional life. We're talking about systemic issues of oppression.

"When we learn to trust one another, we'll become part of each other's personhood — we'll become *community.* When we do that, we've got power. The power of God's spirit." TW

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A community of restless spirits: learning accountability at Iona

by John Harvey

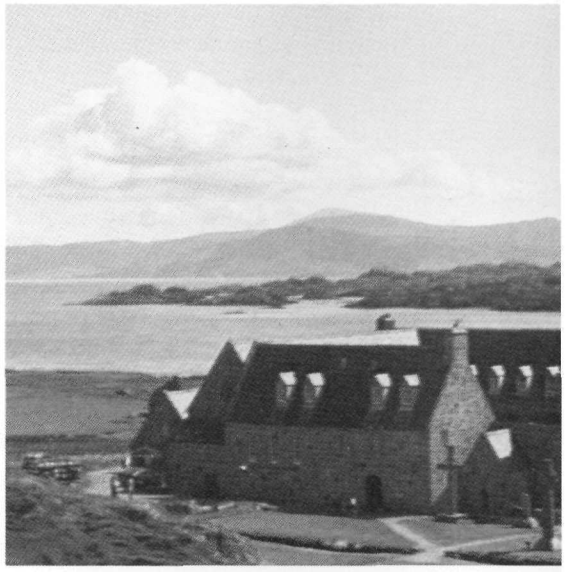
George MacLeod founded the Iona Community in 1938 based on a vision of a renewed church serving the real world. Pastor of a downtown shipyard parish in Glasgow, Scotland, MacLeod had been experiencing firsthand the profound effects of society's brokenness during the Depression. His congregation was one of the biggest and most popular in Scotland, but there was a yawning gulf that separated the church's members and the teeming mass of unemployed persons he encountered from Monday to Saturday on the surrounding streets, people who were certainly not there to hear him preach the Gospel on Sundays.

In founding the Iona Community, it was never MacLeod's intention to set up an alternative church or to experiment with various forms of Christian communes. For him, the Christian community *was* the church — and his burning desire was that the church should be changed so that God could use it for the *whole* salvation of God's people, as against "the soul salvation" only, as he so often put it.

He chose to go to Iona, a remote island off the west coast of Scotland far from the slums and housing precincts of the central lowlands, primarily because Iona was the cradle of Christianity in Scotland and, indeed, in Northern Europe. St. Columba and his missionary monks came to the island from Ireland in 563 A.D. There they set up their little monastic village of beehive huts and wooden church. In twos and threes they sailed out from Iona in frail animal-skin boats to go and live out the Gospel among mainland tribes. "Colonies of heaven," was how Columba described the communities they sought to establish. So when MacLeod went to Iona in 1938 and began the seemingly ridiculous task of rebuilding the ruins of the medieval abbey that had been built on the site of Columba's original settlement, he was making a very powerful appeal to the strong sense of history and patriotism that is in every Scot. He said he was withdrawing to Iona in order to return and make "a new thrust for the Gospel" based, like Columba's missionary vision, on a strong sense of community.

MacLeod saw his experiment on Iona as an experiment in Christian living for the modern age. In the early days he often likened the Iona Community to a hothouse — where those who came to work with him at the building of stone walls could be "brought on" in building up their faith by a concentrated style of life and discipline. They normally stayed on the island for three months in the summer, living together, cheek by jowl, in primitive wooden huts, both ministers and unemployed shipyard workers. They labored together on the walls and worshipped together in the ancient abbey church. In their spare time they argued, debated and discussed the issues of the day in light of the Gospel. At summer's end they would return to the mainland to live out the new insights they had learned in their island hothouse.

Our logo is the Wild Goose — the Celtic symbol of the Holy Spirit — always moving, never tamed . . . a nuisance to settled folk, but an inspiration to restless spirits.



Sojourning at Iona, restless spirits find renewal for socia

MacLeod was attracted to Iona, too, because, he said, "Iona is a very thin place; only a piece of tissue paper separates things spiritual from things material." Both then and today you cannot get away from the Spirit on Iona. She breaks through all our defenses, disturbing and challenging as well as comforting and upbuilding, making us new people, formed into a new community, given a new vision in Christ.

Today the Iona Community numbers roughly 200, with over 1000 associate members. We do not live on the island, although we do maintain a resident staff there which each year welcomes hundreds of guests to stay in two centers on Iona and at our Adventure Camp on the

John Harvey lives in Glasgow, Scotland. He is leader of the Iona Community.

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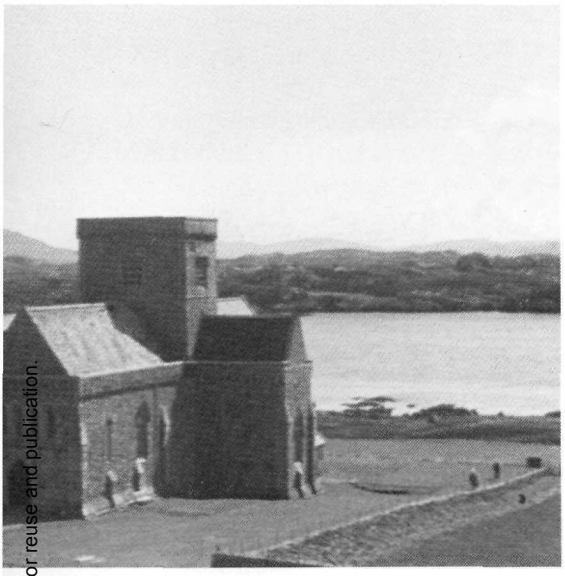

stige work.

nearby island of Mull, usually for a week at a time. The staff invites these people into a common life of work and worship, prayer and discussion, chores and recreation — and above all into the common life of the Christian community in the world.

Community members are still drawn together by much the same vision that inspired MacLeod in the 1930s: the struggle for a renewed church, serving the real world. What holds us together — what makes us a "community" is our Rule and our common Concerns for Action.

The Rule of the Iona Community is very straightforward and what almost any member of the church could undertake. We agree (and renew our agreement each January) to pray for each other and study the Bible every day, to regularly account to each other for the use of our money and time, to meet with each other in "family" groups and plenary meetings, and to commit ourselves to a 12-point statement of belief and action for justice and peace in society.

What most people find helpful in the community is our system of accountability. In the church at large, accountability is generally rather weak. In the Iona Community, on the other hand, we are able to be quite tough with each other. In our family groups — a dozen or so members and their partners living near each other and meeting in each other's homes — we set aside time each year to tell each other in detail how we are spending a proportion of our income, how we are organizing our time, how we are getting on with our prayer discipline and with our justice and peace commitments. These can be difficult meetings, of course, but they are also liberating times, for it is only when we are really held to account, really "bound" to each other, that we can be said also to be truly liberated and free.

The other thing that binds us is our common Concerns for Action. We work these out every five years or so, adapting and adding in between. At the moment, we have made a common commitment to pursuing seven areas of concern: intercommunion, justice and peace, racism and interfaith relations, rediscovery of spirituality, the cause of the poor, work with young people and constitutional concerns. Members join together in small working groups to pursue these areas of concern where they are and as they can — successes and failures are regularly reported. At the moment, we are reviewing these concerns, which we adopted in 1989, to see where we should go from here.



Inevitably there is a tension between our life together as a community and our life in the church. As members of the Iona Community, we all feel this tension most of the time. And it is felt, too, by the people who come to stay for a week on Iona and then have to go back to the normal life of their congregations back home . There is no escaping this tension; it's what we do with it that counts.

Over the years, the community has sought to influence the life of the church — primarily, but not exclusively (for we are an ecumenical community) the Church of Scotland. Community members have been involved in the house church movement and in introducing many new forms of worship. They have been leaders in the work of industrial mission and have experimented with new models of mission among families in deprived areas. They have been active in youth work and in fighting institutional racism both in church and in society.

In these and in a number of other areas, community members are not working on their own, but in partnership with anyone and everyone who is committed to seeing the church change and to "finding new ways to touch the hearts of all."

Before MacLeod died in 1991, the Iona Community had been awarded the United Kingdom's Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion, and MacLeod himself had shared in the International Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion. But even in his final years, MacLeod was never at ease. He was always looking forward, always challenging, always an awkward, restless spirit.

Our logo is the Wild Goose — the Celtic symbol of the Holy Spirit — always moving, never tamed, flying together in formation for better speed, a nuisance to settled folk, but an inspiration to restless spirits. This is the way we want to be. This is the way we believe the whole church is called to be. TW

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Pulling down God from the sky: Women-Church

by S.R. Skees

Thousands of women across the United States cannot go to church. "Once I saw how excluded I really was," says a 70-year-old Catholic nun from southern California — by male-only images and language for the Divine and "His" followers — "I could never go back to not seeing that.

"Patriarchy does not permit women to be participative," explains Ethel Dignan, who now runs a women's issues network for her order and belongs to a worldwide movement called Women-Church.

"There are sisters in this country who don't go to Mass. They feel isolated and cut off; they don't feel a part of what's going on." So they attend feminist liturgies and women-led prayer celebrations, in livingrooms and corners of parish halls.

Some Women-Church gatherings look a lot like a eucharist, except that the congregation acts as minister: members share participative sermons, pray for one another's intentions, and bless and break their own bread. Others discuss the shared experience of being cut off from the church because of gender, sexual orientation, divorce, race, and so on. Some groups include men; many include children.

Generalizing about Women-Church, which began as a Catholic protest movement in the 1970s, is not easy since there is no hierarchy or official national network, and every woman interviewed was quick to explain she spoke for herself only.

The staff at WATER (the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual), based in the suburbs of Washington, D.C., surveyed Women-Church groups and found members participating in "spiritual autobiographies, story telling, dancing, yoga, meditation, dream-sharing, foot-washing ceremonies, and celebrations of mother-daughter relations." Many celebrate the Passover, Advent, Lent, Christmas, and Hanukkah; others add pagan, African, and Central American holidays.

Members of at least 120 groups nationwide, and from over 20 other countries, call themselves "Women-Church," according to Diann L. Neu, feminist theologian who coined the term and co-directs WATER, but she estimates that the numbers reach into the thousands.

Branches in Latin America, Australia, and Europe join cause, according to Silvia Cancio of the University of Cincinnati. Last year's meeting in Albuquerque, N.M., (Women-Church holds a U.S. "convergence" every five years) drew 2,400 women from various racial and religious backgrounds.

"This is an attempt to raise up women's gifts and call them church," says Neu. Neu, a former Catholic nun with years more theological and psychology training than many of her male priest counterparts, believes the movement emerged from Catholicism because, "as Catholic women have found the doors closed to us, we are saying, 'We still are Church.'"

Joanne Bray's group, Massachusetts Women-Church, has nearly 1,000 members on its mailing list and about a dozen who meet regularly in Boston. "We break bread," she explains. "We have celebrations of liturgy or loss." Recently, members created a ceremony to mark the "rite of passage" of menopause for one of their members.

In St. Louis, the Loretto Women's Network meets in small "faith-sharing" groups, according to coordinator Ginny Williams, to "explore through ritual" the image of God and experiences of divorce or other issues that can build blockades between church and people.

"We have ritualized several areas of our lives," says this retired theology/sociology professor who founded a shelter for abused women in her city. "Violence that has happened to us, sharing bread and wine, or commemorating those who have given us spiritual guidance."

> *Women like me wouldn't even think of going into a church for a* spiritual *experience. But people still have spiritual needs; they need to baptize their babies, to bless their dead, to pray together — and so they come to places like Women-Church.*
>
> *— Mary Hunt*

Women, men, and children in Silver Spring, Md., gather in a circle for liturgies with no one presider. A table sits in the center, bearing that week's symbols which may be bread and wine, water, candlelight, shells, or stones.

"We welcome each other and introduce ourselves in terms of that week's theme," Neu explains. Members do a reading or litany, then create a group-discussion sermon by taking turns reflecting on that week's symbol, question, or theme. The liturgy

Sue Skees is a writer in Los Gatos, Calif.

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ends when members bestow blessings upon one another and sing "songs with inclusive language."

A group of eight "regulars" meet at one another's homes in Los Angeles twice a month, according to Pat Reif who founded a feminist spirituality program at Immaculate Heart College and now serves as chaplain for L.A. County Hospital. For each meeting the host prepares the liturgy, which may include readings from Native American writers or feminist theologians, a shared homily and a sharing of bread and wine.

Seven of the eight in Reif's group have not darkened a church door for years; the eighth attends an Episcopal Church for the sake of her children. Yet often they follow Scripture readings from the lectionary; they pattern their services after the eucharist; and more than half the members are or were nuns. Reif herself took all the same vows of ministry and fidelity as did any priest, and she has spent a career serving in Christian ministry.

"What do I miss about the institutional church?" Reif reflects. "I don't have the anger that I used to have, going to church. That used to prevent me from praying.

"It's more important to *be* church than it is to reform church."

Cancio, a Cuban-American theologian in doctoral studies in gender and racial identity, says, "Right now I have a great spiritual void, because I have great difficulty going to church. Seeing a man dressed as a woman, hearing the language that excludes me. ... I have a great closeness to God, but I separate that from my experience with the institution."

So why stay Christian at all?

One after another, Women-Church members talk about the long roots of their faith. They cannot get away from a love of the candles and incense and bread on which their mothers suckled them in their childhoods. Moreover, they cannot get away from the lovable, egalitarian man in the middle of their faith — Jesus.



Argentine anthropologist Sara Newbery, Argentine physician Zulema Palma and WATER co-director Diann L. Neu at a Women-Church celebration in Argentina. WATER archival photo

"We would like to be treated in the same way that Jesus treated women," notes Dignan. She remembers the Samaritan woman at the well, to whom Jesus talked with respect, though no Jewish man would have addressed an unknown Samaritan woman in those days.

"The women were very much a part of things" in the early days of the Church, she continues. "We just want to get back to that."

"The church is my home," adds Reif. "There are lots of gifts I received from the Church. . . .The social justice teaching is beautiful; the sacramental liturgy enriches us at key moments in our lives."

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Williams agrees with theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether: "We are in exodus, but we are not separate. We are standing with one foot in and one foot out of the church."

Williams adds, "What we really want in the end is what Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza calls 'the discipleship of equals.'"

Ruth Steinert, who works as a medical technologist elsetimes, counts 400 on the mailing list of the Cincinnati Women-Church group she has spent years nurturing. Every Ash Wednesday they storm the downtown cathedral in a public prayer vigil, challenging the institution to repent its sin of sexism. The rest of the year, Steinert attends Sunday eucharist and serves on parish council, because "I am Catholic in my bones."

Steinert recites the creed of Mary Daly: "When God is male, male is God." She believes that "We have put God in a very small box. If we give God a female persona, that won't even begin to encompass who God is, but at least it's a start."

Taking turns each month, Cincinnati women lead liturgies at Steinert's home, blessing bread and wine. They plan to branch out next month by sponsoring a Moon Lodge led by a local Lakota woman, a Native American ritual that honors the moon's and women's cycles.

"I think it's simple, and people make it very complicated," Steinert explains. "The Roman Catholic Church is very involved in sacraments, and somewhere along the way we've been taught that we need a male, ordained priest [to mediate], but they do not have the corner on this market."

Women-Church pulls God down to earth by destroying Western dualism. "We need to get beyond either/or," says Neu, "and get to "both/and." Women-Church goes beyond female God-imagery and prayers that include more than "brethren"; Women-Church members want to mediate the divine with their own hands.

When members in Boston break bread, they see their act as sacramental. "The real presence of Christ was *love* amongst human beings coming together," says Bray, who believes it takes more than an ordained priest to summon divinity.

"When Jesus said, 'Do this in memory of me,' I think 'Do this' is caring about people in community."

This creates a priesthood for all.

Self-criticism rankles inside Women-Church: some members say it suffers from a myriad of personal perspectives. As the grassroots groups grow beyond white middle-class Catholicism, their members struggle to hear one another without assuming they know how it is to be an African American Baptist, or lesbian Jewish social worker, or a Thai Christian missionary, and so on. Recent gatherings have been hotbeds for debate on whether members can find common ground.

Ironically, while Women-Church is pretty anarchic, with women reluctant to speak for another and respectful of each other's autonomy, Cancio says Women-Church is diminished by its "extreme liberalism that may shut out some of the more conservative groups we would like to include." On the "politically correct" agenda are such issues as abortion rights, gay and lesbian rights, anti-racism training, women's ordination, and environmental preservation.

In the midst of this tension, women meet to overcome prejudice in a society steeped in it. They gather a group of human people into a circle, needing the divine they find in and with one another.

"Women like me wouldn't even think of going into a church for a *spiritual* experience," quips Mary Hunt, co-director of WATER and an active lobbyist for women's ordination and Women-Church.

"But people still have spiritual needs; they need to baptize their babies, to bless their dead, to pray together — and so they come to places like Women-Church." TW

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Back issues of *The Witness*

The following back issues of *The Witness* are available for discussion groups or personal use. Study guides are available upon request when ordering multiple copies of a single issue.

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Just mark the issues you would like and mail a check ($2.50 per copy) made out to *The Witness* to 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226-1822.

Hawaiian sovereignty

Seiichi Michael Yasutake, director of the Interfaith Prisoners of Conscience Project and an Episcopal Church Publishing Company board member, is in frequent communication with Hawaiian sovereignty advocate Raymond Alapai'Nui Kamaka, a prisoner of conscience incarcerated in Dublin, Calif., prison. The following is a report on Yasutake's visit May 5, 1994:

We had a brief but good visit, in which Kamaka talked with us about the importance of Hawaiian sovereignty, expressing his gratitude to all dedicated advocates. It was not until we were leaving that Kamaka, limping and walking with a cane, mentioned that he was injured when he fell through a roof in the work camp. Since then, we have been pressing for medical care for him.

Kamaka, in his mid-50s, has been demanding the return of 187 acres of his family's land, leased since 1942 to the U.S. military. It was used for live-fire training. After the lease expired, instead of cleaning up and returning the land, the military claimed the cleanup would be too expensive and had the Kamaka land condemned as uninhabitable! Kamaka used tax forms to protest. He continues to insist that the government return his family land freed of unexploded weapons. As a result, the government convicted him of "tax fraud" and "harassing officials" with eight years sentence. This was later reduced to two years by Judge Harold Fong who is quoted as saying he found it "difficult" to punish Kamaka "who was defending his own land."

Nevertheless, since September, 1993, he has been incarcerated in northern California, far from his homeland, first in isolation in despicable conditions. Only after his supporters in Hawaii flew to California to protest was he transferred to the present work camp prison.

In 1991 Hawaii Advisory Committee of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, in a report entitled "A Broken Trust," found that Congress' 1921 Hawaiian Homes Commission Act — which was intended to provide 200,000 acres of land for native Hawaiians (*Kanaka Maoli*) — has not been fulfilled.

The *Kanaka Maoli* — arbitrarily defined by the government as being 50 percent or more of Hawaiian blood — have received less than 20 percent of that land while the remainder has been assigned to non-native interests, including sugar plantations, commercial corporations, the U.S. military and others.

— Mike Yasutake, 2120 Lincoln St., Evanston, IL 60201; (708) 328-1543.



The 25th anniversary of Stonewall was marked by a march for gay and lesbian rights in New York City on June 26, 1994. Marilyn Humphries, Impact Visuals

Bread for the World

In the wake of rising poverty and childhood hunger, Bread for the World launched a campaign to reduce hunger among low-income children and women. The *A Child is Waiting Campaign* offering of letters campaign seeks to guarantee funding for the proven, cost-effective Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) to reach 3.5 million eligible women and children not currently served.

"Without writing checks — just letters to Congress — Christians can help win nearly a billion dollars for vital nutrition and health-related services," said David Beckman, president of Bread for the World. The Christian citizens' anti-hunger advocacy group marks its 20th anniversary this year.

More Americans — 36.9 million — live below the poverty level than at any time since 1962. Nearly half are children which is more than double the child poverty rate of any other industrialized country. One in four U.S. children under the age of six lives in poverty. An estimated 12 million children in the U.S. are hungry.

— Bread for the World, 1100 Wayne Ave., Suite 1000, Silver Spring, MD 20910; (310) 608-2400.

Plowshare sentences

Those arrested for hammering and pouring blood on an F-15E fighter jet last December were recently sentenced. All four had been in prison since their arrest. John Dear and Phil Berrigan are scheduled to have been released to four months' house arrest by the time this issue is in the mail. Bruce Friedrich and Lynn Fredriksson are scheduled to be released in January, 1995.

short takes

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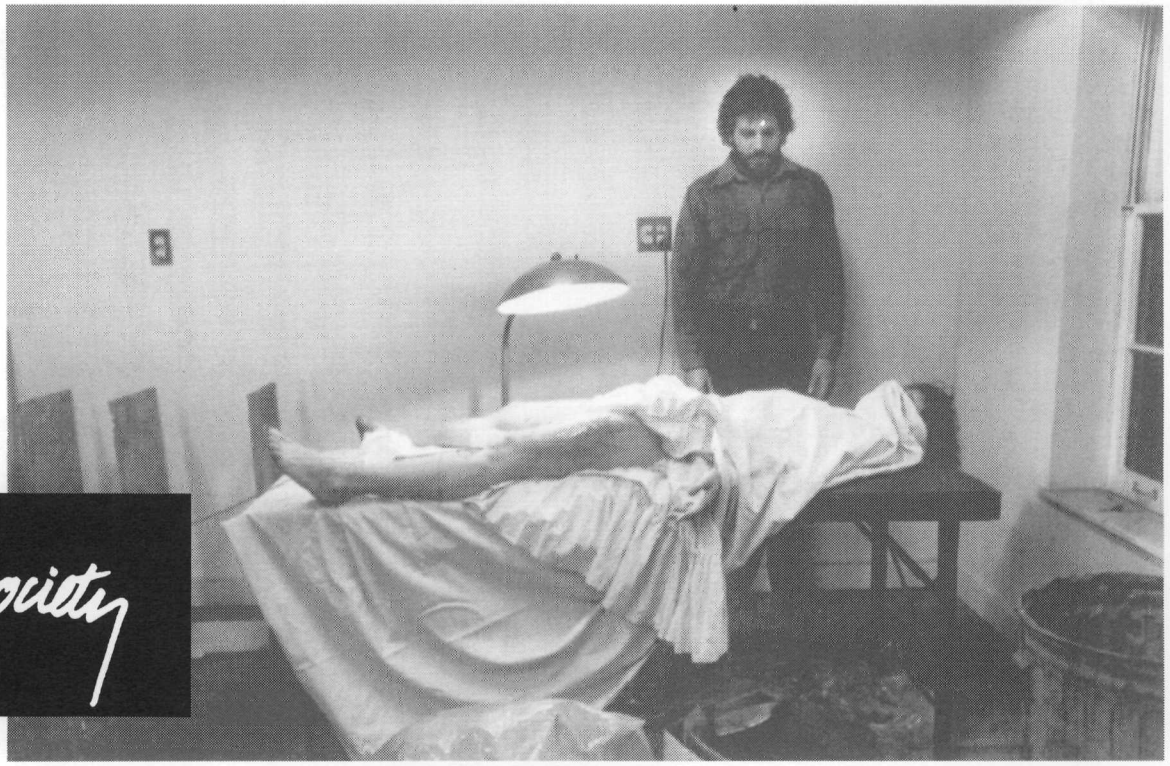
Christ in New York

by Duane Michaels

© 1981 courtesy of Sidney Janis Gallery, N.Y.



Christ is sold a television by a religious hypocrite.



Christ cries when he sees a young woman die of an illegal abortion.

art and society

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Christ is beaten with a homosexual.



Christ eats dog food with an old Ukranian lady in Brooklyn.

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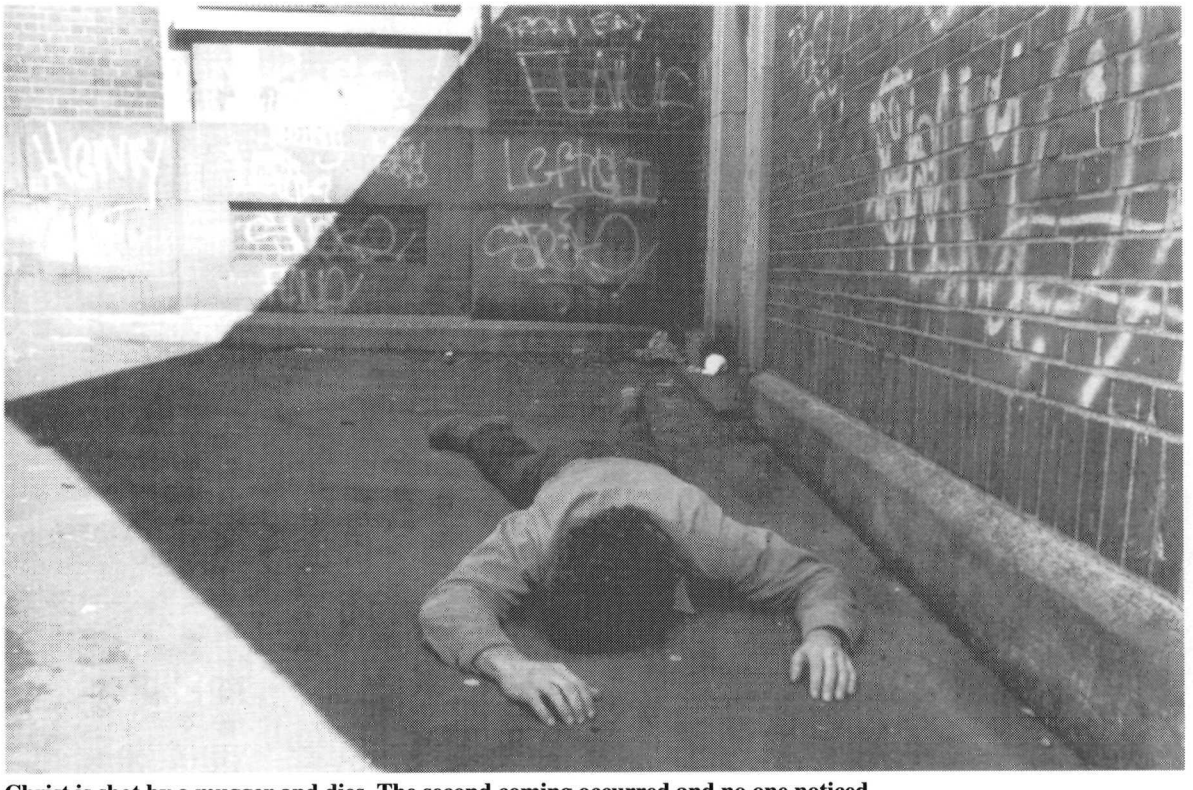
Christ sees a woman being attacked.



Christ is shot by a mugger and dies. The second coming occurred and no one noticed.

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Indianapolis '94

The sin of racism

by Richard L. Tolliver

In *The Souls of Black Folk*, written at the beginning of this century, the African-American writer W.E.B. DuBois said, "The problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color line." Our lack of progress throughout the century is captured in the title of Andrew Hacker's recent book, *Two Nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile, Unequal.* Thus, although the Episcopal Church's bishops and the General Convention have previously spoken out against racism, the bishops' recent pastoral letter on "The Sin of Racism" is a necessary reminder that race and racism remain central and unresolved issues in American life.

A fundamental reason for the enduring intransigence of racism is the denial of its existence exhibited on the part of many whose personal transformation is needed to eradicate it. The bishops were correct in labelling racism a sin. Like so many forms of sin, there is a great deal of energy put into denying its existence. It is so much a part of individual and institutional behavior that people don't see it and many resent being reminded of it. That attitude is reflected in a statement made by a parishioner to her rector after having heard him preach a sermon on sin. She said, "That was a nice sermon, but why did you have to waste it on such good people?"

The bishops are to be commended for having taken a personal inventory of manifestations of racist attitudes and behaviors within themselves. They challenge the entire church to engage in a similar exercise. A simple test might be to evaluate our attitudes about diverse cultural musical expressions used to offer praise and thanksgiving to God. One of the most blatant examples of the existence of racist attitudes within our church is the expression of cultural superiority as it relates to our articulated preference for certain musical expressions within the liturgy. For example, a white organist once told me that he refuses to play anthems that aren't rooted in Euro-centric music traditions. He asserts that only Euro-centric music is universal in its appeal and worthy to be played in the church. A white priest once told me that he permits hymns growing out of the black worship tradition to be sung only if they are played in four-four timing. A more soulful timing would be inappropriate even if it is the one most commonly embraced by African-Americans in their use of that particular hymn.

Scripture confronts us with the fact that faith without works is dead. It is my sincere hope that the bishops' expressed outrage over the sin of racism will, indeed, be revealed in their courage to take concrete steps to make the church more racially inclusive at all levels. But while the bishops have affirmed that racism is a sin, many have recently presided over budget cutbacks for diocesan anti-racism programs.

There isn't anything wrong with embracing a preference for musical expressions that grow out of one's cultural heritage. The racism is expressed in the notion that one's cultural musical forms of praise to God are superior to those used by other racial groups.

Cultural superiority is one of the most blatant and yet unacknowledged manifestations of racism within the church. It is often overlooked because it has its roots in the mentality which says to persons of diverse racial backgrounds, "You are welcome if you become like us." A more honest statement indicating this sentiment was once expressed in my presence by a white female priest who often decries the existence of sexism within the church. In response to an invitation issued by a priest of color to a group of predominately white clergy to experience his culture, our white sister said, "Let's face it. This is a white church." The implication was that understanding and experiencing his culture was of no interest to the group.

The bishops are also to be commended for the proposed covenant committing them to break down every barrier that separates God's people and to develop strategies for the "recruitment, deployment and support of persons of color."

Scripture confronts us with the fact that faith without works is dead. It is my sincere hope that the bishops' expressed outrage over the sin of racism will, indeed, be revealed in their courage to take concrete steps to make the church more racially inclusive at all levels. But while the bishops have affirmed that racism is a sin, many have recently presided over budget cutbacks for diocesan anti-racism programs. Some of us fear that the truth of the adage, "What you are speaks so loudly that we cannot hear what you say," may yet carry the day on the issue of the depth of some bishops' commitment to leading the church in the eradication of racism within its midst.



Richard Tolliver is national president of the Union of Black Episcopalians and rector of the Church of St. Edmund King and Martyr in Chicago, Ill.

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Beyond the smoke and mirrors at General Convention

by Edward Rodman

Every General Convention has its own character, substance and critical agenda. The difficulty lies in discerning what those are amid the glitter and complexity of such a huge gathering. Indeed both the powers that be and those who are seeking change, resort to strategies and tactics that are often designed to confuse or mask what they are doing to the novice deputy and visitor. This process is generally referred to as smoke and mirrors. Simply put it is the net result of all of the moves and counter-moves that often are played out behind the scenes and are designed to minimize exposure to the real issues that are at the heart of the Convention. Simply put, these are money and decision-making power.

The key to getting beyond this often confusing process is to know which questions to ask and to be able to evaluate the answers, if you get them, against some basic standards of fair play and justice.

I believe that the following questions need to be asked of the budget and structure issues that loom large at this Convention. While issues of sexuality and the election of the committee to nominate the candidates for the next Presiding Bishop may capture the attention of the media, it is how much money will go where and who determines that, which is the prize upon which we must all keep our eye.

Edward Rodman is canon mission for the Diocese of Massachusetts and coordinator of the Consultation.

Questions for budget

1. Who will decide what the priorities will be in the 1995 budget in the event of a shortfall beyond that which is currently being projected? Is there a process already in hand that should be revealed?



Edward Rodman

2. What is the authority of the Program Budget and Finance Committee (PB&F) in developing a budget for the Convention?
3. Can the Convention vote on line items in the budget in such a way as to secure them for the entire triennium?
4. Must any change in the budget initiated on the floor of Convention necessarily affect some other part of the budget? Can the rule be changed?
5. Will dioceses vote their self-interest vis-a-vis the bottom line, that is, for those receiving reduced askings, will that be the prime motivator in resisting change in the budget? Meanwhile, will those from whom more is being asked engage in an effort to create a more equitable situation for themselves?

Answers: (If you don't like my answers, see what others you can find.) With regard to the first question it is my understanding that the Administration and Finance Committee of Executive Council is responsible for the budget once it passes General Convention. It is important to remember that the PB&F is a committee of the Convention and is accountable to it, and has total authority to take whatever it receives from the Executive Council or staff to create the budget in light of the requests made of it and the resources it is prepared to request from the several dioceses via the asking. This makes the hearings of the PB&F critical, and it should be remembered that they precede the formal opening of Convention.

The third question can be answered in the negative as far as the old quota budget was concerned. However, we are looking at a unified budget for the first time, and I suspect that an argument could be made to guarantee certain line items. It will be interesting to see if this emerges as a possible tactic.

The current rules governing budget debate require all transfers to occur without increasing the bottom line. This is a way to protect the Canonically required passage of a balanced budget. It does, however, assume that a positive vote for the budget means a positive follow through in the payment of the asking. Recent history shows that one does not follow the other. Does this bring the whole process into question? It will be interesting to see whether this rule is challenged, or whether there will simply be an effort to increase the bottom line.

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Questions for structure

1. Do you believe that the reductions in program and staff, and the new proposals for the structure of program delivery, reflect what the dioceses said to Executive Council during their listening process?
2. Who gains power under the new structure, and who loses power?
3. Do changes in General Convention structure make any real difference in the way in which the Church governs itself?
4. Has the time come for less frequent General Conventions and greater cooperation at the Provincial or Regional level?

Answers: (Again, if you don't like mine, go out and make some of your own.)

As spelled out in more detail in my article in the March issue entitled "Restructuring the Church for Urban Justice" I make the case for the utilization of four basic principles regarding process and structure.

They are: *Access,* attempting to increase it for those who are denied participation in decision making etc. *Sustainability,* both on the ecological and the human level, so that gains that are made are not lost with the collapse of the structure. *Equity,* a principle which involves the creating of structures, processes and behaviors which ensures respect and equal treatment for every person. Fourth, *justice,* love distributed, a state called for in the year of Jubilee and proclaimed in the parables of Jesus as the reign of God.

Working through these four principles helps one analyze the current debate over the structural changes in what I would hope would be an objective fashion. Certainly the downsizing and restructuring that have been proposed — and in the case of some program and staff already accomplished — diminish access and increases the power of the central administration at 815. It also raises the serious question of whether what is currently being proposed is any more sustainable that its predecessors.

It is equally clear that some programs are more respected than others, and I suspect that a lot of the feeling about the cuts had more to do with the equity question than anything else.

Finally, it is not clear whether any institutional structure is ever just, but it is true that some are always more equal than others. The General Convention has no role in this anymore (because it cannot secure line items for the full triennium) and, therefore, changes in its structure are really a non-issue. It is true that Convention should meet less frequently in order to save money and reduce stress in the church. Should this happen it becomes conceivable that some natural cooperatiion might emerge at other levels of the church and there would be less need for posturing on social issues and church policy questions.

While issues of sexuality and the election of the committee to nominate the candidates for the next Presiding Bishop may capture the attention of the media, it is how much money will go where and who determines that, which is the prize upon which we must all keep our eye.

Conclusion

For what it is worth, that is my quick and dirty reading of program, budget, and structure for Indianapolis. Don't get fooled by the smoke and mirrors.

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By examining the authority of scripture, the traditional way, multiculturalism, feminism and conversation, as well as issues of faith, sexual orientation and racism, participants could evaluate whether we share a Lord. This video allows viewers to express their views within the context of passionate Episcopalians on opposite ends of the spectrum.

Send $40 to *The Witness,* Video Offer, 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226.

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On Earth as in heaven? : environmental issues at General Convention

by Jan Nunley

The environmental crisis has been identified by Executive Council and the Environmental Stewardship Team mandated by the last General Convention as the "unifying vision" which "incorporates most of the major concerns before the Church," including Biblical literacy, stewardship, peace, economic justice, the status of women, children and families worldwide, "and more." Even though attempts to incorporate environmental themes into the Phoenix convention met with howls of "pantheism" and "nature-worship" from some conservatives, Episcopalian environmentalists hope that developments over the last Triennium have "mainstreamed" concern for the Earth to the point that even Fort Worth and Newark — the Scylla and Charybdis of the Episcopal Church — can agree.

"Until this year, the environment issue has not been held up that strongly," says Ethan Flad, staff assistant for environmental issues at the Episcopal Church Center. "As a church, with the exception of the Environmental Stewardship Team, there hasn't been that much strategic discussion of environmental stewardship or environmental justice until now. But the environment has proven to be an area where everyone finds common ground — where a lot of people can come together and not be so divided as they are on other issues."

The Environmental Stewardship Team, which owes its existence to Resolution A195S of the 70th General Convention, has been busy sowing the seeds of environmental consciousness in the church. Over the past three years, the 16-member team has commissioned a six-session environmental curriculum, "One God, One Family, One Earth: Responding to the Gift of God's Creation"; called upon seminary deans to prepare a theological position document for the 1997 Convention; supported a colloquium on "Liturgy and Ecology"; and compiled a list of model environmental stewardship programs. Only eight dioceses have not responded to a call for contact people for environmental concerns, and the church's Public Policy Network has included the environment in its list of the top six priority issues for Episcopalians.

Just as President Clinton's February executive order on environmental justice directed all Federal agencies to evaluate the environmental impacts of their policies, the Stewardship Team has tried to interject concern for the Earth into the agendas of other national church program areas, including racism, economic justice, small communities and metropolitan areas. For sale at the Triennial Meeting of the Episcopal Church Women will be a "Women and the Environment" calendar developed by the Women in Mission and Ministry Office with the Team's participation.

Episcopalian environmentalists hope that developments over the last Triennium have "mainstreamed" concern for the Earth to the point that even Fort Worth and Newark — the Scylla and Charybdis of the Episcopal Church — can agree.

In April, the Diocese of Kansas sponsored the first Episcopal Church conference on environmental stewardship — "Caring for Creation," held in Kansas City. The conference, with about 250 participants from across the country, featured such speakers as California State Senator Tom Hayden, senior advisor to the United Nation's Environmental Programme, and Thomas Berry, one of the movement's most respected environmental theologians. "Our substitution of ourselves for God has led us to subjugate the creation we love so much to our own sin," Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning told participants in his sermon at the conference's Earth Eucharist. "Just as sin corrupts the relationships between people which God provided for our joy, so it corrupts our relationship with the earth. We are not right with each other. We are not right with the earth."

The Environmental Stewardship Team hopes the 1994 General Convention will vote to "continue the mandate" of the 1991 Convention for environmental work.

While Executive Council already screens its U.S. investments through the CERES (Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies) Principles governing corporate environmental behavior, the Team wants that extended to "other structures of the Church."

The Team also wants the church to educate parishes and communities about sufficiency and sustainability "against the false values of unnecessary consumption and exploitation."

Doing the right thing environmentally should take the church far beyond eschewing styrofoam cups at coffee hour, but common ground will still be hard to find. Already, the Diocese of Washington has felt the sting of controversy over its plans to develop housing on property in suburban Maryland. Environmentalists protesting those plans locked themselves inside Washington Bishop Ronald Haines' office to show their opposition; they say one of the few old-growth ecosystems on the East Coast is jeopardized by the intent to build and harvest timber on about half of the land. The diocese counters that the development plans are sustainable and provide important income for programs that benefit the young and elderly. The protestors have appealed to the diocesan environment committee, which finds itself caught between ecological and people needs.

— Jan Nunley is newscaster for National Public Radio's "Living on Earth."

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Listening to the earth

by Jean Schlicklin

Grandfather, by Tom Brown, Berkley Books, N.Y., 1993, 202 pages, $8.95.



Wendy Chicoine

Grandfather, the story of Stalking Wolf's search for truth, is a wake up call for all to hear. The experience given to the reader by Tom Brown, who has written 13 books drawing on Stalking Wolf's teachings, is of an openness to the power of God.

This book, like the ones that precede it, describe a relationship to the earth grounded in Tom Brown's experience as a young boy, learning the woods, its inhabitants and his own skill at the hands of an Apache grandfather. Unlikely as it may seem, Brown grew up in New Jersey, but he lived at the edge of a wilderness known as the Pine Barrens, and his teacher lived nearby with family at a military base.

In the teachings on wilderness survival skills is a counsel to trust the Creator and to take delight in creation. For Christians in the first world, it is an essential message. In fact, Brown believes the future of the earth may depend on it.

Grandfather was born into a nomadic clan of Lipan Apaches in the 1880s. His peaceful walks stretch from northern Alaska to Argentine and everything in between as only one living in harmony with the earth could move. In fact, he often referred to God as "the spirit that moves in all things." He taught, by answering a question with a question, that all things are related to one another. When Brown would ask, "How did you know there was an owl in that tree?" Grandfather would respond, "Go ask the mice." Only months of observation would teach Brown what tracks a mouse leaves when aware that an owl is nearby and in the meantime, Brown would have learned a mouse's response to many other things.

In a culture that is isolated from and often hostile toward the earth, Grandfather's teaching is urgently needed. "It held the wisdom of pure survival without struggle," Brown writes. "He had faced the waters of the jungles, the fires of the deserts, and now he had to face the treacherous cold of the north, learning in each instance to accept nature on its own terms and live by its rules." This way of life tells of a person who knows God's love and a sense of unity with all creation. He is compelled to live his vision as he walked the earth.

The lessons and the ultimate gift of life point to a familiar link to the Creator. Yet, in me rises a subtle question of the denial of the power of women in the spirit world; there is a piece missing when the story is told of Grandfather's search for a student. When faced with a mother and daughter who prayed for his return to teach more, he does not accept them as candidates, which seems to lack an openness.

As a farmer and daughter of God who trusts in the power of the Spirit, I recommend *Grandfather* as a story of someone who, in Native American language, "walks his talk" and lives the journey of a search for truth. It is a hope-filled wake up call. TW

book review

Jean Schlicklin, who was an Adrian Dominican for 14 years, is a farmer at Celebration Gardens in Kalamazoo, Mich. She is studying the Twisted Hair tradition and joins a community supported agricultural alternative system in Ontario this fall. Artist **Wendy Chicoine** lives in Northampton, Mass.

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The church needs to respond to the lack of spirituality in people's lives. It also needs to open up to the possibility that the church can be more diverse.



Maria Aris-Paul Dane C. Bragg

Moving beyond hierarchy

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

At her birth, Maria Aris-Paul's father wept.

He had hoped for a son to share the economic burden of supporting a family of aunts and sisters. No one imagined that Maria Marta might support herself.

Spanish by blood line, privileged by birth, Maria Marta Aris-Paul was born into the oligarchy of Guatemala. Protected, educated and cherished, the most challenging obstacle she faced was one of gender discrimination.

Today, as an Latina Episcopal priest in the U.S., Aris-Paul continues to confront sexism. But now her Guatemalan heritage is usually also devalued.

Fortunately, her sense of self was formed in a proud family that understood itself to be second class to no one. And while she now offers critiques of the oligarchy and aligns herself with the marginalized, she recognizes that her culture gave her a sense of self-worth which has helped her withstand racism in the church.

Aris-Paul's mother had been educated in Paris and Switzerland, so she felt it was important that Maria and her sister be bilingual. They studied at a German and, later, an English school.

When it came time to consider college, a wealthy aunt intervened and insisted that Aris-Paul be allowed to go. So in 1950, when Aris-Paul was 16, she was sent to Smith College and her little sister was sent to boarding school in the U.S.

"I was very young," Aris-Paul recalls. "Culture shock was very strong."

For two years, Aris-Paul not only studied philosophy but shepherded her younger sister, working for a New Hampshire family so her sister could attend camp during the summers.

Aris-Paul's education was cut short when her family insisted that she get a degree in pharmacy and she refused. When they threatened to bring her home to Guatemala, Aris-Paul eloped with her childhood sweetheart, "which seemed to please them."

At the age of 18, Aris-Paul set up house with her husband in Illinois where he was studying engineering. They had six children.

They also discovered the Episcopal Church.

"The man who sold us a refrigerator invited us to his church. We loved it and joined in 1958. All our children were baptized in the Episcopal Church."

As her children grew up, Aris-Paul worked in early childhood education so she could keep her youngest children with her.

After the family had moved east, Aris-Paul talked to Smith about completing her degree and was encouraged to return.

With all six kids, Aris-Paul moved to Northhampton where she says the children had to help with the laundry and cooking so she could study.

"It was a very exciting time to go back and pick up where I left off. I did a double major in religion and psychology in two years. In 1976, I graduated cum laude."

Union Seminary opened its doors to Aris-Paul and the family was briefly reunited in New York before the parents divorced.

Prison chaplaincy work during and after seminary radicalized Aris-Paul.

"I did individual counseling and therapy which touched a few, not many. I did education groups, consciousness raising groups, bible studies, informal conversations over a meal. I would invite prisoners to come share a meal in the chaplain's office.

"I researched the reasons that people go to prison. It taught me how the system affects people who are poor. It says a lot about the quality of life for African Ameri-

---

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

can and Hispanic people. Working in the prisons opened up my heart to my true vocation. I was interested in how the church could respond to those who are on the margin of society."

In 1983, Aris-Paul was ordained priest by Walter Jennis.

"When I became priested a lot of things happened in my life that I hadn't expected. They were in some ways difficult and in other ways very rich."

Aris-Paul continued in prison ministry and married Edwin Muller, whom she describes as "the best prison chaplain I ever met."

But soon thereafter one of Aris-Paul's married daughters, Elizabeth Reyes-Guerra, became very ill and died in three months. Reyes-Guerra's husband died shortly thereafter. In 1985, Aris-Paul inherited two-year-old Nicole, the child of her daughter.

The changes in her lifestyle contributed to the end of the second marriage, but she rose to the challenges of parenting a new generation.

A simultaneous commitment in Aris-Paul's life was equally unexpected. She was invited in 1986 to direct the *Instituto Pastoral Hispano,* which offered alternative theological education to Hispanics.

"When I was called and told they had picked me over three male candidates, I was amazed. "

Under Aris-Paul, the *Instituto* educated in the Paulo Friere model, addressing the whole person. [See page 12.]

The issues before the church are urgent, she says.

"The church needs to look at itself and question its viability in terms of the people it serves — the world has gotten smaller, the church has to be responding to the constituency in its immediate area and also to the complicated needs of people in the end of this century.

"It needs to respond to secularism and the pull of materialism, the lack of spirituality in people's lives. It also needs to open up to the possibility that the church can be more diverse. It needs to be contemporary but it needs to be open to the spirit so that the spirit is allowed to give some guidance."

The church needs to look at itself and question its viability in terms of the people it serves.

During the eight years Aris-Paul directed the *Instituto*, the school was vibrant and alive. Students gathered on Saturdays to study Scripture, worship together and untangle their lives in light of the spirit.

"The *Instituto* has been preparing people to respond to the needs of their community. We believe there needs to be another model for theological education and the church if we are to respond to the needs of the poor, especially in the Hispanic community."

Aris-Paul would like to see seminary education challenge the "lone ranger" model of priest-parish relations, developing instead a shared ministry.

But the *Instituto's* work was never embraced whole-heartedly by the church. And at the close of the spring semester, Aris-Paul packed up her office and her home.



This fall, Aris-Paul and Nicole will join the Greenfire Comunity in Tenants Harbor, Maine. They will share 60acres with four women priests who offer retreats and workshops for women. The community has a particular interest in offering refreshment and renewal to those who work for justice in the inner city.

Like the others, Aris-Paul will live near the poverty line.

"The experience of being together with women priests with intense experience within the institution is wonderful. They are saying we must find a way to be together and experience renewal and offer this as a safe place to women.

"It's exciting to be able to help bring in the reign of God in spite of the church. It's the women," she says, "and the small groups that are going to bring forth new models of being church." TW

October issue:
Why I stay
in my
denomination.

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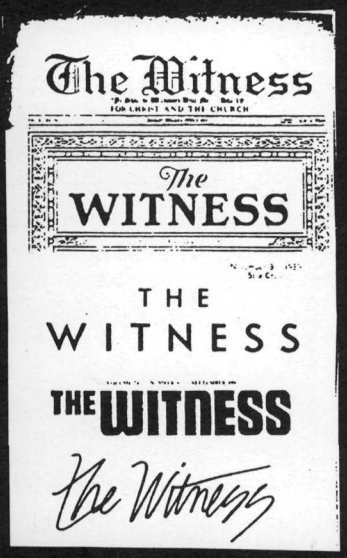
Please join us for our General Convention dinner at 6:30 p.m. on August 31.





You are my witnesses,
you are my servants
chosen by me
to know me
and put your trust in me
and understand
that I am the Lord.

--Isaiah 43: 10-12

The 1994 Episcopal Church Publishing Company Awards will be presented to the Philadelphia 11, the Washington 4, Hanan Ashrawi, Chung Hyun Kyung and Louie Crew. Steve Charleston, bishop of Alaska, will speak. Our dinner will* not *conflict with Indiana Night. We will offer bus transportation to the Indiana Night events and continuous transportation between the Convention Center and dinner hall. Tickets are $30 and are available in advance from our office or at our exhibit booth.

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The Witness

Volume 77 • Number 10 • October 1994



Staying in my denomination

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Women's spirituality

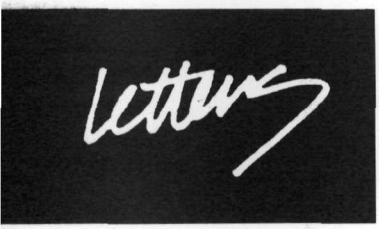
A FRIEND INTRODUCED ME to your publication with the July/August issue. I read it cover to cover, staying up late into the night to think about it, and dreaming about it when I slept. As a woman aspirant to Holy Orders in the Episcopal Church (and the Anglo-Catholic branch at that) I found much that excited, saddened, heartened and stirred me.

While the entire issue was riveting, I keep thinking about Lesley A. Northup's article, "Misogyny in Scripture." That the Bible is misogynist is not news to me or to anyone who reads intelligently. She neglects to mention the mayhem inflicted on men, both Israelites and their enemies. It was a violent world and the writers shared the biases of their societies. What keeps resonating for me was her final question: "... is there any way for Christian women to live with that witness and remain faithful," the witness being God's demanding the horrible suffering and bloody sacrifice of his son.

The problem that Northup seems to have is one that used to bother me, too. Do I want to serve a God who thinks it's grand to kill his one and only son? What kind of a God is it who does such horrors? On reading the article, I realized that this does not bother me any more, and I wondered why.

Women, especially, have a hard time with the idea of a loving parent setting up suffering and death for his son. We are often more in touch with our nurturing sides than men are, so we recoil from this idea more strongly. One of the clearest impulses I have is to protect those I love, to protect them from suffering and death, futile as that is. Therefore, we reason, if God loved his son, he would have moved heaven and earth to keep him from harm.

The problem seems to be with the word "love." But what if God does not feel in the way that we do? What if "love" for God means something quite different from what we mean?



My husband often accuses me of being a fan of the Old Testament God. But he's wrong, I think. In the Old



Testament, God exhibits feelings: anger, vengefulness, desires, crankiness. And I do not think that God feels as we do. God created a very complex world. By our standards, God is wasteful. He makes thousands of tadpoles in order to produce a few frogs. Most of those tadpoles become lunch for the predators of the pond. He did not hesitate to include suffering and death in his creation. We may not like to die or to suffer, but that doesn't mean that they are bad. God apparently wants us to suffer and die. No, "wants" is the wrong word, because it implies feelings, desires. He *intends* that we should suffer and die. All of us, one way or another. Jesus could have suffered arthritis and died of cancer instead of scourging and crucifixion. But because he was human, in the creation, of the creation, he had to suffer and die some way, some how.

We are human, limited by our senses, educations, talents. Of course we will always tend to anthropomorphize God, to make him in our image, in the image of a loving and gentle parent, or of someone we fear and hate. I agree with Northup, that I have no interest in "being in thrall to a God whose prideful anger is appeased only through blood sacrifice — worse yet, only through infanticide." Perhaps she should try not to turn God into a bad-tempered man, of whom she, like most of us, have plenty of experience here on earth. Let God be Itself — sexless, beyond the scribblings of sexist men, beyond the paltry deaths of tadpoles and people, beyond our selves.

I look forward to reading future issues of your wonderful journal.

Nina Pratt
New York, NY

LESLEY A. NORTHUP'S ARTICLE, "Misogyny in Scripture," in the July 1994 issue makes me wonder what kind of training in hermeneutics Episcopal priests receive in seminary. Though all biblical writings have emerged from patriarchal cultures (some which were perhaps worse than our own), Northup's interpretations are so unusual that she seems to read to reject rather than to understand.

For example, her quote from Numbers 31:7-40 is truly horrific, but the violence against the Midianite women is, if anything, slightly less than the violence against Midianite men, who were all slaughtered. As a Mennonite pacifist, I and my people struggle hard to understand war in the Old Testament, since Jesus later commanded us to love our enemies; but there is not space to go into that here. Nevertheless, how are such texts misogynous, when the slaughter is primarily directed toward men?

Second, Northup makes no differentiation between texts that are descriptive and those that are prescriptive. Stories like the rape of Tamar, the rape and murder of the Levite's concubine in Judges 19, and the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter are all presented as the results of negative, outrageous male behavior that should never have happened.

Third, criticizing Jesus for making "dire eschatological predictions" in Luke 21:23 that "singled out women" truly boggles my mind. In Luke 21:20-36, Jesus foretells the fall of Jerusalem, which happened 40 years after his death. The Jerusalem inhabitants suffered terribly, many fleeing the city. There is no worse time for a woman to become a refugee than when she is pregnant or nursing a baby. Rather than putting down women, Jesus is particularly concerned about their suffering. This is a female-affirming, not a misogynous text! (The same could be said for "Who is my mother?" in Matthew 12:46-50.)

Fourth, the Bible nowhere teaches salvation through "divine child abuse," although it is an extreme interpretation of the satisfaction theory of atonement, which was developed in the 11th century in a medieval context. To call Jesus' death infanticide is inaccurate, for he was an adult who knew that his revolutionary teachings and practices would get him into political trouble, but chose that path anyway.

The "Christus Victor" theory of atonement, held for the first 1000 years of church history, emphasized Jesus' life and resurrection just as much as his death.

Northup says, "The Bible teaches that only the death of Jesus, the son of God, could satisfy the Deity's requirements for reconciling Eve's sin," followed by five NT references. However, *none* of these texts teach that, particularly if you look at their larger contexts.

Further, there is only one reference to Eve in the entire New Testament — in 1 Timothy 3:13-15, a text so obscure no one can agree on what it means. Adam usually gets the rap, as in Romans 5. To say that Eve's sin forces God into the role of child abuser says something far beyond what any NT writer claims.

Besides other arguments with this article, I agree with Northup that a major problem is the lectionary. For each Sunday's worship, chosen texts are lifted out of their original contexts, placed with other similarly isolated texts, and read "on the flat." A New Testament text is the controlling text, with a psalm and an OT text chosen to fit with it. Texts that speak of violence (or other values Christians are not supposed to hold) naturally tend to be left out, for there is no way to include the larger context. In this respect, a lectionary is not unlike fundamentalist prooftexting, which also ignores context.

Lectionaries may have a place, but why not alternate their use with book studies to get a sense of a biblical document as a literary whole, with main and supporting ideas. And how many parishioners understand the mega-narrative of the whole Bible in its ancient Near Eastern context? With some sense of the big picture we can better evaluate whether or not some biblical writers actually hate women.

Rather than throwing out the Bible as "irredeemably abusive toward women," how about first studying it as one would any other ancient literary document? The first thing to go should be faulty interpretation.

Reta Finger
Editor, *Daughters of Sarah*

THE JULY ISSUE OF *THE WITNESS* is great! What a way of touching otherwise painful facts!

The Witness faces the issues with profound honesty. More than unpredictable, the magazine is, to me, daring in its search for answers, in its search for the truth of God. Moreover, the people of *The Witness* are courageous to live the answers, and, again, honest in their attempts to seek ways to articulate the steps to follow. (I dare say that Gandhi would have loved *The Witness!*)

Pio Celestino
Refugio del Rio Grande
Harlingen, TX

YOU ARE DOING a terrific job.

Dick Righter
Faith & Justice Newsletter
Dayton, OH

I'VE JUST RETURNED from a "mini-sabbatical" attending the 30-day Charismatic Spiritual Directors Retreat at Pecos, New Mexico. While there, several people had a chance to look over my copies of *The Witness* and they raved about what they saw.

Keep up the good work!

Mike Dobrosky
Jackson, MS

Correcting the record

In the July Ecutakes we reported that the United Church of Christ has been ordaining women since 1953. this was a typo and should have read 1853!

Due to miscommunication during production of the August *Art & Society* column, Duane Michals' work, Christ in New York, was printed without enough contrast and with printed captions instead of the artists' handwritten ones. Additionally, Michals' name was misspelled. We apologize to the artist and trust that his work still had an impact on readers.

Classifieds

Education Conference

Mark your calendars now! Announcing ... "Continuing in the Apostles' Teaching: Educational Ministries in the Episcopal Church."

This conference is designed for congregational and diocesan leaders concerned with creating environments that promote faith maturity among children, youth, young adults, and adults. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect theologically and gain practical skills through learning tracks, workshops, Bible study, worship, music, and fun!

Learning Tracks will be offered in the following areas: Children's Ministries, Youth Ministries, Young Adult Ministries, Christian Educational Ministries.
WHEN: April 25-29, 1995
WHERE: Y.M.C.A. of the Rockies, Estes Park, Colorado (airport: Denver)
COST: $200 (plus transportation)
SPONSORED BY: Christian Education Network, Treasure Kids!/Model Dioceses, Youth Ministries Network, and the Young Adult Ministries Office. Funding for this conference provided by the Episcopal Church Center.

For further information, contact one of these offices at the Episcopal Church Center, 1-800-334-7626: Children's Ministries, exts. 5266/5264; Youth Ministries, exts. 5237/5239; Young Adult and Higher Education Ministries, exts. 5262/5256.

Kollwitz Art Search

Käthe Kollwitz original prints and restrikes sought by Swords Into Plowshares Peace Gallery, Detroit, for March-May 1995 exhibit. To loan a piece, or for information, call or write James Bristah, 33 East Adams, Detroit, MI 48226, 313-965-5422.

Classifieds

Witness classifieds cost 75 cents a word or $30 an inch, whichever is less. Payments must accompany submissions. Deadline is the 15th of the month, two months prior to publication. For instance, items received January 15 will run in March.

When ads mark anniversaries of deaths, ordinations, or acts of conscience, photos — even at half column-width — can be included.

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Since 1917

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8 **Embracing an ambiguous heritage** by William Stringfellow
A previously unpublished essay by Stringfellow explains his membership in the Episcopal Church, and his identification with the sin and faithfulness of the whole church throughout history.

10 **Pluralist, feminist and Orthodox** by Demetra Jacquet
The founder of an organization promoting women's full participation in ministry in the Orthodox Church describes how she learned "to dance in the paradoxical tension" between Orthodox faith and a pluralist worldview.

12 **Why I am (still) a Baptist** by Ken Sehested
Sehested examines his heritage, asserting that "Baptists at their best are sectarian, apocalyptic, against the world — that complex set of arrangements and powers which now rummage creation."

14 **God in improbable places** by Edwina Gateley
A prominent and controversial Roman Catholic woman writes of her conviction that God is present "within our broken and inadequate institutions."

16 **Holy communists** by Kenneth Leech
Leech situates his own commitment to socialism within a colorful Anglican socialist tradition.

20 **General Convention coverage**

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Cover: Dierdre Luzwick, Cambridge, Wis.

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Why I stay in my denomination

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

As a restless child who preferred to scale alley fences behind the Church of the Advent, Boston, it was an act of will (not free will) to sit still in church.

But in time the shadows and the incense, the organ music and the vaulted heights spoke to me. Before I could read, the repeated words of the liturgy anchored me to God.

The Episcopalian understanding of sin appeals to me — we are sinners, not the reborn righteous. We go to the eucharist for the sacrament and the general absolution, not to pat ourselves on the back as the community of visible saints, nor for the pastor's approval. I enjoy solitude, even in the crowd.

But we are baptized, of course, into community.

At General Convention in Indianapolis, I realized that a denomination is, among other things, a vessel for collective memory. In a transient culture, it is a gift to see people you have known over time or who have known your parents, grandparents or children.

Likewise, it is a gift to have common touchstones: the General Convention Special Program in 1969; the ordinations in 1974 and 1975; the dissent from the Anaheim resolution concerning gay and lesbian ordinations.

At times the relationship feels solid, at others threatened.

I stopped at a booth to buy a book on witch-burning and overheard a prayer gathering at the SAMS (South American Missionary Society) booth next door. The pitch of the prayer was high and accelerated — it ended with enthusiastic and militaristic energy. I didn't feel invited to join in; I felt like the target of their (largely white male) reformist energy.

I overheard conservatives thanking God for the demise of resolutions I believe to be important and friends laughing that the hand of God had struck when the Episcopalians United (EU) booth fell over.

I started asking people whether schism is necessary. It felt good to allow room to imagine a clean break.

Roger Bolz, associate director of EU, answered that it as though we are walking arm in arm and a crack is growing into a fissure between us. "It's not a chasm yet," he added. "But maybe the kind thing to do is to let go of one another before we fall in the chasm."

Alison Cheek, ordained in 1974 and teaching at EDS, agreed, saying that although she likes the Episcopal Church's "roominess," she also feels the church has been "held hostage" by "ultra-conservatives."

"When conciliation means we're not responding justly then we're building the church on a false foundation," she added. "We're pretty close to that point, I'd say."

I was relieved when Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning, in his Convention address, called straight out for an end to financial boycotts within the church.

"Some of the reason for our financial difficulty is because we have allowed our sisters and brothers," Browning said, "to believe that it is acceptable to punish the totality of our body by withholding funds from our mission, or by being lukewarm about their participation as a way of saying they are uncomfortable. ...

"We have not risen up in the healthiness of our total corporate life and said: **NO!** This is not acceptable. This is not of God. This is not stewardship. We have not said: We need you. We love you. We are called together to be on mission and you can't just pick up your cards and go home."

Of course one can pick up one's cards and go home.

Sometimes I wish those on the right would. When they declare in *The Living Church* [9/11/94] that the Convention was a victory for their side or speak hatefully of gay and lesbian Episcopalians or deride women priests, I think the issues are too important to be cloaked in a "continuing dialogue" or "inclusivity" based on honoring people with diametrically opposed views.

Other times I worry that we take our self-definition from those with whom we disagree – exaggerating the differences and creating a whirlpool of division that keeps us from the real mission of the church.

Jim McReynolds, of Teleios, says he'd rather remain together, because "they'd be out there anyway."

And, as Bill Stringfellow notes (on page 8), to be Christian is to carry the debts and joys of the **whole** body of Christ — in that sense we are locked in relationship for eternity.

In whatever denomination we are, it's my prayer that we will be people who love God, know our own sin and are unafraid to meet the world in love — to be slow in judgment, affirming where possible, working for justice and taking delight in creation.

editor's note

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

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Free in obedience

by Bill Wylie-Kellermann

I am no longer my own, but thine. Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for thee, exalted for thee or brought low for thee; let me be full, let me be empty; let me have all things, let me have nothing; I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal. And now O God...thou art mine and I am thine. So be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

Prayer from Wesley's Covenant Renewal Service

It is among the paradoxes of radical freedom that it may be found only in commitment. Free in obedience, as it has been put.

I suppose it is another paradox of my life that although I regard our fractured denominationalism as a peculiar American apostasy, I remain a faithful United Methodist. In fact I love that church.

In practical terms the life of our family evinces that concrete horizontal ecumenism of the base, in which I have no doubt the church's future lies. The Detroit Peace Community is an expressly ecumenical crew, though its sacramental heart resides at the local Catholic Worker House where I take my turn in the Sunday evening preaching cycle.

At the behest of my bishop I teach at Whitaker, the Episcopal diocesan school of theology, with its attendant Anglican connections. And yet my heart has a home at Cass Methodist, where I pastored for nearly a decade and still hold my charge conference membership. In a certain sense, it is relationships that keep me in the Methodist saddle — the congregation at Cass, coming this far by faith in one of Detroit's poorest neighborhoods. I can't help loving them. Or the family history which runs in my blood. Or even a series of remarkable bishops and superintendents who have enabled my ministry of nonviolent resistance.



Methodist archives

John Wesley at his father's grave.

In another sense, though, it is my love of John Wesley. Oddly, I was already in seminary when I discovered him. Dan Berrigan, fresh from prison, suggested to a group of us that you couldn't know where you were headed if you didn't know where you were coming from. I took the hint and sought out, among other things, the tradition of Wesley.

His style was down-to-earth: gutsy street and field preaching, in-praxis theology written literally on the move and in plain language, and those strident polemical leaflets (notoriously plagiarized and circulated hand to hand). I like his class sense — though he never would have called it that — building from the bottom up, among the cast-offs of society. I think of the "discipline" (now our thick book detailing administrative procedure, then the movement's lifestyle covenant), a rule virtually monastic in spirit committing the Methodists to nonviolence, simple poverty, works of mercy, and common prayer. Wesley was utterly and justly scandalized when the industrious revival movement became more and more middle class. And he would have been heartsick to see his passionate antislavery commitments (built right into the discipline) give way to American accomodationism.

Wesley's relationship to the church is worth considering. He saw no New Testament basis whatsoever for a national church, regarding it a mere political institution, a Constantinian compromise. He found the Church of England sluggish, apostate, and in need of renewal. And yet to his death, he stayed a priest. Wesley and the movement preachers were often put out of or forbidden access to church pulpits — there is that famous image of him holding forth from his father's grave after he was denied the pulpit at Epworth. Yet Wesley strictly forbade Methodist preaching services to conflict with the times of Anglican eucharist. And, irony upon irony, the American church was born of a hunger for sacraments. Because the Church of England had all but abandoned the Americans after the revolution, he consecrated (irregularly to say the least) a "Superintendent" (who, by the time he'd crossed the Atlantic, regarded himself a bishop) to ordain the traveling elders.

All in all, Wesley found his ecclesiastical geography "on the edge." A consummate organizer, he lived at the institutional margins. I take heart and clue from that. And also that Methodism is a church with the soul of a movement. Its first prayer was that a new church be built within the shell of the old. That remains my prayer. And how I remain, in freedom and obedience, a faithful United Methodist. TW

Bill Wylie-Kellermann is book editor of *The Witness.*

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Staying in balance

A poem offers us a sudden burst of light, as from a late-night lightning flash. Since deeply felt faith provides quite similar surges of vision, every poem — no matter how skeptical its premises — records something akin to visionary experience. Mindful that this issue of The Witness *pursues issues of fidelity to tradition and denomination, I am moved to share a particularly lyrical moment from Barbara Kingsolver's wonderful novel, Animal Dreams (Harper Perrenial, 1990).*

Perhaps it is no more unusual to offer a piece of fiction to elaborate the nature of poetry than it is to offer a discussion of a Pueblo solstice/Christmas ritual as a comment on remaining within a Christian denomination.

Every gesture of liturgy must awaken us from the dull habits of our lives to embrace the vision only available after the leap of faith. Doubtless, the liturgy of the eucharist has kept me within my "church," when other forces might have driven me out.

In this section, the main character, Codi Noline (in the midst of seeking her real identity while returning to her home town, Grace, Arizona), has gone with her lover, Loyd Peregrina, to his family home for the village Christmas ritual. As they sit on a housetop watching what must be the ultimate liturgical dance, Codi, mired in a paralyzing skepticism herself, questions Loyd's faith.

— Michael Lauchlan

"...so you make this deal with the gods. You do these dances and they'll send rain and good crops and the whole works? And nothing bad will ever happen. Right." Prayer had always struck me as a more or less glorified attempt at a business transaction. A rain dance even more so.

I thought I might finally have offended Loyd past the point of no return. ... But Loyd was just thinking. After a minute, he said, "No, it's not like that. It's not making a deal, bad things can still happen, but you want to try to not cause them to happen. It has to do with keeping things in balance."

"In balance."

" ... The spirits have been good enough to let us live here and use the utilities, and we're saying: We know how nice you're being. We appreciate the rain, we appreciate the sun, we appreciate the deer we took. Sorry if we messed up anything. You've gone to a lot of trouble and we'll try to be good guests."

Sunday Greens

by Rita Dove

She wants to hear
wine pouring.
She wants to taste
change. She wants
pride to roar through
the kitchen till it shines
like straw, she wants

lean to replace
tradition. Ham knocks
in the pot, nothing
but bones, each
with its bracelet
of flesh.

The house stinks
like a zoo in summer,
while upstairs
her man sleeps on.
Robe slung over
her arm and
the cradled hymnal,

she pauses, remembers
her mother in a slip
lost in blues,
and those collards,
wild-eared,
singing.

Rita Dove is Commonwealth Professor of English at the University of Virginia and poet laureate of the United States. "Sunday Greens," from *Thomas and Beulah*, copyright 1986 by Rita Dove. Reprinted by permission of the author.



Embracing an ambiguous heritage

by William Stringfellow

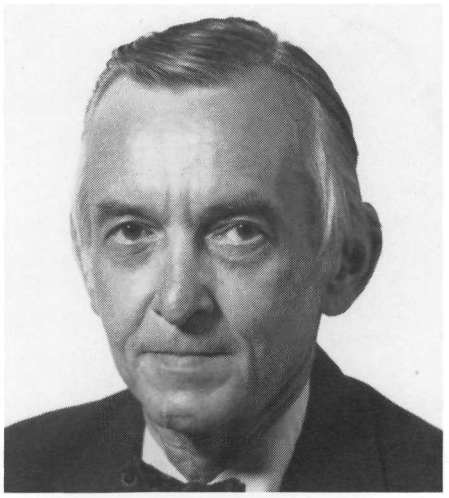
[The following essay is excerpted from a previously unpublished manuscript by William Stringfellow, courtesy of the Division of Rare and manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.]

There is no church which is pure and unscathed. To be a Christian requires an acceptance of that fact. To comprehend and affirm the biblical precedent of the church of Christ means participating in the tension of the church in the world. It is exactly in the midst of that dialectic of church and world that the profession and witness of the Christian faith is wrought.

The crucial question is not whether the ambiguity attaching to the church in the world can be obviated or escaped, but whether there resides in the church the capacity for transcendence, such as the biblical witness portrays, by which the church is at once truly in the world, but not conformed to the world.

The enduring asset of the Episcopal Church is that it is not an indigenous American church and it is not dependent upon a personality cult, but it does bear a remembrance of the biblical precedent for the church which is concretely institutionalized liturgically.

Wherever one may go in the Episcopal Church, at the least one is certain to behold and hear the biblical Word portrayed and celebrated in Anglican liturgy. One hopes, of course, that, in any given circumstance, the people and the clergy comprehend the biblical witness, so that what is affirmed liturgically is simultaneously verified politically and socially, and in that way incorporated into the biblical witness, but the crucial element is that the Word be there, in the midst of the church, regardless of anything else.



William Stringfellow

Why do I remain an Episcopalian?

I would be glad to offer an enthusiastic endorsement of the Episcopal affiliation as if it were preemptive in Christendom, but that would be pretentious, false, and silly.

For myself, the issue of church membership is not one of locating a sect of perfected doctrine or one unblemished by worldly involvement for there is none such to be anywhere found. More than that, the yearning for "church" in that sense is delusive. The question, rather, has to do with being identified and connected in a public way with *all* those who have professed the Christian faith and, in doing so, to confess and share the responsibility for every apostasy or infidelity of the church throughout history, as much as to be edified by and enjoy every faithful word and act of those who have been predecessors in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The church of Christ is called into being and constituted in this world as a community and institution — as a new *nation* bearing a priestly vocation toward other nations and principalities — and that fact of history (it is a fact of history not a theological abstraction), verified in the event of Pentecost, means that a human being can only become and be a Christian in relationship to the full body of Christian people, to the whole community in all of its ambiguity — that which one deplores as well as that in which one rejoices, that with which one concurs in one's own mind and conscience and that which one cannot comprehend or defend, that which one opposes and that which one upholds. It is categorically impossible to profess the Christian faith in separation or isolation from the church as it is in its empirical reality. It is not a possibility to be a Christian and to renounce Christendom even though it be part of the vocation of Christians to attack Christendom, for thus may the church be renewed.

This is why, in my understanding, membership in the church is necessary and practically unavoidable, though not, at all, a matter of vanity and not a means of justification.

Having gone that far, I remain an Episcopalian, however mundane or inglorious the Anglican inheritance may be said to be, because in the Anglican communion within Christendom the biblical Word is remembered and honored liturgically and that empirical integrity of a Scriptural lifestyle has a capacity to transcend any ambiguity and inform and shape the Christian witness in the world. TW

William Stringfellow was an attorney, theologian, writer, and board member of *The Witness* who died in 1985.

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William Stringfellow offers "cliff notes" on Anglican history which are abbreviated still further here in the interest of space. Where Stringfellow offers analysis, this is included in quotes.

"Episcopalians more romantic than I sometimes speak of the inception of Anglicanism as 'the English Reformation' as a way of imputing profound confessional issues to the separation between the Church of Rome and the Church of England by summoning association with the Reformation.

"I consider that Anglicanism originated before the 'English Reformation' and long before the separation from Rome was institutionalized. To me, it appears that the inherent spirit and genius of the Anglican tradition was founded in the Constantinian Arrangement in the early part of the Fourth Century — the idea of ecclesiastical establishment is the hallmark of Anglicanism."

• First century — Joseph of Arimathaea is said to have been sent as a missionary to Britain.

• Third century — St. Alban was a victim of Roman persecutions. Honored now as the first British martyr.

• Fifth century — the Roman occupation was withdrawn, church leaders fled to Wales and Ireland.

"One readily speculates how influential the Anglican exodus experience may have been. It certainly would seem to have made English Christians receptive to a congenial regime from which to take an official status and to which to offer its benedictions and with which to collaborate. [Henceforth] Episcopal jurisdictions looked to indigenous rulers."

• Missionary Christianity returns to England in 597, when Pope Gregory the Great sends St. Augustine.

"Anglicanism could not, however, become a communion in its own right with some bishops in comity with English rulers, while other still were privy to Rome, albeit to pope instead of emperor. Thus there was strenuous resistance among bishops from the earlier jurisdictions to Augustine's designation as Archbishop of the English."

• This culminated in 1349 in an act forbidding appointment of English bishops without consent of the King and proscribing appeals to courts outside England. "With that, king and pope were on an irreversible collision course. Since the king occupied the territory, it is not surprising that the royal political power proved the more convenient and efficacious."

• "Papal authority in Britain gradually eroded as it was repeatedly curtailed or thwarted by parliamentary acts, until 1534, when the Act of Supremacy declared that the Bishop of Rome had no authority over bishops of the Church of England. ... Anglicans remain to this day somewhat embarrassed about this, as if they would have preferred Henry VIII or Archbishop Cranmer or somebody to nail up a few theses."

• Internal reforms in the Church of England followed the death of Henry VIII, when Cranmer's translations and compilations of the Book of Common Prayer were published.

• In 1553, Mary executed bishops not obedient to the pope.

• In 1750 Elizabeth, who had reversed Mary's policy, was excommunicated by the pope, "furnishing English churchmen with the pretext for arguing that Rome withdrew from communion with the Church of England, a boast which seems to me at once unnecessary and vain."

• The bible is translated into English, King James version, in 1611. James I presides at a conference between Puritans, including some Anglican priests, and Anglicans. He agrees to the proposed translation of the Bible, "but when he realized that the Puritans wanted to change or abolish the episcopacy, he sided with the Anglican bishops ... and is said to have declared his reason for doing so in the succinct remark: 'No bishop, no king.'"

• The Bible and the English Book of Common Prayer have political significance, "the use of the indigenous language capitalized the disassociation from Rome and reinforced the English crown and nominal head of the church," but they also "furnished access to the biblical witness and opened participation in the liturgical lifestyle of the church for the laity. Recourse to the common language in the Bible and in the Prayer Book was a safeguard against superstition, ecclesiastical abuses, theological illiteracy."

• In 1658 Cromwell died. Puritanism became an export for the convenience of the Church of England.

• English exploration in America is justified as a challenge to the pope's authority to "give and take kingdoms to whomsoever he pleased" and for "propagating of the Christian Religion" among the "Infidels and savages."

• The "principal visible distinction" between the Puritans and Anglicans "was the episcopacy. The Puritans had dispensed with that in favor of either presbyterian or congregational polities, but the Anglicans remained within an episcopal polity, albeit under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London."

• "With the outbreak of the Revolution, Anglicans were confronted with something like the reverse of the dilemma of James I, that is, if they had no king, they would have no bishop. Strong Tory sentiment within American colonial Anglicanism."

• "In the revolution, the political and religious division within the colonial Church of England were represented by two notable clerics, William White of Christ Church, Philadelphia, and Samuel Seabury of Connecticut and New York. They seem to have been classic protagonists: Seabury served as a chaplain to British troops in N.Y., while White became chaplain of the Continental Army and, later, of the Continental Congress. Seabury was a high churchman; White was a low churchman. Their ecclesiastical views differed most sharply on polity, specifically the extent of episcopacy authority, on the one hand, and the participation of the laity in the government of the church, on the other."

• After the Revolution, "the Anglican Church ... was in disarray."

• In 1785 there was a General Convention at which White was elected to preside. Seabury did not attend.

• In 1789, the Episcopal Church established bicameral legislative houses and a revised book of common prayer.

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Pluralist, feminist and Orthodox

by Demetra Jacquet

I remember clearly Good Friday when I was in the fourth grade. Good Friday meant spending all day at church, attending three services, and busily helping the women decorate the symbolic tomb of Christ with flowers, for the dramatic procession of the lamentations that night.

The grade-school girls got to wear white dresses and represent the myrrh-bearing women, stand in front, and at the appropriate moment during the hymn, walk around the flower-bedecked tomb, sprinkling rose petals on the tapestry of Christ, while the altar boys stood back to make room.

It was exciting, so I told my friends at school about it. They responded by asking, "Why don't you have Good Friday on the right day?" Crestfallen, I'd say, "We're Orthodox. It's just different, that's all." Then they'd say, "Orthodox ... that's kind of like Catholic, isn't it?" and I'd stand up very straight and say, "No, Catholic is kind of like Orthodox!"

Within these memories lie the core issues in my spiritual struggle and journey: the polarization between my immigrant Orthodox and American identities; the fear of questioning too closely or speaking up too clearly lest I be belittled or outcast; the centrality of family participation in church services which, while not understood because they were in *koine* Greek, still managed to instill an awe-filled sense of something very special going on; the bittersweet joy when, once a year for about three minutes, the GIRLS got to be close to Christ in a central ritual of the church.

Over 30 years later, with these early impressions still jangling around inside me, I did something absolutely nonsensical and blatantly impractical: matriculate as the first Orthodox Christian to receive her M.Div. at the local liberal Methodist seminary. I frequently describe my seminary years as feeling like a porcupine passing through a boa constrictor. Yet those four years were the crucible in which God insisted I work through my issues, and my anger, to struggle toward a new freedom in a transformed reality.



Demetra Jacquet

The first thing I did was become more confused than I'd ever been. I found disembodied pieces of Eastern Orthodox Christian theology scattered here and there in Western Christian theology. What was all this fuss about Matthew Fox? His remarkable new ideas seemed like Orthodoxy's oldest news. And then there was Rosemary Ruether — her theology both repulsed and attracted me.

A key skill for sorting things out was to learn to measure my faith by my own yardstick. This meant venturing into radical pluralism, a pluralism which allows absolutists to live in solidarity with pluralists while keeping their absolutism intact — something which sounds basically illogical. Justin Martyr, an apologist in the early Christian church, addressed this question, which centuries later still perplexed modern Western thinkers struggling with Christianity's claim to superiority in a shrinking world.

When asked how non-Christians are to be judged, Justin Martyr answered, (my paraphrase), "Yes, we Christians have the fullness of truth, AND the seed of the Word ("sperma tou logou") IS spread throughout all creation". He stopped short of stating the logical conclusion, "Since WE have the fullness, THEY do not."

My own convictions regarding pluralism coincide with Justin's, in that one need not presume opposites to be mutually exclusive. Rather, two contradictory premises may stand together in paradoxical tension, their resolution left to God, as one of God's mysteries.

Understanding this typically Eastern, pseudo-Dionysian, apophatic insistence that human logic is ultimately inadequate to the mystery of God, was the key to my understanding Orthodoxy. It also was a big step in freeing me to fully embrace both my Orthodoxy and my citizenship in a religiously pluralistic society, and to live in the tension between them. The fullness of my truth is measured by and between me and God, not by and between me and my neighbors. There is also truth in my neighbors, which I celebrate and embrace, and its measurement is God's job, not mine.

I used to bounce uncontrollably between my anger at the Orthodox for not understanding my feminist concerns, and

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my anger at the Western Christians for not appreciating Orthodox theology. I was in a ricochet rut, flailing at my own tradition for what it lacked and at the Western tradition for what it arrogantly presumed.

Then one day, by the grace of God, I stepped to the side to look at myself, and saw I had etched out not what had felt like a bumpy depression between two pits, but surprisingly, a beautiful bridge. I shifted from struggling to prove Orthodox ministry is NOT just for men, to offering joyful witness that it INCLUDES women. I changed from fighting to prove that Christianity is NOT just for Western Christians, to witnessing that it INCLUDES Eastern Christians. The reasons for leaving became the reasons for staying, when I discovered the inner wisdom from God to cease grounding my energy in what is lacking, and embrace the positive realities in my life.

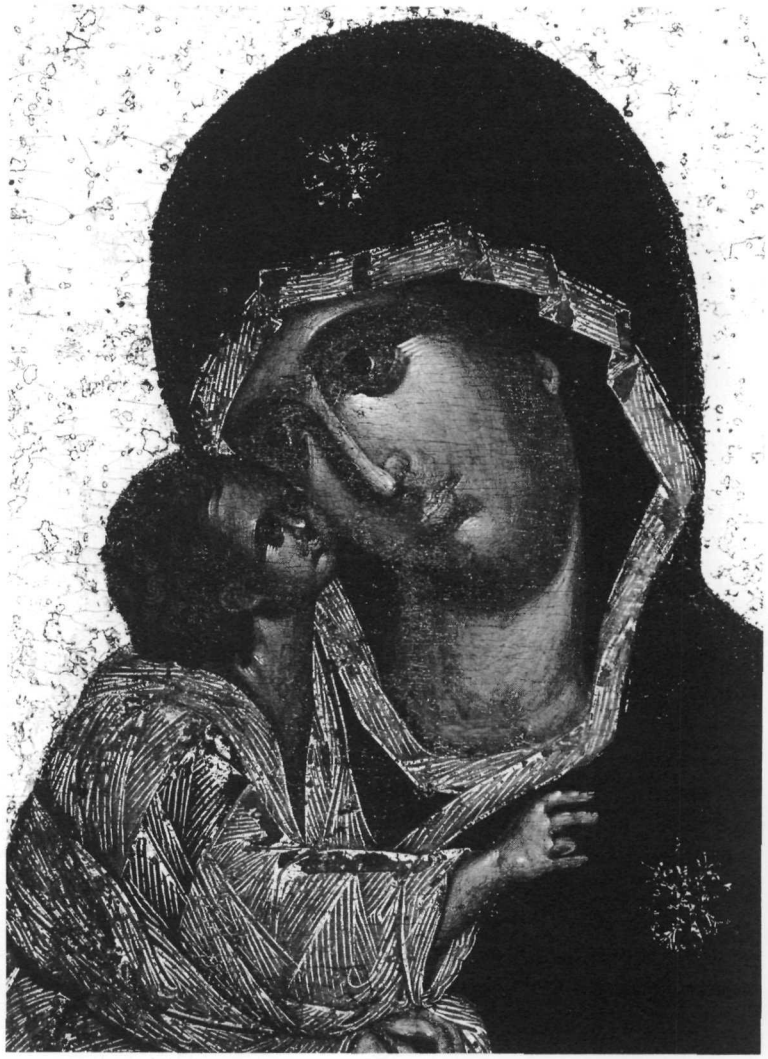
The treasures at each end of the bridge were beckoning me to dance in the paradoxical tension between them, where both dance and dancer vibrate to the limitless, creative movements of the Holy Spirit.

From the ashes of my seminary experience arose a phoenix of supportive ecumenical solidarity, giving me the courage to return to the Orthodox with renewed vigor. As the cataracts of anger dissolved, I could see support within my own faith community. With intentional concentration on Christ, I could joyfully experience a liturgy led by all-male celebrants, knowing that my identity in God runs much deeper than any titles or institutional practices. Encouraged by the ecumenical community and a handful of Orthodox, I dared to trust my own spiritual experiences of God as signposts of reality. This yielded the courage to risk action. Yes, I still see and hear the same old injustices, and there certainly are times when I feel frustrated, disappointed, and that not enough has come too late. But somehow, these times have less power over me, and mysteriously, I have more power over them. Daily I re-choose to focus my energy on promoting parity for Orthodox women in ministry, as well as ushering in authentic global ecumenism, stimulated by moving amidst the harmonious contrast between the two.

Daily I re-choose to focus my energy on promoting parity for Orthodox women in ministry.

I am still Orthodox because of the times like that Good Friday long ago, when the light of God's reality fills me, leaving behind the distortions of the world which torture and destroy.

Trusting my best experiences of God and encouraged by a supportive community, I keep firm footing to dance on my bridge, celebrating more fully who I've chosen to become — a female American Orthodox Christian, who knows it is possible to change things, to live prophetically, and to grow closer to God. TW



The Virgin of the Don, **attributed to Theophanes the Greek (c. 1392).**

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Why I am (still) a Baptist

by Ken Sehested

There was a time when Baptists, like mesquite trees in West Texas, were viewed with annoyance. But somewhere between the Carter and Clinton/Gore administrations, mesquite-grilled food became the culinary rage. And we *Babdists* started learning the social graces.

Since Will Campbell has a fair amount to do with the fact that I'm still a Baptist, I'm tempted to start by mimicking his voice with something like *'cause I'm po' white trash and proud of it.* But Bro. Will is a species all to himself. I'm just happy to be in the same genus.

So I'd best speak first-person. Which is a very Baptist thing to do — and a major reason I am willing, after some serious ancestral interrogation, to lean into the tradition of my childhood nurture. "Testimony" is a treasured activity in Baptist circles and an important reason why I maintain that identity. Testimonies are personal, unscripted narratives of faith. They are stories of conviction, of choices made, both for and against, often under trying circumstances.

The significance of testimony bespeaks the emphasis placed on conversion. In our evangelical passion we have always known what my Roman Catholic friends now say best: disarming the heart and disarming the nations are parallel struggles. As a liturgical genre, testimony is more associated with the laity than with clergy, evidence of our notion of "the priesthood of the believer." The floor is open to anybody, even the young, the untrained, the non-ordained.



Jan Luyken, *Martyrs Mirror*

Anabaptist Dirk Willens, fleeing his pursuers, turns back to rescue one of them who had fallen through the ice. Upon orders, the man he had saved arrested him, and he was burned at the stake on May 16, 1569.

As T.S.Eliot complained, we know too much but are convinced of too little. Testimony is the language of conviction. Testimony involves wombish disclosure, the entanglements of Spirit and flesh. The stories come from the trenches. They summon memories of passion, of risky business, of suffering, but ultimately of joy. They are tales of conception and gestation, birth and rebirth. Death is cheated on a daily basis.

Part of the reason I'm (still) a Baptist is implied in the very name. We Baptists love water music. Our roots stem from the nonconformist traditions in 16th century Continental Europe and 17th century England. Leaders of the "left wing" of the Reformation were convinced, after first-hand reading of Scripture, that baptism was for believers only — no faith by proxy. Their opponents dubbed them *anabaptists*, or rebaptizers. Contrary to popular opinion, the debate wasn't so much about how much water was enough (though the dissenters usually performed the rite by full or partial immersion in water, or by pouring a pitcher of water over the head). The debate was over the question of whether citizenship in the Body of Christ was coterminus with citizenship in the state. The subversive character of divine obedience was framed in dramatic terms, especially so with most of the Continental radicals who also refused on biblical grounds to wield the sword in defense of the state. For good reason, then, these civilly-disobedient believers were cursed as "incendiaries of the commonwealth."

The wedge driven between civil and divine authority, and the ensuing legacy of political dissent, is the singular contribution of these rebaptizers to U.S. history. Roger Williams, founder of the first "Baptist" congregation in England's New World colonies, was driven out of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1635 because of his preaching. The first of four charges in his conviction was that he declared "...we have not our land by patent from the king, but that the natives are the

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Ken Sehested is Executive Director of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America in Atlanta, Georgia.

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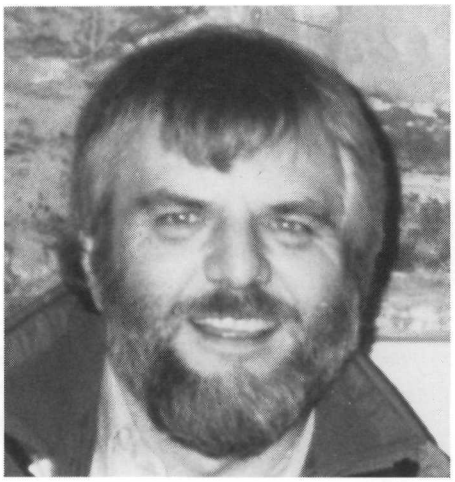
true owners of it, and that we ought to repent of such a receiving of it by patent."

I am a Baptist (still, despite obvious cause for embarrassment) because of a profound metaphor of faith summoned by my rebaptizing ancestors. To the great chagrin of the Luthers, the Calvins and the Zwinglis of the day, these unlettered Anabaptists argued that "salvation by faith alone" was a worthy notion but an insufficient alternative to the tyranny of Roman Catholic sacramental control. The rebaptizers insisted on speaking of *nachfolge Christi,* "following Christ." They sensed that "faith alone" language was too abstract, too devoid of animation, lacking the capacity to indicate the concrete character of discipleship.



Ken Sehested

Historically, Baptists have been urgent apologists for freedom. "Soul competency" is the traditional phrase, meaning each bears both the weight and the privilege of decision. No pope, no bishop, not even any T.V. evangelist can prescribe the terms of faithful living. We are populists, in the best sense of the word, and thus also profoundly multiracial. (At least as a whole, though rarely in part.)

Ironically enough, despite the emphasis on freedom, Baptists are a deeply communal people. Every Baptist churchhouse has a kitchen, and the dishes are well worn. As are the offering plates, because money is not a private prerogative but a covenant commitment. Baptists are also a people of "the Book." This characteristic functions as the tradition (for a notoriously traditionless people) of accountability. In an increasingly rootless and disposable culture, fidelity to Scripture (which includes, in good Jewish fashion, arguing with Scripture) fosters communal identity and the habits of cultural transcendence, forming and informing faith.

Needless to say, being a Baptist can be a confusing (and confused?) enterprise. Our tent stretches across everything from Jesse Jackson to Jesse Helms, from Marian Wright Edelman to Jerry Falwell, from Martin Luther King Jr. to John D. Rockefeller (not to mention my Aunt Len). You have to wonder if this is a confessional tradition or a three-ring circus.

Admittedly, with important exceptions, we are an arrogant and often insular people. The dramatic rise in social power and economic class among Baptists in the U.S. has crippled many of the impulses described above. Episcopal presidents (G. Bush) now summon Baptist preachers (B. Graham) to bless military adventure. We've become "at ease in Zion."

But the sectarian quality — the vestigial memory of God's impending, rending Reign— is still there. Baptists at their best are sectarian, apocalyptic, against the world. Not against *the earth,* mind you (the distinction is crucial); but *the world,* that complex set of arrangements and powers which now rummage creation. At our best, when we sing "This World Is Not My Home" that old gospel hymn functions not as escapist piety but as the subversive prayer of "Thy Kingdom come on earth, as in heaven;" not as pie-in-the-sky dividend but as recollection of Jesus' warning: *In the world you will have tribulation. But be of good cheer...* As I've cautioned my daughters, when you talk about heaven — biblically speaking — you're liable to raise hell.

"You shall know the truth," wrote Flannery O'Connor, paraphrasing another of John's Gospel texts, "and the truth will make you *odd.*" That's why we *Babdists* have always been at our best on the run. Come to think of it, all of us have. TW

General Convention Supplement

The Witness staff prepared a 56-page General Convention supplement which presented new articles and consolidated our pre-Convention reporting. The new material includes a consumer report on the bishops (self-reported and reported by members of the Consultation); a bishops' hall of fame prepared by Mary Lou Suhor; a list of bishops eligible to be the next presiding bishop; a chronology of women's ordination; a response to the bishops' pastoral on race; and a testimony to God's grace by Louie Crew.

Since the supplement was partially financed by book advertisements, we can only mail this supplement first class. If you'd like a copy, send a check for $3 to *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Boulevard, Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226.

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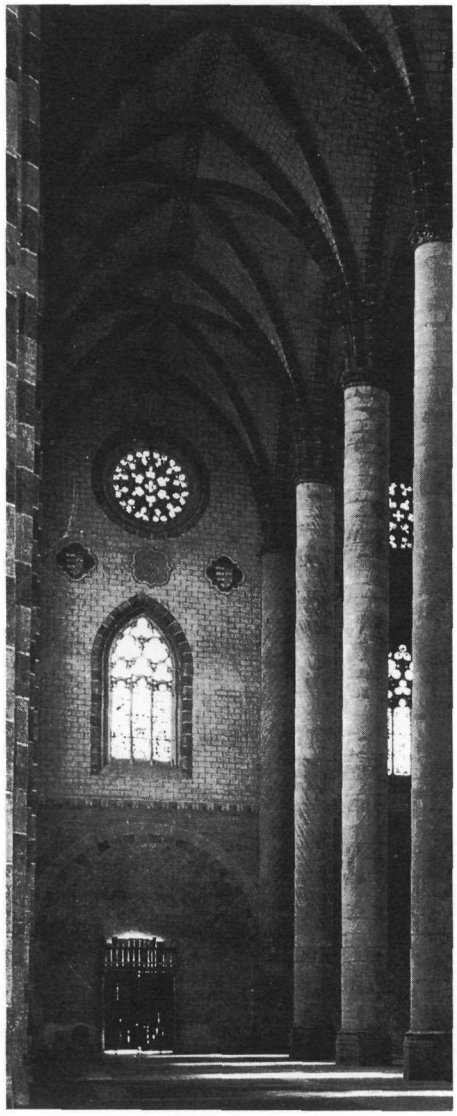
God in improbable places: a Catholic inheritance

by Edwina Gateley

I shall never forget the awe and mystery which captured me as I stood in the great old Cathedral of my home town in England. I was only a child, but deep in my subconscious I knew that God was there — in the ritual, the exotic smell of incense, the tinkling communion bells, the cold grey walls and magnificent pillars that reflected the dazzling colors of the stained glass windows.

I fell in love with this mysterious God who dwelt amidst such ancient splendour. As a teenager I opted to study Latin at school so I could join in singing the hymns and saying the long prayers in the beautiful and moving Latin language (which surely was God's native tongue!). I joined the choir, the Legion of Mary, went to Mass as many times as I possibly could, knelt entranced as the Blessed Sacrament was exposed at Benediction and felt cleansed and pure after my weekly confession. But more important than the Latin, the rituals and the ever-pervading sense of mystery was the certainty of the very real and nourishing relationship I experienced with the God who dwelt within it all. It was with great joy and anticipation that I crept daily through the ancient doors of the great Cathedral hoping to surprise and delight God with my sudden presence. I would talk, whisper and laugh with God's unseen presence for hours. Aware sometimes, in the background, of the yells and shouts of the other children in the nearby school playground, I used to think of how much they were missing out. Almost always, I was alone in the great Cathedral — it was my refuge, my sanctuary, my home, my secret place.



As I grew up, graduated from college, worked as a missionary in Africa and then founded the Volunteer Missionary Movement (VMM) in England in 1969, my experience of church inevitably began to change.

I discovered in Africa that God was *much, much* bigger and all-encompassing than the God whom my own Catholic Church had taught me about. God was already in Africa before I got there — in the eyes of the people whom I had come to teach and in their hospitality, in the banana plantations, the rich red soil and the magnificent sunsets. God was not only in my own great Cathedral at home but was also in a myriad other places that I stumbled upon as my journey continued.

I discovered that the church which I loved was not, after all, the inviable, secure refuge I had once experienced; I discovered that its priests and leaders were mere mortals who, like the rest of us, erred and sinned and were unjust.

When I began to work to found the VMM — a lay overseas missionary movement — I ran into clerical and ecclesiastical opposition which left me amazed and not a little angry. It was clear that a good number of Catholic clergy did not want a woman — young and lay, to boot — to assume such ministerial and leadership responsibility in the church. In spite of the opposition, the VMM grew and flourished and has sent over 1,200 men and women to work in 26 countries.

My understanding of church matured. It was quite obvious that as a woman I did not really have a place in it except as a helper. But my personal experience of being a Catholic was definitely not confined to "helping." I went on to obtain a degree in theology and to found Genesis house — a house of hospitality and nurturing for women involved in prostitution in Chicago. I had spent over a year on the streets of Chicago trying to listen to and understand the prostitutes. It was

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Edwina Gately is currently writing, advocating for women engaged in prostitution and engaged in giving talks, conferences and retreats internationally.

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scary and risky but the God whom I had first encountered in the great Cathedral of my home town came with me. The relationship that had been forged amidst the Latin chants, the incense and the rituals was as alive in the streets of Chicago as it had ever been within the Cathedral walls.

I began to speak in public about discipleship, spirituality and prayer, and wrote three books. And then came the questions: "How can you, such a strong and experienced woman, remain a Catholic?" "How can you be part of an institution which denies women's rights and which preaches from a male hierarchical structure?"



Edwina Gateley

I have pondered long and deep on such questions. And always my reflection takes me back to my childhood and the great grey Cathedral where I first fell in love. This church, for all its sinfulness and oppression, is as much mine as the pope's and the priests'. It is my inheritance. Its mysteries, its rituals and its struggles all belong to me. I cannot, will not let go of all that gave me such joy and amazement in my youth and which later challenged me to share my life with the villagers in Africa and the prostitutes and street people in Chicago. It seems clear to me that God, too, has to struggle to touch people's lives from within our broken and inadequate institutions. God does not flee our churches because they are sinful — God, on the contrary, is ever busy in impossible and improbable places!

I have no illusions about my Catholic Church — but I am also aware of the diamond in the dung heap and I do not forget the wisdom and the grace I have received from my church. It was the vehicle which birthed my spiritual self.

I often use an analogy to describe my relationship with the Catholic Church. It is that of my senile grandfather whom I love. He is now deaf and blind and petulant and selfish in his old age. He hangs on to his lost authority and status and makes pompous pronouncements to people, many of whom no longer listen seriously — the man, after all, is out of touch. Nevertheless, he is my grandfather, his blood runs in my veins. From his knee I learnt his wisdom and his stories. I will always cherish him and remember all he taught me. I will not destroy him or abandon him, but nor will I die with him. I suppose, for all his deafness and blindness and petulance, I will always love him and be amazed at how God, too, continues to flow through his veins.

Yes, I am a Catholic and, like my church, ever in need of conversion. We do our best with the little we have; gradually we let go of the rites which are no longer life-giving. I certainly am a different Catholic from the one I was as a teenager. If we are open, the God we start out with will not be the God we end up with. Unfortunately, the church I've ended up with looks pretty much like the church I started with — and that causes great sadness for me. However, the great grey Cathedral still stands and the smell of incense still hangs in its silent air. The pews are mostly empty, the singing thin and faint. But I know deep in my soul that God, powerful and enduring, dwells there in the midst of all of it. TW

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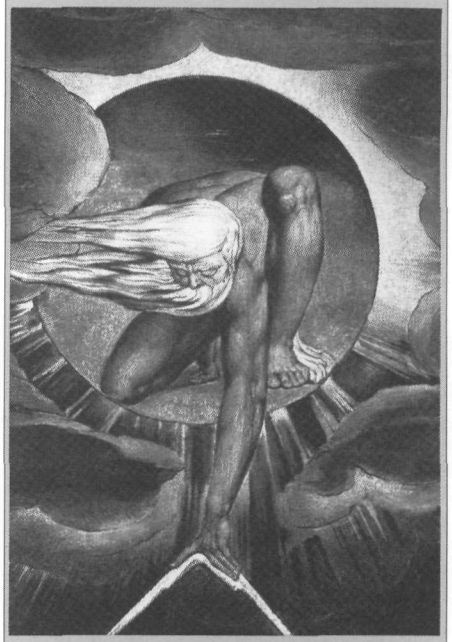

One Lord, one faith, one baptism?

The Witness is now offering its 75th Anniversary video package for $40!

The package includes six segments and a study guide which makes it perfect for an Advent or Lenten series.

The content is taken from a conference held at Trinity Episcopal School of Ministry where *Witness* readers had a chance to articulate their vision in the face of passionate questions from Trinity's students and faculty.

By examining the authority of scripture, the traditional way, multiculturalism, and feminism, as well as issues of faith, sexual orientation and racism, participants could evaluate whether we share a Lord. This video allows viewers to express their views within the context of passionate Episcopalians on opposite ends of the spectrum.

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Holy communists

by Kenneth Leech

I have been a socialist as long as I have been a Christian, since I was about 16. My concern with revolutionary politics and with the quest for an intelligible religious faith occurred at the same time. The most important early influence on my thinking was the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre, then starting his academic career in Manchester in the mid 1950s, and a member of the same parish. What attracted me to the Anglican tradition (and keeps me here) was its apparent ability to hold together a sacramental spirituality, social vision and intellectual integrity.

In 1958 I moved to London to study history, and have been in the East End of London for most of my adult life. The East End has played a major role in the growth of Anglican socialism. It was here that Stewart Headlam founded the Guild of St. Matthew in 1877. The GSM was committed both to the renewal of eucharistic communion and to the common ownership of land. Some have called it the first explicitly socialist group in Britain. Headlam was the most controversial priest of the late Victorian age: he stood bail for Oscar Wilde, supported the music hall and the ballet (for which his license to officiate was removed), and said that "those who assist at holy communion are bound to be holy communists." Other members of the GSM included Charles Marson, author of *God's Cooperative Society*, and Thomas Hancock who called the Magnificat "the hymn of the universal social revolution." Although small, the impact of the GSM in shaping an Anglican social and socialist conscience was very significant.



Kenneth Leech

Here later were people like John Groser, the best known priest in East London in the 1930s, who was active in anti-fascist struggles and campaigns over housing. Groser and his congregation were members of the Catholic Crusade, a revolutionary socialist group founded by Conrad Noel in 1918. In the same tradition was Stanley Evans whose book *The Social Hope of the Christian Church* (1965) remains a valuable guide to the movement. Evans, parish priest of Holy Trinity, Dalston, in the 1950s, was the key figure in the Society of Socialist Clergy and Ministers, while nearby John Rowe and others led a call of the Society of the Catholic Commonwealth, whose main base was in Cambridge, Mass. In 1960 the Christian Socialist Movement was formed and it has increased its membership recently among Labour Members of Parliament including both John Smith, the former Labour leader, and Tony Blair, the present one.

It used to be said that if the Church of England was "the Tory Party at prayer," the Anglo-Catholics represented the socialists at Mass. This was never true: the socialists and radicals within the Catholic movement were always a minority, and were regarded as an embarrassment, though claimed as heroes after their death. (Compare the treatment of Dorothy Day and Martin Luther King, Jr.!) Nevertheless there was a vigorous socialist wing among the heirs of the Oxford Movement, and it influenced the Church of England as a whole (the Episcopal Church to a lesser extent, though Bernard Markwell's recent study *The Anglican Left,* Carlson 1991, is worth looking at in this connection). By 1900 a vague kind of socialism, of a reformist and respectable type, probably reflected the social viewpoint of most of the English bishops, many of whom were members of the very influential Christian Social Union.

The respectable stream of Anglican socialism came to a climax in the work of William Temple who was Archbishop of York and then of Canterbury and died in 1944. His book *Christianity and the Social Order* (1942) helped lay the foundations of the modern "welfare state," a phrase which he coined. (His private secretary, Dorothy Howell-Thomas, who typed the work, is still a member of the Jubilee Group.)

So there is a rich tradition, which recently has been augmented by many evangelicals, Roman Catholics and Christians from other traditions. However, the real strength of Christian socialism has always been at the grass roots where the movement has been formed and nourished in the process of concrete struggles. Twenty years ago a group of socialist Christians in East London set up the Jubilee Group as an informal support structure. Within a few years it had grown into

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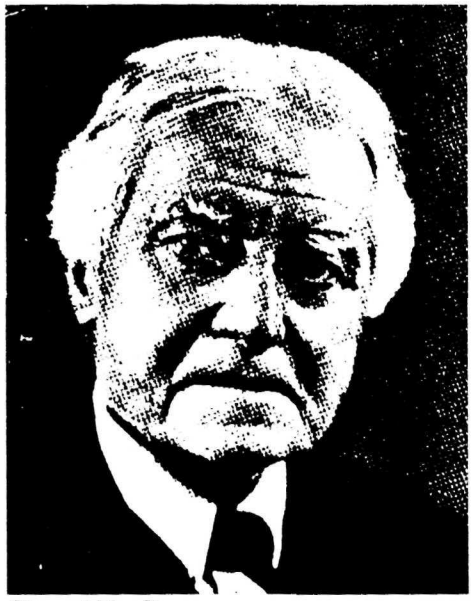
a loose national (and now international) network of socialist Christians, mainly within the Anglican tradition.

For the first time in many years, the socialist Christian tradition is being portrayed as alive and well by the secular media. Some writers are even using the word "tradition." Speaking of such figures as William Temple and R. H. Tawney, Alan Watkins in *The Independent on Sunday* (24 July) told us: "It is to this tradition that Mr. Blair belongs."



Stewart Headlam

It was on this same day that the International League of Religious Socialists met at Thaxted Church in Essex to honour Conrad Noel, the famous "red vicar" there from 1910 to 1942. Modern socialists have a lot to learn from Noel. He saw that "socialism in action" was not possible without socialism in theory, that "the historic principle of solidarity" was meaningless unless it was allied to a struggle against the structures of capitalism, that "the bonds of common purpose" could only be built on recognition of the forces working against that purpose, and that "community" had no meaning apart from politics. (All the phrases in quotation marks are from a recent speech by Tony Blair.) Noel was not guilty of that impatience with theory which Tawney saw as one of the major weaknesses of British socialism — and perhaps of Anglicanism also.

It is just 36 years since I came to the East End as a student. While I hope that my faith and politics have matured, I remain an Anglican and a socialist. I do not believe the conventional wisdom that socialism is extinct. Indeed, as opposing forces collapse, I believe that capitalism will assume more cruel and barbarous, though sophisticated, forms. Short-term prospects for an alternative to market-led capitalism, or for revolution in its usual sense, are bleak. There is a lot of rethinking to be done by people on the left, and Christians need to contribute to this process.

Yet I am increasingly convinced that there is no likelihood of a smooth shift towards a more egalitarian and more just society within the present structures of capitalism of the kind that socialists in the Labour Party have favoured. This must present the church, as (actually or potentially) one of the few remaining oppositional groups in western societies, with major and painful questions. In many parts of the world, it is being forced to take sides with poor and oppressed people, and against the powerful and privileged, and this option is increasingly going to shape its future in the developed world as cities and communities become more divided and polarized.

In his last book, *Jesus the Heretic,* published in 1940, Conrad Noel wrote:

It may seem strange that in a world crisis like the present I put forward so few practical suggestions and have no immediate solution of our troubles, but an ounce of fundamental theory is worth a pound of superficial fact. We must go back to first principles and to our first principle which is God and his righteousness, but that will need not only sincerity and emotion but severe mental discipline.

His words remain true.

Let us pray for and support one another. TW

Back issues available

The following back issues of *The Witness* are available for study groups or personal use. Study guides are available upon request when ordering multiple copies of a single issue.

Alternative ways of doing church 8-9/94
"Be ye perfect": From perfectionism to prophecy 3/93
Birthing in the face of a dragon 12/91
Caesar and the widows and orphans 4/93
Christians and animal rights 10/93
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Native religious freedom

Freedom of religion was named this year's top legislative priority by the National Congress of American Indians. They urge support of the Native American Free Exercise of Religion Act of 1993 (NAFERA), Senate Bill 1021. The bill guarantees protection of Native American sacred sites, religious use of peyote by Indians, and religious rights of Native prisoners; streamlines the federal permit system for religious use of eagle feathers; and restores the "compelling state interest test" as the legal standard for protecting Native religious freedom. Write senators asking them to co-sponsor the bill.

Bishop gets death threats

Death threats against Roman Catholic Bishop Samuel Ruiz of San Cristobal, Chiapas, Mexico have intensified, despite the successful conclusion of the peace talks between the Zapatistas and the Mexican government. Ruiz has been targeted by wealthy land interests in the region because of his outspoken defense of indigenous peoples, his founding of a center to document human rights abuses, and his efforts as a peace negotiator, according to H.O.N.O.R. (Honor Our Neighbors' Origins and Rights). H.O.N.O.R. asks that letters be sent to the Mexican government and the Papal Nuncio, expressing solidarity with Ruiz and demanding a public guarantee of his personal safety. Write: President of Mexico, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, Presidencia de la Republica, Palacio Nacional Colonia Centro, 06067 Mexico, DF; and Apostolic Delegate, Most Reverend Girolamo Piigione, Juan Pablo II No. 118, Col. Guadalupe Inn, Deleg. Alvaro Obregon, 01020 Mexico, DF.

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Short takes

Documentary on forgiveness

On October 26, the Discovery Channel is presenting a one-hour documentary on forgiveness. The program depicts the spiritual journeys of three people who have survived the violent deaths of loved ones and have since begun ministries working with offenders and opposing capital punishment. Marietta Jaeger, promotion manager for *The Witness*, is one of those interviewed.

U.S. land reform

Equity Trust, Inc. offers individuals and institutions the opportunity to participate in a voluntary American land reform initiative. Donors are invited to 1) sign the Equity Pledge, promising that when they sell their property, they will donate a designated percentage of the social appreciation in its value to the Equity Trust Fund, which will use it to provide loans to community development and conservation projects in disadvantaged communities; or 2) make a land gift by retaining a life estate and donating the remainder interest, or by simply donating a property. For more information contact Equity Trust, Inc., 539 Beach Pond Road, Voluntown, CT 06384.

Christmas in Mexico

Shoestrings & Grace, a faith-based activist organization, is organizing a Christmas caravan to Mexico to carry vital resources to communities and to demonstrate solidarity with human rights efforts. Destinations include Christian base communities in Hidalgo, human rights organizations in Chiapas, and ecumenical human rights centers in Mexico City. To join the journey (Dec. 17 through Jan. 7) or help gather resources, contact Shoestrings & Grace, 58 North Ave., #3, Owego, NY 13827; 607-687-5449.

Violence at home

"It is a fact that during and after the Vietnam War, American homicides jumped 42 percent. Isn't this the price we pay for killing millions of Indochinese? More to the point, isn't it inevitable that when the U.S. butchers people abroad, we kill one another at home? Is this the key to the bloodshed on our streets? ... If the government cheapens life and attacks it — the people will also."

Phil Berrigan, *Pax Christi Spirit of Life Plowshares Newsletter*, 3/28/94

Corporations questioned on gun sales

"Concerned about the spread of violence in the United States, 15 religious institutional shareholders submitted resolutions to K MART and WAL-MART about their retail sales of rifles, shotguns and handguns, the first time religious investors have questioned major corporations about domestic weapons sales. As the largest domestic retailers of firearms, together K MART and WAL-MART made $81 million of total $488 million annual rifle sales and $77 million of $433 million annual shotgun sales in 1992. ... Religious investors withdrew the resolutions after the companies agreed to review their weapons sales, including the types of weapons sold, procedures to ensure weapons are sold only to responsible adults and the possibility of halting weapons sales."

Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, 4/94

Alternative investments

The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility now offers a quarterly "Clearinghouse on Alternative Investments Newspacket." The newspackets include announcements of important community investment events, reviews of community investment publications and resources, updates on community groups seeking financing, profiles of investors, legislative reports, and other related news. To place an order ($50/year) or for a free sample issue, contact Gary Brouse at ICCR, (212) 870-2316.

Parallel understandings: a retrospective

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

When we initiated "Art & Society" three years ago, our premise was that there is a great deal of contemporary visual art that has an affinity with progressive Christianity, through similar spiritual understandings and shared social goals. We explained that this art takes many and diverse forms—most not recognizable within the traditional understanding of "religious" art; perhaps some not even immediately recognizable as "art"! We suggested that there is a large gap, attributable to historical and political factors, that has kept socially concerned visual artists and socially concerned Christians separate from, and unaware of, each other.

Recent political events have seemingly polarized these two communities even further. Fundamentalist—and even mainstream—religious leaders, and their political representatives, continue to rail against "blasphemous," "subversive," "homosexual" or "pornographic" artists (adjectives often used interchangeably) and the use of public money for their work. Funding for the National Endowment for the Arts and many state arts councils has been cut back; galleries have had to close; exhibitions have been canceled. In response to what they perceive as a reactionary political attack on basic creative and expressive freedoms, artists have consequently produced works even more likely to cause outrage among their opponents.

Blaise Tobia and **Virginia Maksymowicz,** Philadelphia artists, edit the Art & Society Section of *The Witness.*

At least some of this polarization can be attributed to a mutual lack of understanding. Few contemporary artists have any association with traditional organized religions. They are, in fact, likely to see religious establishments as sources of



Blaise Tobia ©1994

Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

repression and hypocrisy. Few people active in organized religions have any understanding of the history or goals of contemporary visual art—especially that portion which might be characterized as "experimental" or "avant-garde." But the greater cause is essentially political. The same gap that separates "left" and "right" within religions, separates the religious right even more profoundly from the non-religious, even anti-religious, left. There is simply no shared language, and a great deal of suspicion.

Artists have become used to challenging norms and pushing issues to extremes as a means of revealing truth and gaining understanding. Experiments with the nature of representation initiated more than a century ago have led to experiments with the nature of art itself and its relationship to society.

Yet—although they may not be religious—many contemporary artists have reached parallel understandings with contemporary interpreters of religion. They understand that form and substance are inseparable (see "Gods of Money," *The Witness,* March 1992). They understand that the "medium" is very much the "message"—that the attitudes and contexts surrounding an artwork may communicate more forcefully, and perhaps more accurately, than the artwork itself (see "America's Finest?", March 1994). They believe that history should inform contemporary practice, rather than dominate it (see "Challenging the Canons," July 1994). And they know that languages, whether verbal or visual, change with time, and that traditions and stories must be continually re-interpreted or they will lose their meaning and their power (see "Liberation Symbology," March 1993).

This is our last regular column for *The Witness*. After three years, we believe we have had our say. We hope that your concept of contemporary art may have been expanded—perhaps even somewhat transformed. We hope that you may be able to resist the tendency to stereotype contemporary art or to believe that an unbroachable chasm exists between the communities of art and faith.

We welcome any comments you may have for us, and we look forward to seeing continuing coverage of the arts in *The Witness.* TW

art and society

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Of God, family, and earth

by Julie A. Wortman

"Do you think that I have come to bring peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! From now on five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; they will be divided: father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter -in-law against mother-in-law."

He also said to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you immediately say, 'It is going to rain'; and so it happens. And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, 'There will be scorching heat'; and it happens. You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time? And why do you not judge for yourselves what is right?"

— Luke 12: 51-57



Logo of the 1994 General Convention

This past August, deputies and bishops from the Episcopal Church's 118 domestic and foreign jurisdictions gathered in Indianapolis, Ind., for the triennial meeting of the church's governing General Convention. From the beginning I was troubled by the Convention theme: "With Water and the Holy Spirit, Proclaiming One God + One Family + One Earth."

It is the kind of triumphalistic slogan that is invoked by a fearful institution. Proclaiming *one* God, *one* family, *one* earth is insisting too much on a kind of unity that this General Convention could not uphold, nor, perhaps, should have wished to.

Whose God?

Proclaiming *one God* invokes controversy by trying to mask it. So-called "traditionalists" have been saying for several years now that there are in the Episcopal Church two (at least) different understandings of who God is and who we are to be as God's people (the Prayer Book Society talks about two different "religions"). These different understandings have accounted for both the relentless division and mind-boggling "compromise" in much of the debate and legislation of recent General Conventions, especially around the topics of homosexual behavior and women's ordination.

Those who celebrate (almost exclusively, it seems) the God who banished Adam and Eve from the Garden have in recent years insisted that for them to feel included they must have the right to exclude others, if not from church membership at least from ordination. These folks have been relatively successful because the people who look for guidance to the God who led Jesus to embrace the excluded have allowed themselves to be held hostage to the apparent contradiction of seeming to push the excluders away when they insist on inclusivity ("reverse discrimination" anyone?).

Happily, this past summer in Indianapolis we finally began to see some honest public recognition that these theological differences have concrete implications for the lives of real people and should not be swept under the rug by expansively proclaiming *one God*.

A case in point occurred during one Convention press conference when a reporter asked Frank Griswold, bishop of Chicago, if bishops who continue to exercise "local option" in ordaining qualified gay men and lesbians to the diaconate and priesthood while "continuing the dialogue" on human sexuality wouldn't be unfairly acting to "resolve" the discussion in favor of accepting homosexual behavior.

"We are living with very different perspectives on human sexuality grounded in very different ways of approaching the question theologically," Griswold had the guts and good grace to respond. "Some see the Word most active in terms of Scripture and tradition and others see the Word most active in terms of human experience and what's actually being lived by men and women in our dioceses and congregations. My sense is that there is no way to reconcile these different perspectives. I have no sense

Vital Signs

Julie A. Wortman is managing editor of *The Witness*.

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that at any moment, ever, we're going to produce a statement that is going to include all perspectives in some kind of happy harmony."

The more fundamental question is, Griswold continued, "Can we as a community of faith live with this difference in perspective and perceive in these differences traces of Christ? If we can, then we can continue as a community in communion."

As Chester Talton, suffragan bishop of Los Angeles, candidly observed about the same matter in an earlier press conference, "We have been reluctant to be too confrontational, but this may well be the time to confront these issues — perhaps we might have to allow people to leave."

One family?

Sometimes divorce is a good thing for all concerned, which was part of my problem with proclaiming the church to be *one Family.* But beyond this, the "family" image fosters the very stereotypes about who is in charge and who belongs that excluded groups in this church have been fighting for years.

No matter how much we acknowledge the infinite variety of household configurations people live in these days, the white patriarchal model of husband (the head of the household), wife and children, is the one people think of first when the term "family" is used. It is a model focused on power and property, on presumptions of who is in charge, who has unquestioned sexual access to whom and on bloodlines that insure or invalidate inheritance. In this kind of family, all too often, the unacceptable members run the risk of being confined to the attic or locked in the closet.

And there were plenty of indications in Indianapolis that this church continues to live out of this unjust model of relationship. Witness the Convention's decision to prohibit the Church Insurance Company from selling dioceses health insurance coverage for the domestic partners of their clergy and lay employees because such an action might precipitously

continued on page 23

Sex — getting it straight?

Anticipation was high on the first legislative day of the 1994 General Convention when the bishops began to discuss the final (fifth) draft of "Continuing the Dialogue: A Pastoral Teaching of the House of Bishops to the Church as the Church Considers Issues of Human Sexuality," the document mandated by the 1991 Phoenix General Convention in an effort to foster churchwide examination of the "discontinuity" between the church's traditional teaching on sexual morality and the experience of its members.

In 1991 the bishops had been unable to talk about human sexuality without losing their tempers. This time the debate was considerably more cordial, but the basic divisions had not disappeared and the "discontinuity" recognized in Phoenix went unresolved. (Ethicist John M. Gessell, who was honored at Convention by the Episcopal Peace Fellowship as the 1994 recipient of the John Nevin Sayre Award, takes exception to the term "discontinuity." "What is really being referred to here is the authentic experience of many church people distinct from that of 'traditional marriage,'" Gessell said. "The dialogue should embrace the two as equals.")

From the beginning, of course, the pastoral was a compromise document. Its drafters, which in addition to bishops included lay and clergy deputies, represented a wide spectrum of viewpoints and various drafts had been reviewed and commented upon by the bishops along the way. But conservatives who were fearful that the document could be construed to be affirming of gay and lesbian relationships still persevered in winning approval for amendments that diminished that possibility, for changing the phrase "Pastoral Teaching" to "Pastoral Study Document" and for attaching an "Affirmation" statement written by John MacNaughton, the bishop of West Texas, that condemned all sexual relationships outside of marriage, including between persons of the same sex.

The next day, John Spong, bishop of Newark took a point of personal privilege to read a counter-affirmation stating that sexual orientation is "morally neutral," marriage is an "honorable vocation for some of God's people" and that the "faithful, monogamous, committed" relationships of gays and lesbians are also worthy of being honored.

Close to 60 bishops present signed the Spong statement. More than a hundred bishops, many not present and nearly half retired, had signed the MacNaughton statement. When Martin Townsend, bishop of Easton (Maryland) moved to attach the Spong statement to the "Continuing the Dialogue" document, conservatives balked, apparently concluding it would be better to circulate the amended pastoral without either statement attached than to risk wider circulation of the Spong statement.

Would approval of the document change anything? Predictably, bishops in the "MacNaughton" camp said they believed "continuing the dialogue" meant that there would now be a moratorium on ordaining homosexual persons and blessing their committed relationships. Equally predictably, no one in the "Spong" camp said that this was their understanding. — *J. W.*



M.O.R. Stamps

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Women's victories in both houses

After rancorous debate in the House of Bishops, the 1994 General Convention pledged itself to earnest pursuit of ways to implement the canons on women's ordination in those five dioceses (Eau Claire, Fond du Lac, Fort Worth, San Joaquin and, possibly, Quincy) where women are categorically barred from seeking or exercising a ministry as priests or bishops. The committee appointed to pursue that conversation will report back to the bishops in 1995.

During the debate that led to this compromise, the male bishops opposed to women priests and bishops expressed outrage that anyone would challenge their right to bar women from ordination to these orders. The canons in question, however, plainly state that the provisions shall be "equally applicable" to men and women.

"How dare you?" demanded Fort Worth's coadjutor, Jack Iker, shaking his finger at members of the Episcopal Women's Caucus (EWC) observing the debate from the gallery.

"What is this dialogue to be about if I'm not to be given an equal footing with you, that I hold a theological conviction as you do? I am tired of being intimidated by a radical feminist agenda for this church."

Members of the EWC said later that Iker and the other bishops who refuse to implement the canons can expect to begin arguing the matter in ecclesiastical court if this latest dialogue reaches, once again, an impasse.

"For the past 18 years the bishops have protected a handful of their members from the consequences of their own behavior at grave cost to the church," said Carol Cole Flanagan, a member of the EWC's General Convention legislative team. "While the House of Bishops may be held captive by melodramatic performances, violent rhetoric and pathological behavior, the rest of the church does not have to collude in it. We left Convention thankful for the increasing strength of women and their friends whom God is leading out of bondage."

Flanagan and other EWC observers called this latest gathering of the church's decisionmakers "a women's Convention," and not only because the Convention's Sunday eucharist focused on celebrating women's ministries.

At the top of the EWC's list of legislative successes was passage of an amended set of revisions to the church's disciplinary canons for clergy, which will affect how the church responds to instances of clergy sexual exploitation. This is the first major rewriting of these canons since World War I.

According to Long Island deputy Robert Royce, the principal drafter of the revisions, these canons have until now been directed mainly at "theological" offenses, not cases of sexual and physical abuse.

"I was striving for a process that addresses the needs of the victims," said Minnesota deputy Sally Johnson, chancellor of her diocese and the principal author of the extensive amendments the joint legislative committee made to the proposed revision before it reached the legislative floor. [Ed. note: Johnson will be reflecting on the revisions in our November issue.]

The new revisions adopted by the Convention eliminate the statute of limitations for exploitation cases involving minors and expand the five-year statute of limitations in adult cases.

"Under these revisions clergy will not be protected from an appropriate charge," commented deputy Gay Jennings of Ohio, a strong supporter of the amended revisions.

In related actions, the Convention renewed funding for the Committee on Sexual Exploitation, approved an "800" number to provide referrals to victim advocates and funding for anti-sexual exploitation training.

In a joint session of bishops, deputies and Episcopal Church Women devoted to exploring sexism, Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning called for concrete action to combat discrimination against women.

"I think when there are vacancies in congregations bishops of this church have a deep responsibility to make certain that women are included in the search process for every vacancy in the church," Browning said. "When I consecrated Barbara Harris, Jane Dixon and Mary Adelia McLeod, I realized the sexist language that is in that service. And I say to you, on the issue of sexism, that at every level of this institution we need to be intentional about making a change."

The Convention also approved the development of "expansive language texts," proposed a number of women for inclusion in the calendar of "saints" (Julia Chester Emery, Macrina, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Amelia Bloomer, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman and Hildegard), strengthened its 1988 pro-choice statement on abortion and called on the U.N. to create a tribunal to investigate human rights violations of 200,000 Korean women used by Japan as sex slaves during World War II.

"Resolutions on gun control, violence and children at risk also commanded our attention," Flanagan said. The Children's Defense Fund's Marian Wright Edelman, in a forum address called on the church to mobilize a "massive moral witness" against gun-related violence and the neglect of the young.

"One of several actions proposed by this Convention in response is the establishment of a Children's Ministry Fund in each diocese to expand this work," Flanagan said. — *J.W.*

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"resolve" the dialogue on human sexuality, never mind that this church is on record as favoring universal health care. Likewise, Kwasi Thornell, an African American priest from Washington, D.C., lodged a protest in the House of Deputies because, as at the 1991 General Convention, few priests of color were standing at the altar at the daily eucharists. "With intention," Thornell said, "it is not hard to be inclusive."

Or take note of the Convention's refusal to approve the preparation of educational materials specifically aimed at reducing the incidence of suicide among gay and lesbian youth for fear of suggesting that we can accept a son or daughter who is *not heterosexual.*

If nothing else, the fact that clergy sexual exploitation has generated the need for massive revision of the disciplinary canons should indicate that the image of family — an image that breeds inappropriate expectations of intimacy and renders women and children disproportinatley vulnerable to being considered sexually available by men conditioned to believe such access is their right — is not the self-image the church should be adopting if it wants to be respectfully and justly inclusive.

"Community" does a better job of implying the equality, diversity, common commitment and mutal accountability people are looking for and, I'm glad to say, there was also much evidence of vital and faithful church community in Indianapolis this summer. In elections to the nominating committee for a new presiding bishop, the church's executive council and other bodies we saw persons of color and women elected in more than token numbers. We also saw legislative committees take seriously the testimony they heard in open hearings. As a result, much of the meat was restored to the bare-bones budget that the Executive Council had proposed, a budget that would have virtually put an end to the national church's involvement in world mission [see page 25]. Ethnic ministries and cross-cultural education also received support. And new disciplinary canons were adopted that improve the church's process for adjudicating cases of clergy sexual misconduct in a manner that also respects the needs and concerns of victims/survivors.

The "family" image fosters the very stereotypes about who is in charge and who belongs that excluded groups in this church have been fighting for years.

One earth, many worlds

Finally, I was worried that the proclamation of *one Earth* was too naive a declaration in these troubled times. We may live on the same globe, but, as the missing deputation from Haiti could have told us, we live in several different worlds — first, second, third and fourth.

During an evening address to Convention participants Archbishop Desmond Tutu said that if nations like the new South Africa are to have any chance of achieving self-reliance and propserity they must be given some relief from the "oppressive debt" that they've incurred as they have endeavored to feed, clothe, house and educate their people. Just a six-month moratorium on interest payments would make a dramatic difference. (Tutu suggested that debts should be cancelled for countries that demonstrate they are moving toward democracy, improving their human rights records and will use the money saved to benefit ordinary people.) "We are a Jubilee people," Tutu exclaimed, "and Jubilee in the Bible is giving people another chance!"



Helen Siegl

But can a predominately first-world church that appears to be more acquainted with a theology of poverty than with a theology of abundance accept the invitation to live a Jubilee life?

Amazingly, with very little fanfare, the deputies and bishops in Indianapolis this summer responded in the affirmative by passing a resolution committing the church to participation in "Jubilee 2,000," an initiative that calls for making the year 2000 a Jubilee Year incorporating the biblical imperatives of debt forgiveness, environmental renewal and human liberation.

"A striking feature of debt cancellation discussions is that while some of us fret about whether such a strategy is realistic in the world of high finance, some banks holding large debts from nations in the South have already begun restructuring those debts so radically that the results come close to debt cancellation," said Titus Pressler, one of the resolution's strongest supporters. "Jubilee 2,000's resolve on debt is actually quite modest, simply calling the church to affirm and strengthen current initiatives to reduce and cancel debts owed by the poor both internationally and within the U.S."

Maybe we do have some hope of interpreting the present time and judging what is right.

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Jubilee — an international cry

Christians in Asia and Africa, as well as a group of U.S. study groups, are eyeing Jubilee as the biblical text most germane to the pursuit of justice in our times. During World War II, "Jesus is Lord" was the radical assertion of the Barmen Declaration. Under South African apartheid, "Neither Jew nor Greek" challenged the prevailing ideology. Today's crisis may best be redressed by cancellation of debts, the freeing of slaves and the redistribution of lands called for in the Jubilee.

Chung Hyun Kyung, Korean theologian honored at the ECPC General convention dinner, is editing a Kairos document being compiled by Asian and African theologians. They are preparing for 1998, the 500th anniversary of European/American exploitation.

"We want to theologize the meaning of these 500 years of colonialism," Chung said. "We have several demands to the first world. The first is the cleaning up of our debt, which is not our debt — it was taken from us. There is no peace with this debt. Second thing we ask, return all our art from western museums — they stole this from us.

"This is the most cutting edge of theology now, because we are not only working against colonialism, we want to lift up that we triumphantly survived and we liberated ourselves. We want to honor the spirituality which we have. So this is time for honoring all these people, our ancestors, who went ahead of us."

Chung added that the Kairos group is planning an informational street theater which will travel internationally with the support of churches throughout the world.

"This is a joint adventure, not the just the third world people accusing you of what you have done. We have compassion for you. We have to see how our sufferings are connected. Who benefits from our suffering?

"In the first world maybe what you need is the theology of the letting go. And theology of letting go will eventually become liberation theology of the first world. Without this letting go, I don't know how you have any empty space to worship God or spirit."

Between 1992 and 1994, Christian peace groups in the U.S. participated in a Kairos process which resulted On The Way: From Kairos to Jubilee. Released on Pentecost this year, the U.S. document focusses on children, economic injustice, racism and the need for a Jubilee for land and people. The document specifically calls for release of the third world debt and recognition of the bondage debt creates in U.S. cities as well as in middle class households with overextended credit cards.

It reads, in part: "The Jubilee regulations are anything but naive. They foresee that capital consolidates capital. They provide inventive mechanisms which restore lands to families driven off by debt. Against consultation the regulations affirm access to the land as an inalienable right, a corollary of God's ownership."

Support for the Asian/African Kairos process can be sent to Chung Hyun Kyung, Dept. of Christian Studies, EWHA Women's University, Soeul, South Korea. The U.S. Kairos document is available through Pax Christi, 348 E. 10th St., Erie, PA 16503; (814) 453-3495.

— Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

As we go to press, a complete accounting of General Convention legislation is not yet available. However, resolutions were passed:

Gay/lesbian concerns

• calling for study of the theological foundations and pastoral issues involved in the development of rites blessing same-sex unions;

• prohibiting discrimination in access to ordination based on sexual orientation;

• calling for sexual orientation protection in the Federal Civil Rights Act;

Women

• calling for continued study and development of supplemental expansive-language materials;

• condemning violence against women and mandating efforts to raise awareness of this issue;

• calling for reparations for victims and families of Korean and other women exploited as sex slaves during WW II;

Book of Common Prayer

• finalizing approval of Jonathan Daniels' commemoration in the calendar and proposing commemorations for Paul Jones, Julia Chester Emery, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Macrina, four 19th-century women liberators and prophets (Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Amelia Bloomer, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman);

Anti-racism

• providing funding for historic black colleges and Hispanic seminarians;

• urging recruitment of people of color for ordination and for lay ministry;

• encouraging church bodies to establish overcoming the sin of racism as a priority;

• supporting the Coalition for Intercultural Ministry Development in Province 8;

Human rights

• urging the U.S. government to promote democracy and human rights in Burma and the Philippines;

• urging a ban on construction of Maximum Control Unit prisons;

Peace

• calling for a ban on anti-personnel land mines and restrictions on importing weapons and weapon parts;

Appalachia

• supporting the Commission on Religion in Appalachia (CORA).

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World mission in perspective

by Ian T. Douglas

Deputies and bishops at the 1994 General Convention in Indianapolis this past summer offered a sign of hope and new life for this church when they rejected the dramatic cutbacks in world mission proposed by the Executive Council for the next triennium and not only reinstated funding for missionary programs and overseas dioceses at the 1994 level, but also authorized prepraration of a plan for developing new missionary structures.

"The missionary structures of the Episcopal Church are in crisis," the Standing Commission on World Mission (SCWM) had stated bluntly in its 16-page report decrying the proposed budget-cutting measures issued before the Convention. In Indianapolis, the Commission's voice of opposition was soon joined by the Episcopal Council for Global Mission (ECGM), whose representatives testified at committee hearings in favor of a revitalized, not a downsized, approach to world mission. A network of over 30 organizations committed to world mission, the council is arguably one of the most diverse and eclectic networks in the Episcopal Church. Embracing a wide variety of mission theologies, the ECGM includes voluntary missionary societies, parishes, dioceses, seminaries, funding agencies such as the United Thank Offering and the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, as well as constitutional bodies of the church like the SCWM.

For three days the World Mission legislative committee wrestled with the many resolutions that had been put forward by SCWM, dioceses, provinces and deputies. By Friday of the first week of the Convention, the committee had boiled down the resolutions into a half dozen that proposed new forms of mission engagement and education, a reinstatement of funding for mission programs at the Episcopal Church Center and a plan for developing new missionary structures. All received General Convention approval.

The two mission engagement and education resolutions challenge parishes, dioceses and seminaries to a new level of commitment to world mission. The first calls each parish and diocese in the church to become involved in the global mission of Christ through study and by both the sending and receiving of missionaries. The second establishes a task force to develop "World Mission/Cross Cultural" internships for seminarians.

Not content with simply reinstating existing programs, the legislative committee on World Mission also looked forward to developing new missionary structures for the Episcopal Church. Resolution D-016a, thus directs the Standing Commission on World Mission, in partnership with ECGM, "to develop a theological basis for mission and develop new strategies and structures through which the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Episcopal Church will continue the Church's work of sending and receiving missionaries." This seemingly innocuous resolution, passed by both deputies and bishops without any visible dissent, puts in place a process that could end Executive Council control of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (the incorporated name of the Episcopal Church and the name under which the national church has all all its financial holdings).

The passage of D-016a becomes even more significant given that a major restructuring proposal was rejected by the House of Bishops on the last legislative day. For almost a week and a half the legislative committee on structure had dealt with the question of what constitutes the church's mission and what is the most effective structure to enable that mission to go forward. Listening to the "grassroots," the committee had combined a host of resolutions into one omnibus resolution (C-032). The resolution called for two new committees in the next triennium, one to organize forums around the church to engage structural questions and the other to draft a plan for structural change.

"The missionary structures of the Episcopal Church are in crisis," the Standing Commission on World Mission had stated bluntly in its 16-page report decrying the proposed budget-cutting measures.

Although the resolution passed handily in the House of Deputies, the Bishops, concerned over stewardship and the duplication of existing interim bodies, failed to concur with the "upper House".

Finally, the 1994 General Convention presided over the birth of the newest autonomous church in the Anglican Communion, the Mexican Episcopal Church. On the final day of Convention, the House of Bishops approved the organization of the church from the five Mexican dioceses that had previously been part of the church's Province IX. It was with a mixture of joy for the new Mexican Episcopal Church and sadness at their leave-taking from the Episcopal Church, U.S.A., that bishops from all theological and ideological persuasions applauded the new sister church.

Ian Douglas is director of Anglicanism, Globalism and Ecumenism at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass.

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ECPC awards

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

A joyful and inclusive spirit wove together the lives of those present, most with long histories in struggles for justice, with those receiving the Episcopal Church Publishing Company awards at our Convention dinner.

The Philadelphia 11 and the Washington 4

"We stand knee-deep in a debt of gratitude to those 11 women in Philadelphia and the 4 in Washington who took courageous action not to be denied their calling by God," said Barbara Harris, suffragan of Massachusetts.

"It was a joy and a privilege to be a part of that great gettin' up morning, July 29, 1974. As many of you know, I was the crucifer that day and in the interest of the safety of the ordinands we had agreed to a short procession through the Church of the Advocate, but I felt like Joshua that morning and I wanted to march around that place seven times leading that band of women.

"It is to them that many of us who are in orders today owe our heartfelt thanks, our gratitude — for had they not braved that morning, we would not stand in the places in which we do."

Jane Dixon remarked soberly, "I was not like my sister Barbara. I was not holding a cross and leading people in.

"I was following the admonition of my bishop to stay home when the women were ordained in Washington.

"I remember sitting in a Sunday School room, up against the wall, thinking about the courage it was going to take for women to be ordained and how the structures were going to have to fall. I remember walking out into the nave with another woman and saying to her, 'That's never going to happen for me, but I want it for my daughter!'

"But it has happened for me and I will be grateful every day of my life to those women for what they stood for and what they've taken in the years since. They have been there for all women, but they've been there for all of you men, too!"

Pursuing justice

The keynote address, by Steve Charleston — bishop of Alaska, focussed on how important it is that we not grow complacent after winning the victories of women's ordination and consecration.

"It's unusual, brothers and sisters, to be successful in this line of work, isn't it?" Charleston asked. "It would be a nice, normal human thing to do to ride on the crest of the wave for a while.

"We have come a long, long way. Women have been in the vanguard of a new progressive movement opening doors for many of the rest of us and continuing to press the Episcopal Church toward even more acceptance and a deeper understanding of the dignity of all human beings.

"But we must not forget that the successes of women are still only a dream for many gay and lesbian people in our church. We still have a very, very long way to go. For peoples of color, for women of color in particular, these are agenda items that still loom before us and we still confront daily the issues of social and economic justice and of peace."

Charleston stressed that as the search for a new Presiding Bishop begins, the church will be in turmoil again. The key, he suggested, is finding ways to tell our stories to those Episcopalians who are afraid, not hostile, but scared.

"We are only as successful as we are able to capture the hearts and minds, the imagination and the goodwill of the vast majority of other Episcopalians who are not at this dinner tonight.

"These men and women are good Christians, but they are a cautious community. They have felt battered and bruised as we went through the sexuality debates. These are timid Christians. They are men and women of good conscience and good intelligence. We need to appeal to their best instincts and best values."

In his youth, Charleston said he fought for causes with courage and conviction.



Receiving the Scarlett award are, left to right: Alla Renée Bozarth, Carter Heyward, Betty Bone Schiess, Alison Cheek, Marie Moorefield Fleischer, Nancy Wittig, Betty Powell and Diane Tickell. credit: Rachel Roberson

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Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

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He was a socialist, an anti-war demonstrator, but he did not have a spiritual faith.

"Therefore I was a grim, bitter, determined clenched-jawed politician, even in my 20s. I was not a person filled with life and abundance. I was not a person filled with joy and a commitment to the Lord. I did not have the brighter vision of Zion and of the Promised Land in my eye. I had only the streets and what the streets can mean. Are you listening? I'm telling you something.

"As a politician, I was able only to batter other men and women into believing by the force of my own will — and my will is like a speck of dust floating in the wind compared to the mighty power of the wind of the Holy Spirit.

"When I was able to combine all of that fervor and all that passion for justice — when I was able to stand as a native man in pride and in dignity free from the shackles of racism, never again dependent, never again bowing the knee or head to a colonial system that enslaved my people — when I was able to stand tall and proud and claim the cross of Christ as being the banner under which I would serve, then I truly found the voice and the power and the strength that has moved the agendas that I care so deeply for forward.

"Only insofar as you and I maintain a deep spiritual commitment to the gospel of Christ, only insofar as when we encounter another man or woman they can see in our eyes that we are truly, absolutely devotedly Christian will we be able to walk across that path that lies before us to the shores of the Promised Land and claim the new Zion for ourselves, for our children, and for our children's children.

"The victory is ours. We have only to move toward it hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder with Christ our companion along the way and with a fervent prayer for peace, for justice and for truth on our lips.

"This will occur, brothers and sisters, in the days to come. The second reformation is only a generation away. We can rejoice and have a party tonight because the bridegroom is in this room with us."

Louie Crew

In that spirit, Chester Talton, suffragan of



Ernest Clay and Louie Crew. Dick Snyder

L.A., presented the Vida Scudder award to Louie Crew who founded Integrity 20 years ago.

"I think of the courage that it took all those 20 years ago in Georgia to begin an organization that would gather people who were openly gay and lesbian to say they had a rightful place in the Episcopal community. Integrity came together then because Louie is a committed Christian who believes that gay and lesbian people are God's children."

Talton said that, at Integrity's General Convention eucharist, Crew had preached about Robert, a student he had had.

"Robert was failing the course and Louie decided to offer to tutor him. After many hours, Robert's grades came up enough to pass. One day Louie met him while jogging. Louie went over to greet him and the young man spat in his face and said, 'Faggot!' Rather than become angry or embittered Louie knew that Robert was in pain and wondered what it must be like to be close to him, to be a member of his family, his wife or daughter.

"Every time I meet Louie he thanks me for my courage [for marching in a gay rights parade] and I think to myself, but you're the one who has courage. I want to say that publicly, Thank you Louie, for your courage, your loving heart, your resilience and your persistence!"

Hanan Ashrawi

Hanan Ashrawi, an Anglican, Palestinian woman who has negotiated for peace and now directs a human rights organization that records abuses by the Israelis *and* the Palestinians, was unable to be present. Her award was accepted by Patti Browning. In a statement faxed from Jerusalem, Ashrawi said, "In granting me the award you have not only honored me as a person, but have extended recognition to the Palestinian people as a whole in our long struggle for a comprehensive and just peace which in essence is a process of redemption of history.

"We are now facing our most demanding and painful challenge — that of building a healthy nation with protection of the basic rights and freedoms and accountability. Our transition from the dual injustice of exile and dispossession on the one hand and occupation and repression on the other is a precarious passage.

"We look to you for your active support, encouragement and inspiration."

Chung Hyun Kyung

The William Stringfellow award went to Chung Hyun Kyung, a Korean, feminist theologian who flew half way around the world to be with us. Carter Heyward, who presented the award, reminded us that Chung spoke at the World Council of Churches in Canberra in January, 1991, invoking the "the Holy Spirit of those persecuted for the sake of righteousness, the same spirit, she noted, which infuses and animates the mountains, the trees, the seas and all creation.

"You will recall I am sure the fear and fury sparked by Dr. Chung among those

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Christian patriarchs who recognized danger when they saw it," Heyward said. "Danger to the foundations of a Christianity that secures economic and sexual, social and spiritual power in the hands primarily of ruling class men."

Heyward recalled Chung's speech in Brazil where she spoke on sexuality and spirituality, raising up horrendous abuses of Korean women by Japanese soldiers and of Filipino women by U.S. soldiers.



Carter Heyward presents an award to Chung Hyun Kyung.
credit: Dick Snyder

"Dr. Chung named the evil in sexual exploitation and in the same address did what Christian theologians seldom do publicly — she praised *eros* as a life-provoking, life-giving, life-expanding energy. She praised *eros* as a magical power, a power different from the power of domination, coercion and violence. *Eros,* she said, is like when the power of the sun is upon us. Then in this erotic spirit of life and love, Dr. Chung, speaking as an apostle to the Anglican Church, called on us to struggle to overcome our fears of *eros,* and in particular, she said, 'our fear today, as a church, of homosexuals.' "

Heyward noted that Chung experiences the racism of the church — as do "her feminist, womanist, and *muherista* sisters of color" because of their passionate theology and because they are in awe of the "goddesses and spirits and sacred stories that most western Christians cannot comprehend or easily tolerate.

"Chung Hyun Kyung literally embodies the freshness and the movement of the spirit that invites us to celebrate diverse and daring ways of love and life, of faith and worship, of healing and liberation. She is prophet, priest, priestess, shaman, teacher and healer all wrapped into one beautiful, faithful Christian woman.

"In the spirit of Bill Stringfellow, himself a daring prophet of love and justice, who shook the foundations of unjust power structures and privilege, we pay you honor for breaking theological molds with your imagination and vitality, for pushing theological and political boundaries with courage, grace and humor, and for bearing powerful witness to Jesus, in his spirit. Your own willingness to bear so much hostility and to struggle with such solidarity and joy is helping make this world a less hostile, more hospitable and ultimately more fully sacred place for your sisters and brothers."

The evening ended in a hubbub of talk and laughter until the last bus pulled away. At that point, *The Witness* staff sat down to eat and the staff of Honey Sage Catering took a moment to talk with us. The evening was terrific — not least because it put more than $8,000 into the hands of two African American businesses in Indianapolis.

ECPC award winners

1979
Bill Spofford: Paul Washington
Vida Scudder: Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemekin
William Scarlett: Daniel Corrigan

1982
Spofford: Ben Chavis
Scudder: Marion Kelleran
Scarlett: John Hines

1985
Spofford : Margaret Ellen Traxler and Jean Dementi
Scudder: Pauli Murray
Scarlett: Robert DeWitt
Stringfellow: Steven Guerra

1988
Spofford: Miguel D'Escoto
Scudder: Mattie Hopkins
Scarlett: Paco Reus-Freuland and Paul Moore

1994
Spofford : Hanan Ashrawi
Scudder: Louie Crew
Scarlett: Merrill Bittner
Alla Renee Bozarth
Alison Cheek
Marie Moorefield Fleischer
Carter Heyward
Emily Hewitt
Suzanne Hiatt
Lee McGee
Alison Palmer
Betty Powell
Betty Bone Schiess
Katrina Swanson
Diane Tickell
Nancy Hatch Wittig
Stringfellow: Chung Hyun Kyung

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Baby boomers

by Larry J. Peacock

Bridge Over Troubled Water: Ministry to Baby Boomers — A Generation Adrift, by James Bell, Victor Books, Wheaton, Ill., 1993.

Baby Boomers. It is simply a title given to people born between 1946 and 1964.

Yet, it is an evocative term that refers to a generation which has gone through many shifts and exercises considerable (even Presidential) influence on contemporary society.

In the 1960s, many boomers challenged the prevailing culture and government and fought against racism, war and oppression. Discouraged by the slowness and resistance to change, many withdrew to a hippie lifestyle or adopted educational and career goals. In the 1980s, boomers reappeared on the cultural scene with a visible search for health, wealth and happiness. The "me" generation was alive and well. In the 1990s, family life and the search for meaning have emerged as dominant themes. Such is the journey of the unique generation in the eyes of author James Bell, a doctoral candidate at General Seminary in New York. His summary rings true; at least it describes a whole lot of people I know who carried picket signs with me and now are alongside me coaching kids in soccer. Baby boomers are hitting middle age.

Though Bell's description is good, the most helpful part of the book is his reflection on the worldview of the baby boomers. He identifies pluralism, relativism, individualism and hedonism as the ethos of boomers and then proceeds to wrestle with each in the light of the Christian faith.

Bell explores the way relativism must confront the question of truth, individualism must dialogue with community, and materialism encounter the spirit of generosity. The bridge on which these dialogues take place is the incarnation. It is the seeking love of God that sends Jesus to be in the world but not of the world, who loves the world and transforms it, who blesses creation and works for justice. Bell has done us a great service. He deepens our understanding of the important dialogues that must go on as we engage in ministry to and with baby boomers.

The analysis is thought-provoking, but the prescription is finally lame. There is little new in his suggestions that there be more attention to contemporary music and the arts in worship, more small groups, and that everyone should explore solitude. Though he is not very creative in looking at teaching and worship in the church, he does lift up for mainline Christians the need to be involved in recovering healing ministries. We would do well to heed that call and fortunately we can look to other books on baby boomers for ministry suggestions.

As middle-aged baby boomers sense their restlessness, rear their children and head back to church, Bell does help us know who is coming and the importance of dialogue on the bridge. TW

Larry J. Peacock is co-pastor of Malibu United Methodist Church in Malibu, Calif., and the author of *Heart and Soul: Spiritual Formation in the Local Church (Upper Room Books)* and *Water Words — Inclusive Language Liturgy.*

book review



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"Come out from all sects"

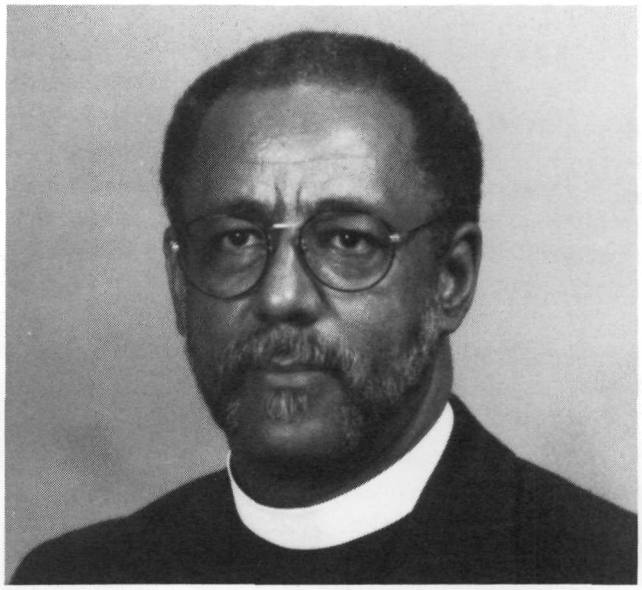
by Erika Meyer

In 1958 it was nothing new to Robert O. Dulin, Jr., to have his high school basketball team eat in restaurants that refused to serve him. He had often waited on the bus while his teammates ate together or celebrated after games. But this game was a tournament and Dulin, the only African-American player, had helped lead his team to victory. Perhaps this time he wouldn't be noticed. After all, the place was busy; the players from the losing team had come there as well. Instead, a familiar scenario began. The waitstaff told Dulin to leave and his own team stayed put. But this time there was a change in routine: The players from the other team, the ones he had beaten, got up and walked out with him.

Dulin, now the ordained leader of the Metropolitan Church of God located in Detroit, laughs as he tells the story of solidarity from the wrong team, but it was important to him that some whites acted on his behalf. For the past 20 years he has served a predominantly black congregation, but Dulin's vision of the Christian community is one of solidarity across racial lines. "'If anyone be in Christ, he or she is a new creation,' (2 Cor. 5:17)" quotes Dulin. "I think that goes for communities as well." Dulin says that he wants his congregation to be as ready to celebrate the Irish on St. Patrick's Day as they are to celebrate Black History Month.

Interracial worshiping communities were part of the original tradition of the "movement" formally known as the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana). The teenage Dulin was converted at a Church of God tent meeting. He went on to attend Anderson College, then Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City.

Church segregation results from poor folks being socialized into dominant values.



Robert O. Dulin, Jr.

The founders of the Church of God in the 1880s had a rallying cry: "Come out from all sects and denominations and join the pure church!" They were committed in their personal and congregational life to a holiness empowered by the Holy Spirit, but they also wanted to witness against the divisions within Protestant Christianity. Membership in the "pure church" was for the believer to decide based on faith in Jesus Christ, not on agreement with a particular teaching or practice. The church was not given the right to bestow membership; to this day many Church of God congregations do not keep formal membership lists, and they still call themselves a movement and not a denomination.

In the Church of God movement, from the earliest days, there were black preachers, especially prominent women, who preached the call to unity and holiness. For the first few decades, blacks and whites worshiped together.

From the earliest days, there were black preachers, especially prominent women, who preached the call to unity and holiness. For the first few decades of the movement, blacks

Witnesses, the quick and the dead

Erika Meyer is a transitional deacon serving a rural cluster ministry in Michigan's thumb, and a contributing editor of *The Witness.*

and whites worshiped together in Church of God congregations. By 1923, the church was segregated. Dulin refers to this as a classic case of "poor folks being socialized into dominant values."

In the 1960s, African-American leaders in the Church of God challenged segregation in the church's national organization. This led to Dulin working for five years as the national Christian Education staff person, again the only African American on the team. He traveled extensively, visiting congregations in the West. He looks back on that time with mixed feelings. "It was hard to be window dressing," he says. He ended up with a sense of burnout, weary of the effort of explaining racism to white Christians.

In 1974, Dulin left to take the congregation in Detroit. Long active in community affairs, he is a familiar face at school board and city council meetings and at the local interfaith council. He's proud of the basketball court behind his church and will be working behind the scenes to bring midnight basketball to Detroit. He confesses to struggling to stave off the temptation to run for local office.

Dulin has hopes that Detroit under the present administration will be a more inclusive city. He believes that, at this point in time, too much emphasis on race is counter-productive and divisive. And despite his own encounters with racism, if whites return to the city, he wants his congregation to welcome them. For him, that is the church which models the new creation. TW

November issue:

Glamour

Christmas offer!

To encourage readers to give *The Witness* as a Christmas gift, we will send donors a custom-made, rubber-stamped Advent calendar for each gift subscription. The calendars make great gifts in themselves.

Designed by managing editor Julie A. Wortman, the calendars are ironic and faithful. This year's theme is the *Magnificat*. Wortman's 1993 Advent calendar, on the theme *For we like sheep...*, won an award at the Episcopal Communicators' conference last June. Copies of it are also available upon request.

(Wortman and Anne Cox have started a business, The Ministry of Rubber (MOR), and are selling rubber stamps which they have designed and crafted. If you'd like a MOR catalogue, send Wortman a note at *The Witness*.)



Order a $20 Christmas gift subscription now (we'll send a card announcing the gift in December and start the subscription in January, 1995) and see who will be filled with good things and who may be sent empty away.

❑ ***Yes,*** **please start a gift subscription in my name ,**

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Letters overflowing

THE JULY ISSUE is a fabulous one and *Re-Imagining God* by Chung Hyun Kyung opened my eyes, heart and mind to the meaning of God for an Episcopalian. We rejoice she is the recipient of the 1994 Scarlett award at General Convention. How much we would like to be present and to meet her.

I read every page of this issue and am so proud of you and your staff for witnessing to the needs of growing awareness of God's presence in all people and places, and reading the New Testament and our Lord's words with new understanding. Thank you!

Daniel and Elizabeth Corrigan
Santa Barbara, CA

THANKS SO MUCH for the July issue about women — it was a feast for my soul and spirit.

Janet Hope
Louisville, KY

WHEN *CHRISTIANITY & CRISIS* was no longer able to continue, you took over my subscription. I continue to miss *C & C* greatly, but your magazine is consistently thought-provoking and well put together.

Your July issue was wonderful — the poetry, the articles, and the art were bearers of grace and struggle. I ordered five copies to give to friends. Thank you for your fine work.

Christine Wagner
Minneapolis, MN

WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE for me to buy three copies of the marvelous, liberating Women's Spirituality issue of *The Witness*? I'd love for some of my feminist friends to have a copy. I'm left with a feeling of gratitude after reading it. Best wishes for further opening up of the Spirit for the other half of creation.

Madeline Casey
Belchertown, MA

CONGRATULATIONS ON A SERIES of magazines that continues to have exceedingly high standards and which never fails to challenge and inspire me. I have several friends who I'd love to get reading your stuff. Now that you're offering back issues, this is a good way to do it.

Chris Ambidge
Scarborough, ON

OUR STUDY GROUP WILL BE USING *The Witness* for a discussion We would like six copies of the July 1994 issue.

Pamela Parker
South Yarmouth, MA

PLEASE SEND VOL. 77 #7 JULY copy to me. Wow! What an issue! You consistently outdo yourselves, issue after issue.

Lee Allison
Lake Bluff, IL

THANK YOU FOR THE ISSUE on Women's Spirituality, which was excellent. I would like to expand on Sally Bucklee's comment that "Patriarchalism oppresses all women, all children, and some men, especially those of color." It seems worth saying that the patriarchal system is not always that great for the men who are trained to be its leaders.

These men are brought up in a competitive atmosphere, always being judged against each other. They learn to hold in their feelings while driving to succeed. They work long hours under too much pressure. Little importance is given to their nurturant sides, and they often don't have much time or energy for their children.

Men have been seduced by the lure of status, power, and money to accept a role which is really quite unhealthy. Is it any wonder that we have more heart attacks and die younger than women? Yet so few men seem interested in exploring alternatives. I guess you don't rock the boat when you're in the captain's seat.

Hopefully more men will come to see that a reordering of sex roles, while threatening in some ways, might be an unexpected blessing. This could be the beginning of a new kind of partnership with women, one that is more healthy for all of us.

Michael Carney
Point Reyes, CA

ENCLOSED IS A CHECK in the amount of $10 for four copies of the July 1994 issue — women's spirituality. This is an issue to be shared!

Barbara Brondt
Pendleton, OR

THE JULY *WITNESS* is a very moving issue, so full of strong women and strength of purpose. It's an honor to have my [art] work included here!

Judith Anderson
East Lansing, MI

I AM A FORMER EPISCOPALIAN (was a D.R.E. for many years), now a Quaker — and your magazine is the remaining social justice journal we choose to get. You — and particularly Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann and her editorials — are doing a *spectacular* work. I am grateful. And the July '94 issue is one of the very best!

Barbara Potter
West Buxton, ME

THIS LAST *WITNESS* WAS A GREAT issue. As an attendee at Re-Imagining I appreciate your defense of the broad extent of thinking and using our imagination.

Katherine R. Sylvester
Stevensville, MI

I MISTAKENLY LET MY SUBSCRIPTION to *Witness* lapse. I just heard about your "Re-Imaging God" issue — an article about the Kuan Yin I heard! I *must* have that issue — plus renew my subscription. I promise not to let it lapse again — I've learned my lesson.

Please rush — my friends won't loan their magazines!

Ellen Ifft
Missoula, MT

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The Witness

Volume 77 • Number 11 • November 1994

Glamour



Alternative ways of doing church

REGARDING THE ARTICLE "Closing the *Instituto Pastoral Hispano*" in the August/ September 1994 *Witness* issue, the closing of the *Instituto* is a tragedy. The article would have better served the Hispanic community and the *Instituto* by reporting in greater detail the growing pastoral needs of the Hispanic community and the *Instituto's* success in meeting those needs.

John Reyes-Guerra
Palisades Park, NJ

[See Vital Signs in the 12/94 issue for further coverage of this issue.]

I WANT TO EXTEND my own personal gratitude to *The Witness* for putting the *Instituto* issue before the Church and the wider audience who read the magazine.

As a board member, I have felt very much in the minority recently and have expressed to fellow *Instituto* board members my sense that we have abandoned the struggle for which we were founded. The article gives voice to some of that frustration. Hopefully it will touch people's hearts and consciences.

Enrique R. Brown
Port Chester, NY

OPEN LETTER TO THE BISHOPS:
I will hope that what you mean about your "pledge to take the lead to fight racism" means a lot more than having a Hispanic deacon reading the Gospel at the Diocesan Convention and concluding with a rendition of *"El Pescador"* .... That the fight for justice will be more than ladling lasagna in a homeless shelter, rather than working to change the socio-economic realities which made "poor people's kitchens" necessary.

"Making the necessary changes in your personal lives and diocesan structures" means more than quoting Dom Helder Camara in a pious attempt to shrug off injustices in and outside church structures. What really had me concerned is why to form "a committee of bishops to monitor how well their fellow bishops fulfill this new covenant."

I respectfully submit that rather than (in some cases) the blind leading the blind, with very few exceptions this committee could be composed of priests and lay people, preferably with a substantial amount of ethnic people on it. As a former recent victim of institutional racism and sexism in the church I am in prayer for you and for all of us, equally guilty of the sin of racism.

Nina Olmedo Jaquenod
Assistant Rector
All Saints' Church, Oxnard, CA

Convention supplement

I HAVE RECENTLY FINISHED READING *The Witness* 1994 General Convention Supplement with its extensive coverage of the proposed issues for General Convention.

My only regret was that all subscribers didn't have the opportunity to read it

I was also pleased with the newspaper format. I think you and your staff do a good job of looking at issues that are extremely difficult and I appreciate your efforts.

Harriet Langfeldt
The Dalles, OR

[Ed. Note: *The Witness* staff prepared a 56-page General Convention supplement which presented new articles and consolidated our pre-Convention reporting. The new material includes a consumer reports on the bishops (self-reported and reported by members of the Consultation); a bishops' hall of fame prepared by Mary Lou Suhor; a list of bishops eligible by age to be the next presiding bishop; a chronology of women's ordination; and a testimony to God's grace by Louie Crew.

Since it was partially financed by book advertisements, we can only mail this supplement first class. If you'd like a copy, send a check for $3 to *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Boulevard, Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226.]

AWARDS WERE GIVEN the Philadelphia 11, all *white* women who after having been turned down by the Cathedral Dean and Bishop of Washington turned to a black church. They asserted that racism and sexism are the same. That is true of black women, but not of white.

White women, as I see it, want equality with white men who run this country. They have the protection of the CIA, FBI and KKK. White men look after their women.

There is a cultural divide between white folks and black folks and today racism is worse than it was in 1974.

Why do you not remove from the Prayer Book the prayer that begins "O God who has made of one blood ... ?" Few believe it.

I wrote Dean Harvey Guthrie about four years after the 1974 ordinations and asked him how many black people were on the payroll. None was the reply. That says a lot about the actions of the seminary.

White women priests, and a few blacks are everywhere. So what is new? Deaths of young children of the streets abound because of white leadership. Bad schools, no preparation to be in the cities after being forced from the land, poverty and drugs are their lot.

As I see it, no one needs *true* Christianity as bad as white people need it. Some do right, but most feel themselves better than black people.

Esther J. Burgess
Vineyard Haven, MA

Women's spirituality

WE WOULD LIKE A SUBSCRIPTION to *The Witness* for all members of our Conference Commission on Status and Role of Women. Enclosed is a check to cover the cost of 21 subscriptions.

Nancy Wray McMurtry
Director of Ministries
The Nebraska Annual Conference,
United Methodist Church
Lincoln, NE

CONTRARY TO MS. BUCKLEE'S opinion stated in the July issue, the Episcopal Church is certainly more of an equal opportunity discriminator than she gives it credit. The object of her complaint, the "Statement of Conscience" of 1977, was designed to protect minority beliefs on both sides of the ordina-

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tion question; it is invoked as protection by the minority and castigated as discriminatory by the majority.

It is true that the bishops have failed to insure that the Statement of Conscience is applied evenhandedly; Ms. Bucklee fails to acknowledge that it is widely ignored in those dioceses which militantly promote the cause of women's ordination. In these 90+ dioceses there is rampant discrimination against those who do not agree with the majority (even in Ms. Bucklee's own) and harassment and rejection are the order of the day.

More disturbing than Ms. Bucklee's misrepresentation of the Statement of Conscience is her assertion that "Within the Anglican Communion in general, and the Episcopal Church in particular, access to the ordained ministry is a defining characteristic of full membership." If this were true, it leaves a lot of non-members of the church throughout its history. Every formulary of the church indicates that Baptism confers full membership.

I am weary of articles depicting the poor, down-trodden, discriminated-against women clergy. They face nothing worse than pioneers in any other profession have faced. Female doctors and attorneys have been around a lot longer, and they still complain about the treatment they receive. Why should women clergy, who have accomplished more disruption than women in any other profession, expect anything else? Their cause has won the day; both whining and triumphalism ill-behooves them. Some restraint might be in order, but they will not be content till all opposition is expelled (there shall be no outcasts) from the church.

Dorothy W. Spaulding
McLean, VA

SOME OF THE GREEKS SAID, "What can this charlatan be trying to say? Others, "He would appear to be a propagandist for foreign deities" — this because he was preaching about Jesus and Resurrection.

— Acts 17:18

We may smile at the Athenians who knew neither Jesus nor the Resurrection, and therefore assumed that the Apostle Paul was introducing new gods in his proclamation of *Yeshua* and *Anastasis*. But what can we say when Christians display such ignorance of our own scriptures and tradition? It's happening now, in conservatives' assault on the "goddess Sophia" and the much-maligned Re-imagining conference.

Do they not know that the Prologue to the Gospel according to St. John, concerning the Word made flesh and dwelling among us, quotes from hymns about Wisdom (Hebrew: *Chokmah,* Greek: *Sophia*)? They should check Wisdom of Solomon 7 and Ecclesiasticus 24. Had they read all the writings extolling her in our Bible, they'd recognize that Jesus associates himself with Sophia in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). They'd realize — when St. Paul says that Christ Jesus is "*Sophia* of God" and "has become *Sophia* to us" — that the Apostle is not talking about another god. He is simply comfortable with the biblical assertion that in every generation "she enters the souls of just people" and that "she is a pure emanation of the glory of God."

Haven't the champions of biblical authority read Proverbs 8 and 9? Ancient Jews and early Christians invoked personified Wisdom, Word (*Memra*), Spirit (*Ruach*), Presence (*Shekinah*), and Way (*Torah*) of the Lord — all feminine and all on occasion agents of salvation — and still believed "the Lord our God is one."

Yet *Sophia* offends these traditionalists, and all feminine imagery, even the use of milk and honey in a liturgy. Don't they care enough about early Church practice to have discovered the ancient tradition of giving milk and honey to the newly baptized? This custom celebrated the "pure milk from the Lord" (I Peter 2:1-3), as well as crossing the baptismal "Jordan" into the Promised Land "flowing with milk and honey" (surely we've all heard of that!). Julian of Norwich for one, a medieval mystic never accused of heresy, identifies Jesus as "our true mother" who feeds us from his own breast. When it comes to biblical and traditional grounds for understanding God as "mother," some Christian teachers must be less than thorough in their handing on of our traditions.

When merely cultural "christians" — who claim the name but feel no obligation to the community of faith — are as ignorant of the scriptures as the present defenders are, it's no cause for wonder. But when church leaders are ready to condemn sisters and brothers, to split congregations, and financially to hold whole denominations hostage on the basis of such selective knowledge, I have to wonder about their motives. Jesus said, "*Sophia* is vindicated by her children" (Luke 7:35). Now Wisdom is under attack by people who claim to follow Jesus. Whose children are they?

Paula M. Jackson
Rector, Church of Our Savior
Cincinnati, OH

Classifieds

Education Conference

Mark your calendars now! Announcing ... "Continuing in the Apostles' Teaching: Educational Ministries in the Episcopal Church."

This conference is designed for congregational and diocesan leaders concerned with creating environments that promote faith maturity among children, youth, young adults, and adults. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect theologically and gain practical skills through learning tracks, workshops, Bible study, worship, music, and fun!

Learning Tracks will be offered in the following areas: Children's Ministries, Youth Ministries, Young Adult Ministries, Christian Educational Ministries.

WHEN: April 25-29, 1995

WHERE: Y.M.C.A. of the Rockies, Estes Park, Colorado (airport: Denver)

COST: $200 (plus transportation)

SPONSORED BY: Christian Education Network, Treasure Kids!/Model Dioceses, Youth Ministries Network, and the Young Adult Ministries Office. Funding for this conference provided by the Episcopal Church Center.

For further information, contact one of these offices at the Episcopal Church Center, 1-800-334-7626: Children's Ministries, exts. 5222/5212; Youth Ministries, exts. 5169/5217; Young Adult and Higher Education Ministries, exts. 5267/5195.

Classifieds

Witness classifieds cost 75 cents a word or $30 an inch, whichever is less. Payments must accompany submissions. Deadline is the 15th of the month, two months prior to publication.

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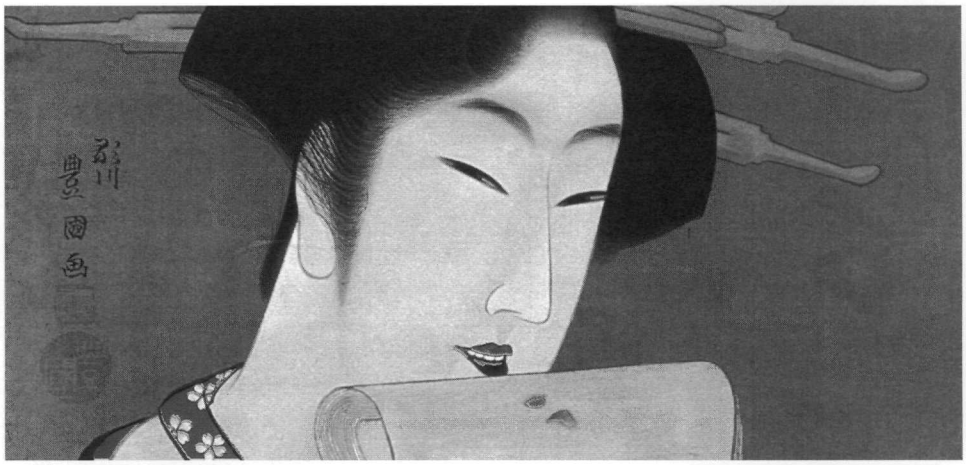

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Cover: Beauty Sealing a Love Letter *by Utagawa Toyokuni (1769-1825), Japanese. Hanging scroll: ink and colors on silk. Courtesy of the Detroit Institute of Arts.*

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Playing dress-up

by Julie A. Wortman

Last summer my niece's daughter, Emily Grossberg, celebrated her fourth birthday. Her mother's gift was a box full of "dress-up" clothes — a feather boa, auburn wig, white veil, plastic high-heeled shoes and an assortment of wrap-around skirts with velcro fasteners. From that point on, Emily spent at least part of every day in costume.

"Who are you?" we adults would ask her when she was thus arrayed.

"Mary!" she'd reply delightedly.

"Where's Emily?" we'd then inquire.

"Asleep," she'd answer, explaining that the two of them, Mary and Emily, could never be awake at the same time.

Emily loved it that we older ones were fooled into thinking that she was another person, someone older and more exotic than the little girl Emily — someone who might this day be a teenager and tomorrow be a grandmother. Sometimes Mary would live in New York, other times in New Jersey. She'd be a bride, a movie star, a mother flagging down a taxi to take her and her daughter (I'd sometimes play this role) to a fancy restaurant. Mary could be, it seemed, anyone Emily found intriguing.



Emily Grossberg as "Mary" Audrey Grossberg

Occasionally, if she thought we were taking Mary too seriously, Emily would remind us that "this is only pretend," as if she feared the spell she had cast had been too strong.

Emily, of course, isn't the only child out there practicing the casting of spells — or, as the ancient Scots would say, the casting of their "glamour." A youngster in my current neighborhood spends much of his time dashing around in a cape made from a bath towel. A few doors away, two sisters regularly transform the secluded space beneath a front-yard tree into some kind of refuge from which they endlessly dispatch one another on mysterious (to me) errands — they seem as startled as deer caught in the headlights of a late-night car if anyone unexpectedly reminds them they are still on Larkmoor Boulevard by offering them a friendly wave.

This exercise of imagination to which the young seem so drawn is, at heart, a spiritual pursuit. They are exploring the power to step apart from their "real" lives and live into the possibility of not now, not yet or once before.

This exercise of imagination to which the young seem so drawn is, at heart, a spiritual pursuit. They are exploring the power to step apart from their "real" lives and live into the possibility of not now, not yet or once before. And, as four-year-olds like Emily seem to realize better than most, that power can be strong enough to subvert "reality" unless we disclaim it as pretense.

But all too often people of faith forget that the subversive power of casting one's glamour is not the sole province of the powers and principalities (via Madison Avenue or Hollywood), even though these seem so effortlessly to hold so many spellbound. Transforming reality, after all, is the vocation to which we, too, are called. Can't we remember the playful, often liberating, excursions of our own youth?

I, for one, recall pretending to be Robin Hood. I had a pair of light green flannel pajamas with red piping that, when cinched in at the waist, looked a little like my mind's idea of the kind of gear you'd wear in Sherwood Forest. It was a bedtime game that I played alone, so there was no one to fool except myself, but I bought the charade hook, line and sinker. I loved imagining myself, lover at my side, the leader of a self-sufficient community of faith-based resistance — a bunch of creative, life-loving "outlaws" who were foes of evil and active supporters of the oppressed, living by our wits in the trees.

It was for me then a spellbinding possibility, to think of living such an alternative life.

I find it so still.

editor's note

Julie A. Wortman is managing editor of *The Witness.*

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Haiti — What then must we do?

It's strange when Republican senators are calling for the return of our troops. I have to work not to be reflexive in changing sides to support the U.S. intervention in Haiti.

Likewise, it is challenging that John Conyers, active in Congress for justice, *favors* this military action. Is it *necessarily* wrong for the U.S. to act on behalf of a deposed, elected leader against a military dictator who, recent reports indicate, may have been C.I.A.-supported?

I'm outraged when I hear Republicans say there are no U.S. interests in Haiti – human rights certainly isn't one of their priorities, perhaps especially when the populace is black.

Clinton's popularity isn't growing with this military action. It doesn't feel like the same cowboy initiative.

At a recent gathering of the Detroit Peace Community, several people were prepared to do civil disobedience at the Federal Building to protest the intervention.

In contrast, I found myself ambivalent. In fact, I'd even had fantasies of a precision-bombing strike aimed at the houses of the super rich who inhabit the hills outside Port au Prince. Of course,the U.S. would first drop leaflets so the the rich would have a chance to evacuate some of their art and valuables. Their lives wouldn't be endangered, but they would have an incentive to depose the military junta.



Port-au-Prince Daniel Morel, ENS

A friend with a long history with Amnesty International wondered if there weren't nonviolent military options for use against Haiti's barely armed militia, like dropping nets over whole areas. Her husband advocates U.S. intervention, militarily if necessary.

I have never known our community to be so divided.

The conversations are respectful — but it's the first time in the history of our nonviolent actions opposing U.S. foreign policy decisions, that we can't agree on the problem.

I believe that nonviolence has to be a consistent ethic, not an intermittent and selective one.

But the questions raised in Haiti seem similar to those surrounding domestic abuse: If you know that someone is acting violently against others, you cannot keep silent. How do you act? How do you intervene without increasing the damage?

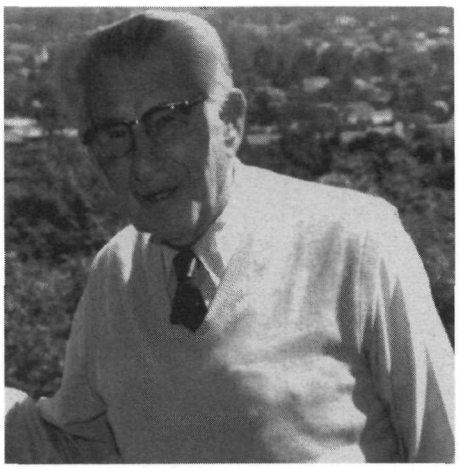
The economic boycott against Haiti was never whole-hearted and never made a dent in the lives of the rich. We can advocate for a more effective embargo. But what else can we do? The constellation of the principalities is different this time. — *J. W.-K.*

Dan Corrigan dies

"People who believe in the resurrection — who can stop them?"

— *Daniel Corrigan,*
The Witness, *April, 1992*

Daniel Corrigan, one of the great witnesses to the resurrection, died September 21, 1994. He is survived by his wife and partner, Elizabeth, who told *The Witness* in 1992, "Daniel was always disrupting things if he saw things wrong. He had a way of saying things that would startle people."



Daniel Corrigan

Consecrated suffragan of Colorado in 1958, Corrigan was one of the bishops who ordained the Philadelphia 11 in 1974. A long-time peace activist, Corrigan was arrested while celebrating the eucharist at the Pentagon during the Vietnam War. He was a recipient of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship's John Nevin Sayre award and of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company's William Scarlett award. He was recently listed in *The Witness'* Convention Supplement hall of fame. Reluctantly, we commend him to the communion of saints.

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Prayer to Masks

by Leopold Sedar Senghor

Masks! Masks!
Black mask red mask, you white-and-black masks
Masks of the four points from which the Spirit blows

In silence I salute you!
Nor you the least, Lion-headed Ancestor
You guard this place forbidden to all laughter of women, to all smiles that fade
You distill this air of eternity in which I breathe the air of my Fathers.
Masks of unmasked faces, stripped of the marks of illness and the lines of age
You who have fashioned this portrait, this my face bent over the altar of white paper
In your own image, hear me!
The Africa of the empires is dying: see the agony of a pitiful princess
And Europe too where we are joined by the navel.
Fix your unchanging eyes upon your children, who are given orders
Who give away their lives like the poor their last clothes.
Let us report present at the rebirth of the World
Like the yeast which white flour needs.
For who would teach rhythm to a dead world of machines and guns?
Who would give the cry of joy to wake the dead and the bereaved at dawn?
Say, who would give back the memory of life to the man whose hopes are smashed?
Thy call us men of coffee cotton oil
They call us men of death.
We are the men of the dance, whose feet draw new strength pounding the hardened earth.

Translated from the French by John Reed and Clive Wake.

Leopold Sedar Senghor is a Senegalese poet who was a leader of the Negritude movement, which arose in colonial times as an effort to restore pride in African culture. His works, including *Nocturne* and *Poems of a Black Orpheus*, have been translated into many languages.



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The witch, the actor and the Hebrew queen

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

At the beginning of this century, actors could not be buried in consecrated ground. Their profession was considered occult. The same was true of witches, though that antipathy may be less surprising.

At issue is our ability to "cast glamour." Glamour is an ancient Scottish word used to indicate someone's ability to cast influence over another human being through their appearance and their intent. The act of casting glamour is presumed to rely on illusion.

There is no indication in the *Oxford English Dictionary* that the etymology is related, but I think of the Scottish "gloaming" time when direct sunlight has vanished and shadows are prolonged, but it is not yet dark. The time was understood to be the moment when people could cross between the worlds.

Glamour has that quality. Whether it's the blonde dripping with furs as she steps out of a limousine or someone on stage bathed in floodlights, one senses that anything can happen. And what does happen may be bigger than life.

We define glamour too narrowly, I think. Anyone who steps out in costume or with an attitude is casting glamour. They may be dressed ethnically, or in transgender clothes or gang colors, but they are projecting a persona, making a statement, maybe trying to recreate reality — or at least reveal a piece of it — through their posture. In that sense, it's almost like a sacrament, an outward and visible sign of something inward (albeit not always grace).

The articles in this issue reveal that pain is often part of the experience of people whose vocation is to act or to model. The issue also includes critiques of the abuses of glamour with which we are all familiar — the ostentation, the media manipulation, the curtailing of imagination and distortion of what is real.

The Quakers and the Amish offer a truth when they encourage simplicity and plain speech. Avoiding fancy clothes and deliberately adopting a simple persona that can be relied upon to speak the truth is a gift in a culture dizzy with glitz.

But I believe we may be short-sighted if we don't at least occasionally engage the provocative power of glamour.

Are there ways that through pretending, through costume, through affect we can liberate ourselves or, perhaps, liberate our culture?

During a recent National Public Radio interview, an actor who plays a transvestite in the outback of Australia was asked about his experience. He said he was anxious about the role and afraid of getting typecast, but felt released finally when he was playing a scene where he had to stand on a bar dressed in orange fishnet stockings to sing to the outbackers. The whole situation seemed so unlikely and so preposterous that he suddenly began to enjoy himself.

When do we push through our limits so we can lay down the cultivated persona we carry with us everywhere? What might we be able to accomplish in that radical freedom? What underside personas are waiting to be released?

I suppose we must also ask — and here's the rub with orthodoxy — what otherworldly influences or lingering souls might speak through us, catching us up in a possession dance, rocking our bodies, turning our vision, loosening our tongues? What visions and dreams, what truths and furies, might cross over?

Glamour in the gloaming time invites the magic of encounters with old women selling apples or peddlers with magic wishes who might change the course of one's life forever.

In biblical imagery, we might entertain angels, speak in tongues, or place our hands in the wounds of the risen Christ. We might stand before kings and judges and have our words provided to us by the Holy Spirit.

Which spirits we channel becomes the question. They will be archetypal, mythic in proportion, but who are they and whom do they serve?

The witch

I have a friend who is a Diannic witch. To the uninitiated, like myself, this means she only practices magic with women. Asked about the spells and incantations associated with witches, Deborah, who was raised Catholic, responds, "What happens in a wiccan ceremony is that an intention is identified and energy is raised to fuel that intention. For example, you may want to quit smoking.

"Magic is about announcing that intention to the universe. If you do it with other people, then you're drawing on their energy as well as your own to support your intention. Our rituals are ecclectic – we draw on Celtic and Native American spirituality. There are parallels

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This issue was inspired by a dream, a nightmare actually. Assistant editor Marianne Arbogast, while producing the animal rights issue, dreamed she was also responsible for an issue on *glamour*. **Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. Joyce Hollyday's book, *Clothed With The Sun*, can be ordered from Westminster John Knox Press by calling 1-800-227-2872. A new selection of William Stringfellow's writings (which have been completely out of print) is available from Eerdeman's by calling 1-800-253-7521 and asking for *A Keeper of The Word*, edited by Bill Wylie-Kellermann.

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in some African ceremonies."

Casting spells on other people is considered unethical in white magic circles, because it would be coercive. Instead, her circle will send energy out to individuals so they can "get a generic support that they can define for their own purposes."

Deborah says she recently cut off her long, red hair — which provided a mystique and kind of armor — because her work has been to "allow my true self to come forth."

But she will try to influence other people on occasion in order to protect herself in a culture that's hostile to witches.

"It's something you do inside yourself," says Deborah, who works as a corporate cash manager. "I used to wear a lot of pinstripe suits. It has to do with the image that you cast over yourself."

She also says that there is a way in which any of us who come together in worship are casting a spell.

"Each person who subscribes to a belief buys into a reality so that it becomes stronger and stronger and to that extent they are all creating a spell together.

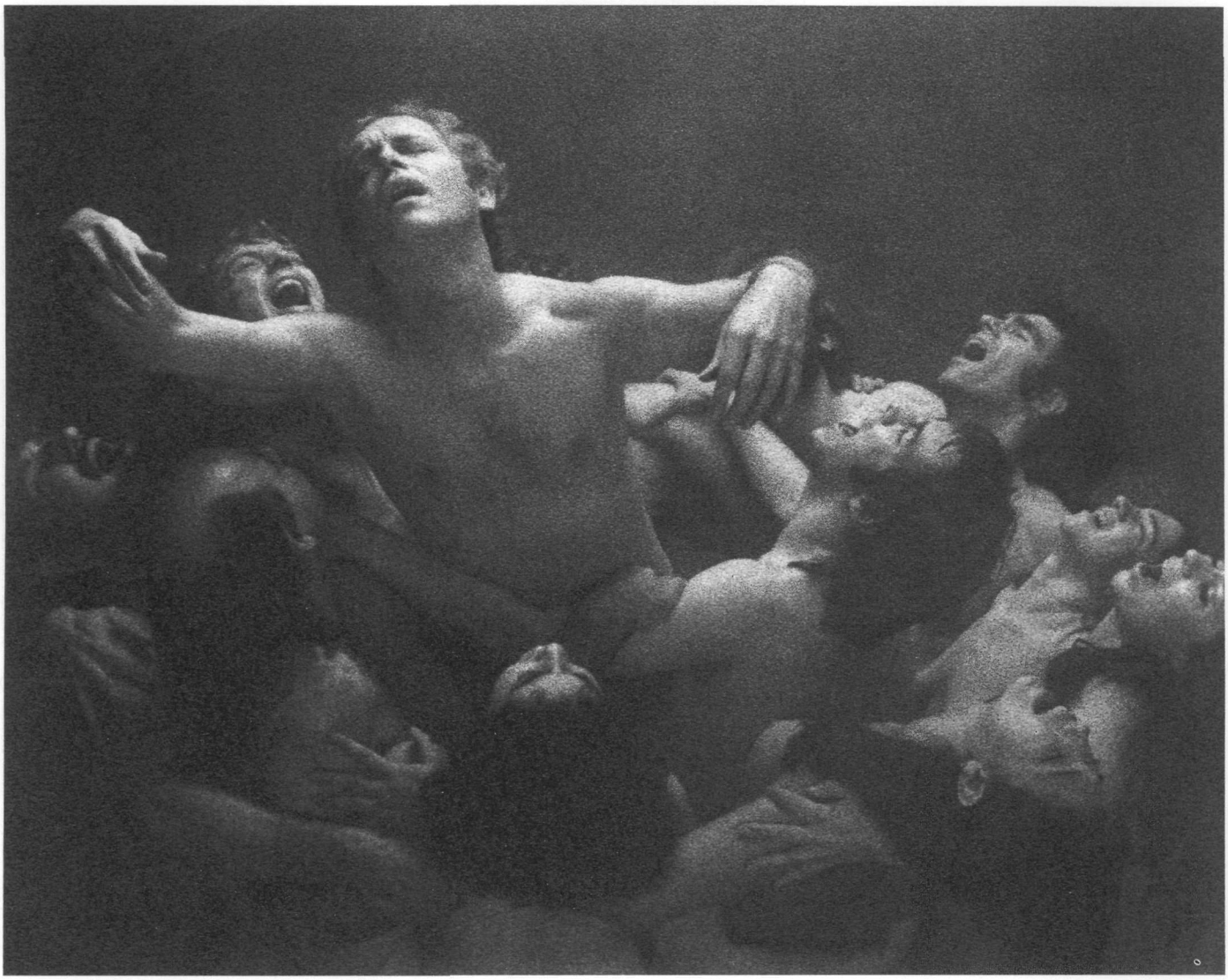
"It comes back to intent. We witches believe profoundly in taking responsibility for ourselves and that other people are not to blame. The mind has the power to create just about anything.

"Each of us holds a piece of the greater hologram of the universe."

The actor

Theo Barnes says he does not *feel* glamorous on stage.

A New York City theater actor, Barnes remembers his first performance.



Theo Barnes as Renfield in *Dracula/Sabbat.* Max Waldman

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"The Latin teacher decided that we would tell ancient myths, act them out. In costume, of course, I was the opening act. When the curtains parted, there I was dressed in the briefest white chiton, reclining on a large mirror, pretending to sleep while, around me, stood my classmates in various stages of Roman dress and undress. They were singing as best they could in still boyish soprano and unsure baritone voices: 'Beautiful dreamer, awaken to me.' I had to awaken and admire myself in the mirror. 'Narcissus!' my fellow lacrosse players declaimed." But Barnes adds that he wore a costume every Sunday before and after emerging as Narcissus.

"I was in the men's and boys' choir at a relatively lofty Episcopal church. It was quite a costume: wool faille cassock, starched batiste and lace surplice and a very stiff white horsehair ruff. Singing in the choir remains the best experience I have had in all my years of performing."

At its best, Barnes says, a performance itself is glamour. "Whenever I processed and recessed with the clergy and choir, whenever I sang a solo or with the choir, I felt that there was something shining *on* me and *reflected off* me, but not originating *from* me. I have felt that light reflected off me in other performance situations, but not so consistently."

It's worth remembering that some people were as hostile to high church services as they were to the theater — smashing the heads of saints and eliminating the mystique of processions, incense and choreography, banning even music from their ceremonies.

In the middle ages, clapping one's hands was believed to be a good defense from being spell-bound. It seems likely that this is the origin of applause after a performance — the more powerful the illusion provided by the actors, the more thunderous the applause as the audience acknowledges the intensity of the spell.

In a performance, actors can call us into another reality. We are aware of the artifice and agree to suspend our skepticism — in fact we hope they will do their work effectively, so that we can begin to feel the passions of another time or place, the sorrow or delight of people of another race, gender or creed.

There is something sacramental about the exchange. We are wide open to the movement of the characters on stage. Through their actions, we can experience and begin to understand truth.

The queen

Esther is one famous for dedicating glamour to liberation. She used her beauty to teach King Ahasuerus a truth and an empathy for her people.

Thanks to a recent book by Joyce Hollyday, *Clothed in the Sun: Biblical Women, Social Justice, and Us* (Westminster John Knox, 1994), I've become aware that Esther was King Ahasuerus' *second* wife, the first having been banished for refusing to dress up to parade before his guests. This was a king who put a premium on beauty. In fact, before selecting Esther, Ahasuerus had a number of beautiful virgins brought to the palace and treated with cosmetics and oils. Each had to sleep with the king, before he made his decision.

So when Esther's cousin, Mordecai, asked her to intervene with the king to prevent the slaughter of all the Jews, she knew the method — she also knew that she was taking her life in her hands for one did not summon the king.

"Esther knew that she alone was able to bargain for the lives of her people," Hollyday writes, "accepting her cousin Mordecai's words, 'Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this.' She also knew that she needed the support of her people and her God, so she called for a three-day fast among all the Jews in Susa. She herself kept the fast as spiritual preparation for her approach to the king.

"Then Esther said, 'I will go to the king, though it is against the law; and if I perish, I perish.'"

Creating a kind of second sight

Kim Stanley, without benefit of special makeup, hairstyling or costume changes, managed to convince me during the course of her performance as Masha in Chekhov's *Three Sisters* that she was becoming beautiful. As the character fell more and more in love, Stanley appeared to become more and more heartbreakingly ravishing. This was the result of pure *praxis* on her part. It is what she did and to what she paid attention, a shift in vulnerablities, that made her seem to change. As a spectator, I was aware of a kind of double image. There, indeed, was "the real" Stanley, slightly heavy, tied with so much gravity to that middle class sofa gravity to that middle class sofa. And there, at the same time, was this other image, unbearably light in its being. There is, of course, considerable doubt about the second image. Surely, it cannot be examined under too high a resolution. But both images are there ready to be seen again in memory. Oh, you say, she was working some kind of magic – this was the result of the exercise of glamour over my mind.

There is perhaps another explanation, one that might be philosophically, even scientifically, more satisfying: namely that the actor, with all good actors, was simply by scrupulously finding the true action in a great play, working to help me use my imagination to achieve a kind of second sight. I personally do not believe in magic.

— *Theo Barnes*

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Esther before Ahasuerus **by Guercino (Giovanni Fracesco Barbieri) 1591-1666** University of Michigan Museum of Art 1963/2.45

Dressed and adorned in ways accentuating her beauty, Esther approached the king. And, according to Scripture, he extended his scepter to her hand, the sign that she might live and speak.

At her request, the Jews are reprieved. Having cast her glamour over Ahasuerus, Esther was able to save her people.

The message is mixed. Hollyday considers Vashti, Ahasuerus' first wife, the real heroine of the story.

But Esther's witness suggests that there may be times when our witness for justice or peace could be enhanced by engaging glamour. Do we sell our witness short? Do we prohibit our access to the king's quarters by shunning the clothing of the courts? Are our simple life-style choices ever used to insulate ourselves from actually having to deliver our message?

All of us probably have stories of times when we did wrangle an invitation to an event in the halls of power and by dressing appropriately had a chance to speak.

There must be countless examples of times when people have followed Paul's advice to adopt alternately the appearance of the Jews or Gentiles and who have thus prevailed on world rulers for justice.

I think more readily of confrontative actions where costume permitted access: like when a group of us entered a country club to challenge a congressman who supported U.S. military suppression of El Salvador or when other unfurled banners at a Detroit Economic Club luncheon, at which the Navy Secretary spoke, protesting the decision to name a fast attack submarine Corpus Christi.

I'm not suggesting that it is always right to compromise with cultural values. It can be as effective and more appropriate, at times, to use costume for the oppo-

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site purpose, like transgender-dressing at a wedding where gender roles are paramount or Oriana Fallaci's radical move during a coveted interview with Khomeini when she dropped the required veil to ask why it was so important to him.

One can reveal the operating, and often hidden, presumptions by wearing the wrong costume, even wearing one's nudity to challenge the constraints and rigidity of a culture. One thinks of Lady Godiva and of Christ's suggestion to Palestinian peasants that when they are sued for their cloak (a frequent collateral) they should surrender their undergarments also — standing naked then before the one collecting their debt.

In either case, adrenalin runs high. One is in costume. One has adopted an attitude, perhaps a pretense. One will interrupt the decorum and the momentum of the place by speaking, by refusing to rise or to salute, by keeping silence, by stripping, by bannering, by miming — somehow contriving to "act humanly in the midst of death," as William Stringfellow would describe it.

Hollyday raises up a woman in her chapter on Esther who was inspired by the queen.

"On the day before Mother's Day in 1963, Flora Smith, then 55, woke up and told herself, 'I'm going to go to jail today, and be somebody's mother tomorrow.'

"She packed her bag with a toothbrush and her white dress and headed into downtown Birmingham, Alabama. During the freedom march from the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church she broke away and went to the steps of City Hall. 'Since I had a Bible, they didn't stop me,' she said. 'I just bowed down and started praying.'

"She was eventually arrested for blocking the sidewalk and spent eight days in jail. She coordinated devotions and Bible studies for the 200 other women there, many of whom had been swept off the streets by the police without warning and separated from their children.

"Flora Smith told me that it was the story of Esther that inspired her to act. She knew her role in the jail was one of providing comfort and courage. 'God had a reason for me being there,' she said, 'just as God had a mission for Esther."

Walking by faith

Lastly, there is another element of casting one's glamour: one can decide to act and live according to values not manifest in the prevailing culture.

One thinks readily of Noah building an ark and of Jews filling a cup for Elijah during the Passover dinner. The disciples moving through the crowd with loaves and fishes must have wondered if what they were doing would prove absurd.

Thomas Merton edited a book of letters written by a German Jesuit who was arrested by the Nazis for holding gatherings during which they discussed what they would do "after the fall of the Third Reich." The women ordained in 1974 and 1975 stepped out in faith that their vocation was real despite the prevailing spirit in the church.

Every year we celebrate Christ's victory over death and still people die and the principalities flaunt their power.

To any outsider these acts must seem delusional, but they can represent the epitome of faithfulness — perhaps the only incarnational example of something one knows to be true.

In confronting the principalities nothing seems more important than understanding how things were uttered in the Word of God to be and living creatively within the tension between that and this "present darkness." Refusing to be transformed by this world may require liberating our psyches and our self-image so that we can walk by faith and, from time to time, choose to cast our glamour.

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Whose vision is it?

moderated by Holly Brubach

[Excerpted from "Whose Vision Is It, Anyway? The New York Times Magazine, *July 17, 1994.]*

They seemed, in principle, like worthy adversaries: Linda Nochlin, the distinguished feminist art historian and critic, a professor of modern art at New York University whose thought-provoking essays on women as depicted in 19th-century painting have pioneered a new way of looking at familiar works by Courbet, Degas and other artists; Thierry Mugler, the Paris fashion designer, admired for his intricate cuts and notorious for his theatrical runway shows — a cavalcade of Amazons, mermaids, angels, dominatrixes, space-age sex goddesses, vampires and other female stock characters, clothed in such elaborate fantasies as a quilted leather bustier and matching hot pants with motorcycle handlebars protruding from the waist.

Holly Brubach: If fashion is in fact "a trick and a game," what does the game tell us about the women who play it?

Mugler: So many things. A lot, I think.

Nochlin: Well, that's if you think there's such a thing as women. I'm more inclined to agree with somebody like Joan Riviere, who was a student of Freud and said that femininity is a condition of disguise. I mean, there may be women, but femininity you dress up for. You learn how to be feminine — it's not something natural, ever. So I would say that the great designer of clothing is always providing additional disguises to create new forms of the feminine.

And I would say that clothes tell you something about the choice of the woman who's wearing them, but they don't tell you anything about the quote-

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unquote real woman, because I don't think there is a real woman. There's a real person, but I don't think it's a woman.

Mugler: Very true. There is only the person who chooses to play the feminine role, to experience different aspects of femininity.

Brubach: And do you feel, Thierry, that you're furnishing women with disguises that they can pick and choose and use?

Mugler: Completely. Completely. It's like directing your own everyday movie.

Brubach: Linda, it sounds to me as if your theory is not so much that the woman is natural but that the person is natural and the woman artificial.

Mugler: Not only the woman but the whole mythology of femininity.

Nochlin: Exactly. But I would also tie it in to certain postmodernist ideas about the self — that there is no self, even. That the self is a condition of disguise and that we can move back and forth in terms of sexualities, in terms of social being, in terms of all kinds of senses of who we are. And I think fashion helps us wonderfully in this.

That's why, in a sense, I would say that fashion is *the* postmodern art, because it helps to destabilize the self in such a wonderful way.

Brubach: Thierry, you've used drag queens and transsexuals as models for your shows. Does that mean that the image that your clothes project — the pushed-up breasts, the cinched waist — is in fact there for anyone to step into? That the requirements for looking like a woman aren't inherent to women?

Mugler: What I was saying in my choice of models is that this game of femininity, if you choose to play it — well, why not a transsexual? Because they are the maximum.

Nochlin: Beyond the maximum.

Mugler: No one wants to be more feminine than a transsexual.

Brubach: When you see these women you've dressed on the runway being so forthright about their sexuality, who do you think is in control? Are they, or is it the men who respond to them?

Nochlin: It's so extreme that these women aren't sex objects, they're sex subjects. Also, we know that this is a kind of artifice — it's a performance.

Mugler: It's not artifice; it's a help — a trick. Because what we're showing exists already; we didn't invent it. We're just presenting it in another way, in a better package.

Nochlin: Right. But it's not a cute little secretary looking like this every day in the office so she'll get a raise. I mean, what you're doing is on a completely different scale. This is like some archetype.

Mugler: And you put yourself in it sometimes, when you feel like it.

Brubach: For centuries, Woman has been the subject of all kinds of painting and sculpture. And in our century, Woman has been the subject of fashion, as well. Men's fashions have remained fairly constant and low-key, by comparison, with none of the sumptuousness and fantasy that you find in men's clothing in the 18th century. What do you think accounts for this preoccupation with women? Is it something so simple as the fact that most artists and most fashion designers have been men, or is there some other explanation?

Mugler: I don't know why, but it's true that woman for centuries became a beautiful, stupid object. And now it's changing again.

Nochlin: Well, you know, there's a theory, by a student of Freud's in the 1930s named Flugel. He had this theory, that at the end of the 18th century there was what he called "the Great Masculine Renunciation." In the 18th century, men's clothes were even more splendid than women's — I mean, absolutely gorgeous, in satin and silk. But with the coming of capitalism and the rise of the bourgeoisie, men adopted a kind of uniform: the black suit. And they renounced fashion, elegance and beauty.

Mugler: But the women did, too. And fashion passed to the courtesan.

Nochlin: Yes. Right. O.K. So, in exchange for a certain kind of public power, an economic power, and in order to be able to run the capitalist factory, so to speak, man renounced beauty in order to become the subject — in order to control beauty.

Mugler: So, it was all about money.

Nochlin: Yes. And I think gay culture has certainly brought back the idea that men can be spectacular and beautiful. And so did the dandy culture, in the 19th century. But that was more about nuances of cut, the right kind of cloth — very subtle kinds of things. Whereas the task of being gorgeous was thrust onto women, who were less powerful — women of leisure, that is, who had time to adorn themselves.

Brubach: I won't ask you to define good taste, but I wonder what you think is its antithesis? Vulgarity?

Mugler: Oh, no! Vulgarity's fun! I would say that the opposite of good taste is bourgeois chic, a kind of obligation to conform.

Nochlin: Everyone wearing the same thing.

Mugler: If someone now goes to the Oscars wearing a tiara and a fabulous dress, people say, "Oh, she's so tacky," because you have to wear a *chemise de nuit* and no jewel now to be in. You have to look discreet and poor and beige and gray.

Nochlin: Right. Understated. Safe taste is, to me, bad taste.

Mugler: That's it. The opposite of good taste is safe.

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From Clairol to persuasion

by S. R. Skees

Nobody knows better than Sue Culver the price one pays for wearing a facade. She began training very early in life.

"I started modeling training in my early 20s, with John Robert Powers. Some Clairol people were on site one day and asked me if I'd be interested in working for them. I didn't have any idea what that meant. Part of it was that I had very dark hair, and they wanted to color my hair; they said I was a natural blonde. That was not something that we did, in my family.

"[But] I said I'd try it. I ended up with very long, blonde hair. I always intended to take it back [to brown] because that was not natural. But I kept getting jobs.

" I was enjoying all the media attention, and it was sort of a glamorous way to live, all kinds of perks. I went from someone who had very low self-esteem to making outward changes and having all these things happen. It was an incredible experience.

"It becomes very heady, the attention that's given to you becomes more artificial, your life becomes more artificial, unreal. So the dark side is that, depending on your own self-image and your ability to process information, your ability to see yourself realistically can disappear."

Kissing Clairol goodbye

Culver worked for Clairol through most of her 20s. She did a lot of international shows. In those days, she says, models often compromised themselves by either sleeping with the men they wanted jobs with, or lying about what product they were using or how they were using it.



Janet McCully and Sue Culver run *With Grace Ltd.*, a company that teaches poise and influence to women in prison and on welfare.

"They were using products on my hair that were not Clairol products, because I had very strong hair and it was resistant to some of the colors that Clairol had, so they were using other colors. And I was struggling with that, because I knew they weren't telling the truth.

"I got to the point where I felt I could no longer compromise."

Teaching performance

Culver worried about the loss of the "nice income and all"; she had marital problems and wondered how she would go on. She then returned, in the mid-1960s, to John Robert Powers, where she had trained, to teach young models. Two terrified women from small towns, wearing jeans and snapping bubble gum in a place where pearls and hats were code, "started to cry when I asked their name, and my life was changed from that moment on.

"I had such empathy and compassion for both of them, for being so scared. I worked with them for six months and they both got jobs. We did things from fencing to yoga, to makeup to wardrobe to diction."

Her favorite students were "what I would call the less privileged, those who did not have some of the opportunities of some of the others. It was those women who came through and felt better about themselves as a result."

With Grace

In 1990, Culver's faith and dreams took her entirely out of the industry and into a related field, working as a consultant with women who want to increase their power by cultivating their glamour. She founded *With Grace Ltd.* with Janet McCully, a business manager whom she met at a retreat for women at St. Barnabas Church on Bainbridge Island.

The company, which is contracted by corporations and subsidized by federal grants, teaches women to use their appearance and their persona "to withstand what can be a competitive, cruel corporate world," McCully says.

McCully says it was "probably God" who drew her to *With Grace* after a long career in both upper management and three periods of unemployment. Having suffered "tremendous discrimination" in a previous job, the severe depression she felt led to "several spiritual conversions."

The two pray every day. "We pray over all of our clients," McCully says. They never bring their Episcopal faith into the classroom, but even agnostic clients comment on the "spiritual feeling" of the course's process.

"We work with the state," notes McCully. And "we can't put our values on somebody else," adds Culver. "I will always adapt myself. If the room is full of charismatics and there is one non, I will be with the non. Many of our clients have grown up in homes where religion was taught as guilt and a method of punish-

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S. R. Skees, who holds a master's in world religions from Harvard Divinity School, writes on international religion and women's spirituality.

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ment. I don't ever want [my faith] to be a barrier. I just want to be the best witness I can of my own life."

An incest survivor, Culver has found that she can relate well to many of her clients who are also victims of sexual, physical, or emotional violence.

Pain and healing

The two women believe they share a background of pain and healing with the women they now teach. "We both hit rock bottom," notes McCully, "and came out on top. [I now have] faith enough to face the pain, and move through it, and know that there's light on the other side."

With Grace does intensive workshops, funded by federal government programs, for unemployed women and continued training for welfare recipients. (Corporate clients pay up to $1,600 a day.)

"This is a real ministry for us," says Culver. "We've had a very good success rate getting women off welfare." Eighty-nine percent of *With Grace* graduates are now working or in school.

Culver and McCully have flown their campaign to Washington, D.C. to lobby for federal money and similar programs.

Since more than half of communication between two people goes on nonverbally, *With Grace* trains interviewees to "mirror" their potential supervisors' posture, gestures. Even the color of a suit matters.

"Color is my passion," says Culver. "You can create energy, you can make or break an interview with color." A woman wearing red, for example, may be unconsciously perceived by a woman interviewer as aggressive and threatening; elsetimes red can empower, enliven.

Morning classes include academics on transference of skills, job readiness, personality; afternoons are spent on wardrobing, color, makeup, resumé writing. They use Meyers-Briggs personality exploration, role-playing in management and interviewing, videotaped presentations and studies in chromatics. Each woman receives individual counseling on her skills and appearance. "There's a trust level at the very beginning," says McCully, "that is developed because there's a connection" which is "the Holy Spirit. We're not bureaucratic people," she continues. "We're not the *system*; we're people who care."



Sue Culver in a Clairol proof sheet shot in the late 1960s.

After training

Many *With Grace* students are "depressed, isolated moms" who go on welfare as a short-term bridge. Anita Coppola was like that.

"I had just left New York and an abusive husband," Coppola recalls. "I came straight to Seattle and immediately went on welfare."

Coppola, who had two boys then 2 and 4, left home when her husband threw a size 12 Reebok at the older child's head. Her older son, especially, had witnessed much of the abuse against his mother.

Landing in Seattle with nothing but sheer will to keep her children safe, Coppola remembers how "I had no self-esteem at all. With all that physical and mental abuse—after a while you begin to say, 'He's right.'"

The children "were scared, miserable, little brats. At night I'd have to let them fall asleep on the couch, rub their backs." The written exercises and group sessions at *With Grace* boosted Coppola. "They made me realize all the talents I had, even though I'd been basically a

> *"It becomes very heady, the attention that's given to you becomes more artificial, your life becomes more artificial, unreal. So the dark side is that, depending on your own self-image and your ability to process information, your ability to see yourself realistically can disappear."*
>
> *— Sue Culver*

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housewife all my life."

Now, a year later, she has been through a six-week *With Grace* program and landed a "dead-end telemarketing job" from which she rose to management within six months. Her kids are "terrific. It's a night-and-day difference from a year ago," Coppola says.

Now making over $30,000, Coppola manages a staff of 24 and dreams of becoming a defense lawyer. "I *will* go back to school someday," she says. "I've wanted to do this since I was 18 years old."

Lenise Clemons, a single mother of two boys aged 14 and 2, had worked previously as a legal secretary but had developed a loathing for that work and quit. She spent a year job-searching, getting by on welfare and with the help of friends. She entered a JOBS program, and balked when the counselor tried to send her to *With Grace*. "I wasn't going to go at first. In fact, the first day, I really hated it."

Clemons felt she already knew much about how to present herself, and she saw the program as a superficial waste of time. "I was tired. I was tired of trying. Really, I just wanted a *job*."

She went home the first night and telephoned Culver to say she was dropping out. "She asked me to give it a try, just till Wednesday. And then every day after that, she asked me to just try a little longer."

"Ninety-eight percent of women in prison — at least in our federal prison here [in Seattle] — have been

The real payoff came for Clemons when *With Grace* sent her on a supposed informational interview with the company for which she now works. "They had connections that I didn't know about," she says. "The interview was supposed to be about 15 minutes. Well, I was here for over an hour, and I felt pretty sure I was going to get the job." She has worked in sales support for Attachmate, a hardware and software company, since her June graduation from *With Grace*.

The slower pace of computer sales support, says Clemons, suits her much better than legal work. She plans to begin night school, in job-related courses; Attachmate pays employees' tuition.

Becoming the look

"Ninety-eight percent of women in prison — at least in our federal prison here [in Seattle] — have been abused," says Culver, "either physically or sexually, and mentally and emotionally of course through all that. That is the biggest connector, because people tend to see me in an outward way and wouldn't have any idea that maybe these are the kinds of things that have happened in my life.

"But when I share my story about being abused as a child, as a three-year-old, which is my earliest memory, it is a very powerful tool in that I can give back some of what I've learned—that we no longer have to be a victim, we can be survivors together.

"For me, keeping myself together was one of the ways that I could fake it, and keep others away from me. People would perceive me as someone who really had it together, even though internally I might have been falling apart. What I try to share with these women is how you can keep it together externally and still get through, and be able to make positive contributions to your life and your community, even though you have suffered.

"This is the first time in my life that I have felt totally integrated with both my inner and my outer. One of the biggest chunks of my life has been opened up, and revealed; and I survived. And they will too. Having that in common is a great denominator, no matter what our skin color is, our economic or sociological background."

"But when I share my story about being abused as a child, as a three-year-old, which is my earliest memory, it is a very powerful tool in that I can give back some of what I've learned — that we no longer have to be victims, we can be survivors together." — *Sue Culver*

Beauty, they say, begins with a good haircut and befitting clothes but ends with the glow of self-respect.

"I see glamour in every person I work with," insists Culver. "Our American version of glamour has become so distorted. Especially young women today think they have to be thin, to be blonde, to be a redhead, to have freckles, to have long arms. We dispel this in our classes.

"These women are survivors, and they're incredible women." TW

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Walking by faith

by Nancy Cannon

Louise Guyton is a mighty woman — a warm, honest, bright woman — filled with fight and faith. It is her training, learned through suffering, that has built her extraordinary faith in God's goodness. And it is this extraordinary faith that's helping stimulate new life in our lower east side Detroit parish. It is a faith that has been tried by fire.

Guyton has reared 12 children and four grandchildren. She has lost a son, lived a long life with sickle cell anemia, gone through six surgeries and most significantly, lost her sight.

If you ask Guyton about her life, her immediate response is "God is the most wonderful thing that has happened to me. I couldn't have gotten through all of this without God and with each crisis I have gotten stronger — each one has taught me how much God loves me."

Guyton's faith is simple, yet far from simplistic and, as she will tell you, "You've got to learn about calling (believing) things not as though they were." As she explains, our words have power. As we envision and believe that which is true in the realm of the spirit or the supernatural, we help it to come to pass in the realm of the material or natural.

Guyton learned this challenging principle through her own painful experience. After having lived many years with sickle cell anemia, she lost the sight of her left eye at age 50. Guyton accepted that loss and did not despair until she lost the sight of her right eye two years later. She was repeatedly told by various eye specialists that she would never see again.



Louise Guyton Richard Cannon

However, Guyton says "I couldn't accept that. I cried out to God and said NO! I sought God for healing and knew that my help had to come from God."

It was about the time she was learning to walk with a cane that Guyton learned of Kenneth Hagin's concept of "calling things not as though they were." Guyton began to stand on the promises of God — to stand on the spiritual truth that in Christ she had been made whole.

As we envision and believe that which is true in the realm of the spirit or the supernatural, we help it to come to pass in the realm of the material or natural.

From that moment on she began "calling things not as though they were." She told others she could see even as she walked in darkness. "The nice thing about being blind," she recalls, "is that you can't see people laughing and snickering at you." And they did because for three months she persisted in calling things not as though they were.

"I can see," she would insist over and over even though there would be dark moments of weeping in private.

You can imagine her family's joy and amazement on that day, three months later, when she walked by the TV screen and saw the head of McGarrett of "Hawaii Five-O." "Grandma, you really can see this time!" they exclaimed.

"I know if I had accepted and believed what the doctors said I would be blind today," Guyton said. And if Guyton had been reluctant to look foolish in the eyes of others, she would be blind today. And if she had not stepped out in faith, she would be blind today. But she is not blind today. Her sight was restored 11 years ago and Louise can still see well.

Guyton is not the only one who had her sight restored. I had been blinded by a culture that reinforces self-sufficiency and knows very little about dependence on God. A culture that will only believe and affirm that which it can explain. I had also been blinded by the illusion that I could stay in control of my life. Somehow an important chapter had been neglected in my training — the chapter on trusting God and "believing things not as though they were."

Guyton and I gather with others to "believe in things not as though they were." We're believing in a world where we are made whole by the loving intersection of all races, classes, ages and sexes. We are believing that our children and grandchildren are turning out fine, even as we deal with teenage turmoil. We are believing that drugs are losing their grip on our neighborhood and our city. We are believing for many who are sick. Most of all we are thanking God because week after week we see changes for the better. TW

Nancy Cannon has been part of the pastoral team at Messiah, Detroit, for 20 years and is a sculptor in clay.

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Captivated by pretensions

by Ched Myers

"What you want is what you get."
—McDonald's slogan

There is a world of difference between costume and uniform in the context of public space. Costuming — through dress, mask or voice — seeks to make a cultural, sub-cultural or personal statement by challenging dominant cultural codes; it exercises *image*-ination.

Uniforms seek to build self- or group-esteem by reproducing the dictates of image-makers; it practices *uniform*-ity.

This difference articulates that tricky biblical dialectic that celebrates human life (in its diversity) as made "in the image of God" but that prohibits the worship of "graven" (which is to say socially constructed) images. It is the distinction between *iconography* (in the tradition of the Eastern Church) and *idolatry.*

We can only rediscover the liberating power of the former by understanding and resisting the oppressive power of the latter. Here, therefore, I want to focus on the Rule of Image.

In modern consumer capitalism the culture of uniformity expropriates our humanity, transforms it according to the vicissitudes of the market, and offers it back to us as a commodity. *Use this and be beautiful, buy this and be powerful, be seen in this and be influential.* In the 20th century such discourse has come to dominate our public space through the ever-increasing power and presence of the commercial media.

Advertising is an increasingly relentless aural and visual onslaught upon our consciousness, saturating us with objectified texts and seductive subtexts which we cannot help but absorb. We are all too familiar with the cacophony of radio jingles and 30-second television spots. But long before their advent, the maze of retail signing had already profoundly transformed urban space.

A few examples can illustrate this point. A billboard seen around southern California during the 1992 Christmas holidays read:

ingle ells, ingle ells...
What are the holidays without J & B?

This was an exceedingly sophisticated sign system — but one immediately intelligible to the average consumer. It was clever; it was cute; it could be read at 65 miles per hour; and it "worked." Afterwards many thought of J & B scotch when singing Christmas carols, European-American folk culture having been effectively commandeered into the service of capitalism.

In modern consumer capitalism the culture of uniformity expropriates our humanity, transforms it according to the vicissitudes of the market, and offers it back to us as a commodity.

The commodification of culture in all its forms is ubiquitous. For example Mark Miller has shown how 1950s and 1960s rock and roll music is employed to sell products targeting the baby boomer market: "A few years ago, advertisers started grabbing every serviceable oldie in the rock and roll canon, hoping that each vivid tag might jump-start the nostalgic yearning of the aging viewer ... using 'Ain't No Mountain High Enough' to pitch Fords, by redoing the Platters' 'Only You' as 'only Wendy's,' by using the Turtles' 'Happy Together' to sell General Mills Golden Grahams, and by using the Diamonds' 'Little Darling' to push the Chicken Little sandwich for Kentucky Fried Chicken."

The Rule of Image profoundly affects how we apprehend the "news." Media marketing even overdetermines war. Scott Shuger points to the unpredecented commercial spin-offs from Desert Storm, suggesting that while advertising during wartime used to portray the product in a way that "served the larger cause," now "it's practically the other way around."

Finally, consider the example of the *Guess?* clothing line, "known" to the consumer largely through upscale advertisements. *Guess?'s* huge profitability, with $750 million in annual revenues, was chronicled in admiring business profiles. What did not appear and what could never by extrapolated from those trendy ads, was the company's rampant labor-law violations. Its local contractors were paying sweatshop workers well under the minimum wage, refusing overtime and employing child labor.

By repeatedly absorbing the fictive jousting of rival car, deodorant or television marketeers, we become more likely to believe their claims to offer us real choices, and less likely to inquire about the real interests that lie behind these

Ched Myers is a *Witness* contributing editor and author of *Who Will Roll Away the Stone? Discipleship Queries for First World Christians* (Maryknoll, Orbis, 1994). Photographer **Jim West** is an editor of *Labor Notes.*

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discourse games. "People recognize themselves in their commodities," wrote Herbert Marcuse three decades ago in his classic *One Dimensional Man.* "Free choice among a wide variety of goods and services does not signify freedom if these goods and services sustain social controls over a life of toil and fear — that is, they sustain alienation." We are truly fascinated with the images that proliferate around us. *Fascination*: Deriving from the Latin *fascinum,* "evil eye," it originally meant "to bewitch or cast under a spell."

We have fully internalized capitalism when we no longer experience cognitive dissonance when Budweiser does spots on "responsible drinking," or when Philip-Morris makes grants to minority health fairs, or when Georgia-Pacific trumpets its commitment to the environment.

Our relationship to the Rule of Image is thus "consum-mated": we become consumed with what we consume. We become passive consumers of aggressive discourses which form us socially and spiritually. What we want is, indeed, what we get.

A popular current beer commercial offers the perfect mantra for a credulous consumeriat: "Why ask why?" But if we are not "asking why," Jacques Ellul wrote in *Propaganda*, we assume the "mentality of the propagandee," wherein our "confused thoughts are crystallized" by the media. In this case, Ellul put it grimly, "the reader himself offers his throat to the knife of the propaganda he chooses."

Karl Marx realized that "the reformation of consciousness lies solely in the awakening of the world ... from its dreams about itself." It is little wonder, then, that the most constant exhortation from the Jesus of the gospels is that disciples learn to "read" (Mk 2:25; 9:12; 12:10), to "Be aware!" (Mk 4:24; 8:15; 12:38; 13:5), and to "Stay awake!" (Mk 13:33,37; 14:37). TW



Selling cars Jim West

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Revising Title IV: fighting for the needs of victims

by Sally A. Johnson

Last summer's General Convention in Indianapolis, Ind., amended the Episcopal Church's disciplinary canon (Title IV), a canon that had remained virtually unchanged since its adoption in the early 20th century. As we discussed during the Convention, it had been "drafted by gentlemen for use by gentlemen to deal with charges of heresy."

While disputes about doctrine pervade the church today, the canon needed substantial revision to respond to charges of clergy misconduct — sexual misconduct in particular. The cry from chancellors, bishops and, to a lesser extent, priests, was for a uniform procedure for all dioceses to use. Under the old canon the procedures for disciplining deacons and priests were left up to each diocese — many dioceses had already developed their own extra-canonical processes for such matters, but others had not.

In response, the Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons had drafted a proposed revision to Title IV for the 1994 General Convention to consider.

A lay deputy to the Convention from the Diocese of Minnesota, I was appointed to the House of Deputies' legislative committee on canons, the committee that would bring the proposed Title IV revisions to the deputies for action.

Critiquing the proposed revisions

When I first sat down several months before Convention to review the 70-page proposed revision, I thought, "Not bad. Looks like it makes sense." The proposal created a uniform process for handling the investigation of charges and restricting the activities of the accused cleric while



Sally A. Johnson

charges are pending, set the standard for a diocese's standing committee to use in deciding whether to issue a "Presentment" (akin to an indictment in the criminal courts) and provided a uniform system of trials and appeals. While the proposed revisions did not substantially change the process for disciplining bishops, they did increase the time limit for making complaints of clergy misconduct and change the burden of proof from the criminal standard of "beyond a reasonable doubt" to the highest standard of civil proof, which is "clear and convincing evidence."

Several weeks later I read the proposed revisions again, this time with a pencil in hand. By the time I was done my copy was so marked up that I couldn't read it. My difficulties were so numerous and pervasive, I wondered if the proposal should be scrapped. The bishop's role in the disciplinary process had been gutted. Chancellors had all but been cut out of the process. The role of lay people in administering discipline was not equal to the role of clergy. Victims, while entitled to the appointment of an "Ombudsman," had no right to participate in the process after filing a charge. The process was secretive, complex, time consuming and potentially expensive, requiring the involvement of four to seven lawyers (not counting the defense lawyers for the accused). Clergy were guaranteed virtually every imaginable constitutional due-process right despite a statement that, "Clergy who have voluntarily sought and accepted ordination in this Church have given their express consent and subjected themselves to the discipline of this Church and may not claim in proceedings under this Title constitutional guarantees afforded to citizens in other contexts."

Finally, the burden on the diocesan standing committee of a diocese was horrendous — it was charged with approving any temporary measures the bishop took to restrict the activities of a priest while a charge was pending, deciding whether a charge was serious enough to warrant an investigation, deciding whether a charge was supported by enough evidence to warrant issuing a Presentment (a statement of the charges and a summary of the evidence that support putting the cleric on trial).

I wrote a 30-page commentary on Title IV that was sent to all the members of the House of Deputies and House of Bishops committees on canons the week before we gathered in Indianapolis (the two committees met and voted together as a joint committee throughout Convention), but my critique of the draft was not the only one that was circulated and, as we met to consider the proposed revisions, tension filled the air.

Open hearing

On the first Friday of Convention, the committee held an open hearing on the proposed revisions. A 34-year-old man told of being sexually abused by an Episcopal priest from the age of eight to 20 and his difficulty in coming to terms with the abuse enough to bring it to the attention of church authorities. A female priest told of being sexually harassed by a male priest and of the negative treatment she received from church authorities after reluctantly coming forward to share her story. A woman who works with congregations torn apart by allegations of misconduct against their clergy told the

Vital Signs

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committee that congregations need information in order to start the healing process. Another witness who works with victims read a letter from a former General Convention deputy who told of being sexually exploited by her bishop and the lack of response when she informed church authorities (see sidebar, page 27). Finally, a male priest told of the difficulties he endured after being accused of sexual harassment by a former church secretary whom he had fired.

While the drafters of the proposed revisions had consulted with the Committee on Sexual Exploitation, various chancellor groups and the National Episcopal Clergy Association (NECA), those who spoke at the hearing made clear their concern that the needs of victims, congregations, standing committees and bishops had not been adequately considered.

Amending the revisions

Our joint legislative committee discussed at length whether to attempt to amend the proposal or whether to refer it to another group to be reworked for presentation to the next General Convention. We decided to try to work through the revisions, considering amendments line by line, although the committee chairs announced that no amendments would be considered unless they were written up in sufficient time to allow copies to be made.

I prepared about 75 written amendments. Another committee member prepared about 15 written amendments and several others prepared a handful more. On Saturday morning we started at page one, line one, of the proposal and began working through it line by line. Each amendment — the committee considered about 180, including many that hadn't been written up ahead of time — was voted on in turn and over 110 were eventually adopted after sometimes strenuous debates.

I was striving for a process that addressed the needs of the victims as well as other stakeholders in the process. The only committee member who also expressed this concern from the outset was a woman priest (the committee consisted of 23 men, all clergy or lawyers, and five women of whom only two had experience in law or misconduct matters). Several of the other committee members focussed on protecting clergy (principally men) from both tyrannical bishops and victims, principally women, who could be expected to bring false charges against them.

It felt like a battle. Us against them. Although it wasn't clear who the "us" was and who the "them" was. Men against women? Accusers against accused? Lay against clergy? Change against *status quo*? Victims against offenders? Law against love?

By Sunday, however, a change had come over most of the committee and battle gave way to collaboration. The members were starting to think about how the process would impact victims and congregations, how to balance the priests' need for fair procedures with the need of bishops to respond quickly and with flexibility as soon as complaints are made, and how a balanced and fair disciplinary procedure could help the church respond to complaints, not based on what the secular courts might do to the church, but based on what it means to *be* the church.

Point of contention: time limitations for complaints of misconduct

One of the most significant changes between the old canon and the proposed revision was in the length of time a person has after a wrongful act by a priest or bishop to bring a complaint to church authorities. Under the old canon it was five years. No extensions were given for wrongful acts against children or for any other reason. If the wrongful conduct occurred more than five years ago, no canonical disciplinary action could be taken.

The drafters of the Title IV revisions had proposed lengthening the time for the offenses of "Conduct Unbecoming a Member of the Clergy" and "Crime and Immorality" (acts of sexual abuse, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and/or physical abuse would, in all likelihood, fit within one or more of these) to the age of 23 for victims who were minors at the time of the wrongful conduct and for two years after the victim "discovers *or* realizes the effects of the occurrence of the Offense" but not more than ten years after the wrongful conduct.

The drafters had listened to the needs of victims and had included a longer period of time to bring complaints forward, but some of us didn't think they had gone far enough.

People who are sexually or physically abused as children often don't even consciously remember the abuse for many, many years. When they finally do, it may take a number of years of therapy for them to understand that they didn't deserve to be abused, that it wasn't their fault and that it was wrong. After that it often takes years before they are strong enough to share their experiences with persons in authority and to participate effectively in a complicated disciplinary process. The same can be true for adult victims of sexual exploitation or physical violence. For those reasons, we proposed eliminating entirely all time limitations for complaints of sexual abuse, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and physical abuse. While the committee did not accept that, they did accept eliminating any limitations for the sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or physical abuse of minors. And they extended from ten to 15 years after the wrongful act the time an adult victim of physical or sexual abuse or exploitation has to discover *and* realize the effects of the wrongful act.

Creating a "window" for bringing charges

Laws are generally prospective only. However, since the church has only recently come to understand sexual and physical abuse and exploitation, it has not always dealt well with complaints that have been brought to its attention in the past. And, in many instances bishops, or the Presiding Bishop in the case of misconduct by bishops, have been prevented from disciplining clergy because of the absolute five-year limitation. Several of us proposed the

continued on page 23

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I was one of you once

[Ed. note: The following anonymous "testimony" by a former deputy to General Convention was read to the joint legislative committee on constitutions and canons by Margo Maris, a longtime victims' advocate, during hearings held on proposed revisions to the Title IV disciplinary canon at the 1994 General Convention in Indianapolis, Ind., last summer.]

I was one of you once
a deputy to General Convention.
You probably arrived at this point
the same way I did —
A long journey through parish picnics and vestry votes,
From diocesan appointments to standing committee elections.
Like you, I cared very deeply
about my expanding family in Christ,
I celebrated my faith and life itself,
And I rejoiced in the love of God.

I was one of you once.
So for a moment imagine
this happening to you.

Imagine, your diocesan bishop sexually violates you repeatedly, and when you finally have the courage to confront him,he says, "We didn't do anything wrong."

Imagine, your chancellor responds to your revelation by saying, "Well, you're very attractive and he's only human."
Where was the shock, sorrow, sympathy or indignation?

Imagine, your rector concludes, "Even if you'd ripped off all your clothes and thrown yourself at him, he still shouldn't have done what he did to you."
But the Rector doesn't offer to confront his boss and benefactor, or even suggest how you should or could proceed.

So far, you've got denial, invalidation and dismissal.

But I was one of you once.
So suppose you're in this dilemma
And you think you know who to call.

You call the Bishop of Pastoral Development of the House of Bishops.
He refers you to another person designated as an advocate.

You call your advocate, and you learn ...
There is only one such person offering this ministry in your entire church.
This person is not paid for all that she does.
She is trying to help you in her spare time.
The national church has no protocol for misconduct by a bishop.

What does that tell you about how seriously our church takes this type of issue?

Since I was one of you once
You think you know
What questions to ask?

You ask for information on something called the Court of Trial of a Bishop, that is listed in the Journal of the General Convention, and you learn
It is designed for heresy issues, not misconduct.
It is designed for fellow bishops to implement and execute, not for the laity.
And no one could remember the last time it was called!

What does that tell you about *how* this church hierarchy protects its own?

You ask for an investigation on these charges you are making.
An attorney appointed by the PB does the investigation and determines that he believes you are telling the truth.

Finally, good news!

Knowing I was one of you once
You've finally realized
You can make any request.

You request that pressure be brought to bear to make this bishop in question deal with his problem.
The bishop in question is asked to meet with you, and each of us with another person of our choosing.
He refuses.
The bishop in question is aksed if he will submit to a psychological evaluation.
He refuses.

You request to meet personally with the PB.
God bless him, he accepts.
The PB is sympathetic, but he explains that there is nothing he can do because a diocesan bishop is protected by diocesan autonomy.
The PB agrees to stand by your side if you present your case to the standing committee of that diocese.
But that never happens.

You request that your advocate stand by your side, as she once offered if all else failed.
But the bishop in question has threatened, *via* his attorneys, to sue her if she does any more than she has already done.
Understandably, you both decide against it.

Because I was one of you once
You know that General Convention
Is here.

You offer to be involved in the design of the resolution to be presented to General Convention, even if it is only to be interviewed by this committee.
No one replies.

I was one of you once.
So I ask *YOU*
How would you feel
If this happened to you?

Or your mother, sister, wife or daughter?

You might ask *ME*
How did this affect
My marriage? My children?
My faith? My life?

It's been seven years since the bishop in question performed his version of the "laying on of hands."
He still presides as the spiritual leader
Of the diocese in question.

For me however, nothing is as it was.
I live alone now, in a different diocese
Far from family and former friends.
I can't speak for my children or my family
But I feel as though I've been living a bad dream.

I speak, but no one listens.
I walk, but go nowhere,
I eat, but still hunger,
I work, but excel only at mediocrity.

I'm not blind, but see only grey.
I'm not deaf, but hear no melody.
My heart still beats, but feels no passion.
My soul searches, but finds no answers.

I take communion, but find no peace.
And I pray, and I pray, and I pray.
"Let me be reborn, renewed, redirected, restored.
Forgive me, and let me forgive and forget.
Let me make a difference.
Lord, I was one of them once.
Please, let them hear me."

And finally I sleep, and pray the Lord my soul to take.

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creation of a "window" during which victims whose complaints are now barred by the five-year rule would have a period of time to come forward and make or renew their complaint.

This amendment engendered some of the most heated debate in the committee. I argued that such a "window" would decrease the number of civil lawsuits because victims generally don't sue the church for money unless the church fails to respond when they contact church authorities with their complaint. Others argued that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to expect a cleric to defend a complaint from decades ago. On a close vote the amendment passed.

When the committee concluded its work on Monday morning, it voted unanimously, both bishops and deputies, to recommend the amended Title IV to both houses, an outcome I would not have thought possible the previous Friday. No one thought the document was perfect. But we felt that a uniform process for all dioceses was needed and that the amended proposal was balanced and fair enough to all concerned to give it a try.

On the morning Title IV was considered by both houses, one committee member tried to have the committee reverse its decision on the "window." When that attempt failed, the "window" then became the subject of a floor fight in both houses. Floor amendments to remove it were defeated in both houses and the window, along with the other amended revisions proposed by the joint legislative committee (plus a few minor amendments accepted by the committee on the floor of the House of Deputies), became part of the new Title IV.

The new Title IV

What were the major changes that the amendments to the proposed Title IV revisions accomplished?

Victims now have the right to an advocate and/or attorney of their choice to provide support and guidance. They have the right to be informed of what is happening in the disciplinary process, to receive a copy of the Presentment or the report telling why the diocesan standing committee won't issue a Presentment, to be present during trial, to make statements to the bishop, court, and appeals court regarding sentencing and to be informed of the sentence imposed.

Bishops may continue to talk to clergy about the allegations against them without first advising the clergy person to consult a lawyer. However, any statements that a cleric makes to the bishop about the allegations cannot be used as evidence in an ecclesiastical trial unless the cleric has been given a Miranda type warning. Bishops may issue temporary inhibitions after a complaint is made without first obtaining the permission of the standing committee. And, it is up to the bishop to determine what information about a complaint should be shared with a congregation or other concerned parties.

As discussed above, the time for making complaints has been lengthened and a "window" of two-and-a-half years has been opened for the consideration of complaints that have been barred by the previous five-year limitation.

The role of chancellors has been clarified. While they are not permitted to act as the "Church Attorney" (prosecutor) or to advise the ecclesiastical court on legal issues, they can continue to advise the bishop and the standing committee throughout the process if permitted by local canons.

The role of lay people was expanded. All decisions are now made by all of the members of the standing committee, not just by the clerical members. The same number of clergy or lay persons may bring a charge against a cleric compared to the draft which required two more lay people than clergy to bring a charge. The ecclesiastical court will be made up of both clergy and lay persons, with only one more cleric than the total number of lay persons.

The secret nature of the proceedings has been eliminated in favor of a process where information is shared on a need to know basis in light of pastoral concerns. The standing committee must justify a decision not to issue a Presentment with a written report. Secret ballots were eliminated. Bishops can share information about the proceedings based on what he/she determines is "pastorally appropriate."

What didn't change?

Clergy are still afforded all the constitutional type due-process rights provided in the draft. The canonical process, if it must be used, is still complex, lengthy and potentially expensive, but the amendments reduce the likelihood that the full canonical process will be needed very often.

There are still significant inconsistencies between the procedures for priests and the procedures for bishops. However, General Convention also adopted a resolution to request the Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons to study the disciplinary process for bishops and to suggest recommended changes to the next Convention.

The new Title IV isn't perfect. There were a lot more things I wanted to see changed but they were mostly technical drafting things. The most important things were changed. The revised Title IV will now help the church respond as the church — not only to charges of heresy, but also, finally, to allegations of clergy misconduct.

*Lawyer **Sally A. Johnson,** chancellor of the Diocese of Minnesota, is currently the only women chancellor in the Episcopal Church. Her law practice is concentrated in the representation of nonprofit organizations, particularly in the area of sexual misconduct of employees, volunteers and students, including the drafting and implementation of disciplinary policies.*

Johnson dedicates this article to Margo Maris, former canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Minnesota; Gay Jennings, canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Ohio; and Carol Cole Flanagan, vicar of The Holy Evangelists, Baltimore, Md., and member of the Episcopal Women's Caucus' General Convention legislative team. Without these women's help, Johnson says, "the amendments to the Title IV proposal could not have been made."

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Cracks in the wall of opposition to lesbians and gays

by Louie Crew

The battle of whether to ordain lesbians and gays in the Episcopal Church is almost over. General Convention in Indianapolis this summer refused to pass a resolution which called for a moratorium on such ordinations. Instead, Convention guaranteed access to ordination without regard to sexual orientation and called for a study of ways to bless lesbian and gay relationships.

On the eve of the Convention, 101 bishops, responding to an initiative of many bishops in the church's southwestern dioceses (Province 7), had signed a statement insisting that only heterosex is normative. When these bishops insisted that their objection be included in the House of Bishops' teaching document on sexual issues, John S. Spong, bishop of Newark, told the House that he would continue to support, protect and ordain gays and lesbians to ministry in the Episcopal Church. Sixty-nine bishops have now signed Spong's statement; 106 bishops have now signed the Province 7 statement. Thirty-four of the U.S. signers of the Spong statement are "active" bishops, serving 29 U.S. dioceses that account for 967,097 communicants. Active U.S. signers of the Province 7 statement serve 36 U.S. dioceses, accounting for 645,827 communicants. Active U.S. bishops who signed neither document serve 34 U.S. dioceses, accounting for 833,126 communicants.

Unwelcome drives people away, all sorts and conditions of persons. It is no accident that all three of the women bishops in the Episcopal Church signed Spong's statement. They know first hand what unwelcome has felt like. When the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops tried to assert that heterosexual marriage is the only "normative" context for sexual intimacy, Orris Walker, bishop of Long Island, complained that the proposal "ain't gonna fly in my diocese. It is not part of the reality of the world we live in."

Otis Charles, retired bishop of Utah and the House's only out gay member, commented: "To say that the normative context for sexual intimacy is only in the context of marriage is to exclude the reality of individuals in this house, individuals in the ministry of this church, individuals who share the baptized life of this church."

Louie Crew, the founder of Integrity, teaches English at Rutgers University.

Active U.S. bishops who signed Bishop Spong's Statement:

Alaska — Charleston
Arkansas — Maze
California — Swing
Chicago — Griswold
Chicago — Wiedrich(suff.)
Eastern Oregon — Kimsey
Indianapolis — Jones
El Camino Real — Shimpfky
Kentucky — Gulick
Long Island — Walker
Los Angeles — Borsch
Los Angeles — Talton (suff.)
Massachusetss — Johnson
Massachusetts — Harris (suff.)
Michigan — Wood
Minnesota — Jelinek
Minnesota — Hampton (suff.)
Missouri — Rockwell
New Hampshire — Theuner
New Jersey — Doss (coadj.)
New York — Dennis (suff.)
Newark — Spong
Newark — McKelvey (suff.)
Northern Michigan — Ray
Ohio — Grew
Pennsylvania — Bartlett
Rhode Island — Hunt
Rochester — Burrill
Southern Virginia — Vest
Spokane (Wash.) — Terry
Utah — Bates
Vermont — McLeod
Washington — Dixon (suff.)
Western Michigan — Lee

Active U.S. bishops who signed the Province 7 document:

Albany — Ball
Central Florda — Howe
Central Gulf Coast — Duvall
Dallas — Stanton
East Carolina — Sanders
Eau Claire — Wantland
Florida — Jecko
Fond du Lac — Jacobus
Fort Worth — Iker (coadjutor)
Fort Worth — Pope
Georgia — Shipps
Kansas — Smalley
Lexington — Wimberly
Louisiana — Brown
Milwaukee — White
Nebraska — Krotz
North Dakota — Fairfield
Northern Indiana — Gray
Northwestern Penn. — Rowley
Oklahoma —Moody
Pittsburgh — Hathaway
Quincy — Ackerman
Rio Grande — Kelshaw
San Diego — Hughes
San Joaquin — Schofield
South Carolina — Salmon
Southern Ohio — Thompson
Springfield — Beckwith
Tennessee — Herlong
Texas — Payne (coadjutor)
Texas — Benitez
Texas — Sterling (suffragan)
Up. So. Carolina — Beckham
West Missouri — Buchanan
W. Tenn. — Coleman (coadj.)
West Tennessee — Dickson
West Texas — Folts (coadj.)
West Texas — McNaughton
West Texas — McArthur (suff.)
West Virginia — Smith
Western Kansas — Ashby
W. Louisiana — Hargrove

Active U.S. bishops who signed neither document:

Alabama — Miller
Arizona — Shahan
Atlanta — Allan
Bethlehem — Dyer
Central New York — Joslin
Cen. Pennsylvania — McNutt
Colorado —Winterrowd
Connecticut — Coleridge
Delaware — Tennis
East Tennessee — Tharp
Easton — Townsend
Hawaii — Hart (resigned)
Idaho — Thornton
Iowa — Epting
Maine — Chalfant
Maryland — Longest (suff.)
Mississippi — Marble
Montana — Jones
Navajoland — Plummer
Nevada — Zabriskie
New Jersey — Belshaw
New York — Grein
No. Carolina — Johnson
No. Carolina — Williams (suff.)
Northern California — Lamb
Northwest Texas — Hulsey
Ohio — Williams (suffragan)
Olympia — Warner
Oregon — Ladehoff
Pennsylvania — Turner (suff.)
South Dakota — Robertson
SE Florida — Schofield
Southwest Florida — Harris
Southwestern Virginia — Light
Virginia — Lee
Virginia — Matthews (suff.)
Washington — Haines
Western Mass. — Denig
W. New York — Bowman
W. North Carolina — Johnson
Wyoming — Jones

Active U.S. bishops without diocesan jurisdiction:

Who Signed Bishop Spong's Statement: Harold Hopkins, Office of Pastoral Development; Herbert Donovan, Secretary, House of Bishops

Who Signed the Province 7 Statement: William Frey, Dean of Trinity Seminary; Jeffery Rowthorn, Suffragan Bishop of Europe

Who Signed neither statement: Craig Anderson, Dean of General Seminary; Edmond Browning, Presiding Bishop

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Patenting life

Thousands of farmers in India and other third world countries are joining a resistance movement against corporate control of agriculture through the patenting of seeds, one aspect of a growing trend toward patenting life forms.

Dollars and Sense magazine reports that "the expansion of legal ownership over life took its most dramatic form in the United States in 1976, when doctors cultured cells from the body of John Moore, a man with leukemia. In 1979 the doctors applied for a patent on Moore's cell line (genetic code), called 'Mo.' It seems that Mr. Moore's cells produced large quantities of certain proteins that could bring considerable wealth to those who could sell the substance. In 1984 John Moore filed a lawsuit to gain a share in the profits from his cells. In 1990 the California Supreme Court ruled that John Moore wasn't entitled to any of the profits derived from his own body. ...

"In addition to patenting human cells, scientists have been busy expanding the boundaries of ownership elsewhere, including our food supply. Agribusiness corporations are scheming to obtain patents on seeds, which, if successful, would force everyone on the planet growing particular food crops to pay royalties to them."

The Third World Farmers' Movement Against Transnational Corporations has declared that they "reject the concept of the patenting of all forms of life, including plants, animals, microorganisms, human beings, or their parts."

—Martin Teitel and Chirag Mehta, *Dollars and Sense*, 9-10/94

Criminalizing homelessness

"An increasing number of U.S. cities are criminalizing non-criminal behavior such as loitering and sleeping in public. At least 50 cities are considering or already have adopted ordinances that specifically target the behavior of homeless people, according to Michael Stoops of the National Coalition for the Homeless. ... Santa Cruz now arrests people who sit on the sidewalk. Riot police in full gear were called out on May 11, 1994, to arrest a group of people for sitting on the sidewalk while they ate free soup. ... The city of Berkeley is now considering an ordinance that would limit to one shopping bag the number of belongings people can carry with them."

— Celine-Marie Pascale, *The Utne Reader*, 9-10/94

Turning criminal energy around

"I know this sounds crazy, but I like the energy of criminals. They do everything backwards, but I always thought, 'What if we could flip that energy totally around.' You see, these people haven't given up. Or rather, their version of giving up is not to die, but to keep clawing and spitting and being destructive and self-destructive and violent. ... And it just seemed to me that if you could take that and turn it in the opposite direction, there would be such a potential life-force. ...

"You have to be willing to completely take a risk on the people who are the problem, to make them the solution. And we do that one hundred percent. Our residents typically have everything wrong with them. They've literally failed at everything. They're violent. They've been victims of child abuse. Most of them have been in gangs. They've been in prison time after time. But the idea is to truly live together like an extended family, with the kind of support and discipline that will teach us everything we need to know to make it. ...

"People learn to be givers and does rather than receivers. As soon as you learn something, you have to teach it. As soon as someone comes in who is newer than you, you have to help that person."

— Mimi Silbert, president of the Delancey Street Foundation, a self-help rehabilitation program serving 1,000 residents in San Francisco and four other cities; *Creation Spirituality*, Autumn 1994

Cooking to change the world

"Increasingly, the vegetarian movement has attracted social justice activists like Safiro Patino, who grew up in Argentina in an activist family opposed to the military dictatorship of the 1970s. For Safiro, confronting the regime and challenging her own urban, meat-centered diet were both political acts. Today Safiro co-directs Ethnic Natural Foods, a community-oriented vegetarian cooking service in Boston, and makes annual tours of Central and South America to hold neighborhood cooking workshops. ...

"We should learn to see groups such as Earthsave, PETA, and the Beyond Beef coalition as the social-change groups that they are, and encourage their participation in the broader movement. Such an inclusive attitude can help bring together the traditional social-justice community (social rights, peace, just foreign policy) and the younger sustainable development community (environment, alternative energy, transportation)."

— Steve Karian, *Z* magazine, 7-8/94

"People on a deep, unconscious level already know that something's wrong. Discussions around cost of health care, the breakdown of the immune system, the food, the larger agricultural picture, are very easily grasped by people. We need to create the tools and provide the experiences. ... I think local cooking classes could change the world."

— Miriam MacGillis, founder of Genesis Farm, *Creation Spirituality*, Autumn 1994

Short takes

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Looking to the next century:
an interview with Chung Hyun Kyung
by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann: Tell me something about your experience of God.
Chung Hyun Kyung: My God started from this Charleton Heston-looking Western man with blue eyes and blond hair. Most of the churches were run by missionaries and we got this little children's package with a picture of Jesus.

Then through the Korean Student Movement I started to ask all these questions about colonialism and national liberation. My God became more Korean-looking.

After I started working in the church, I really see the sin of patriarchy, sexism. This is a real challenge. How can I envision God in a non-hierarchical way?

During my education in the West I discovered that no matter how I try, I will never be a Westerner. All the education I got really made me more clear about my Asian identity. I am different in my envisioning of God, in my spirituality, in my Christianity.

For example, Jesus is the only son, the only sinless human being. It's like he parachuted from the sky. God loved this world so much and sent his *only* son to the world and he got killed in this world. That's the atonement.

We don't have this kind of paradigm in Asia. We don't have such a big view of our sins as human beings.

I work with many Korean women and discovered how Christology from above (like God sent the sinless Jesus to us) doesn't work for the Asian mind. Most gods and goddesses in Asia — especially indigenous people's gods — are *people* who have lived a life of compassion and wisdom and justice. When they die, they elevate to the position of God. It's a Christology from below — real people



Chung Hyun Kyung Dick Snyder

who show the way, they become God. That's why we don't have this obsession with virginity or sinlessness. Original sin is not in the picture. Most religions start from the goodness of creation and of a human being. Like Buddha — the light Buddha had is within me. This is totally different from what I learned from Western Christianity. I felt my program had been very colonialistic, imperialistic and should be changed.

I started to work with men and women in Asia. We have a study group on the image of God and Christology. It's called EATWT, the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians. When the women's committee started to study the image of God coming out of Asian women's spirituality — especially indigenous spirituality — many Asian women confessed that the real problem with western theology is not just that God and Jesus are male. But everything is personified. The anthropomorphic image of God is a real problem for many women because, in Asia, God is spirit. God is very fluid. God is everywhere — in the tree, in the ocean, in the wind, in the fire, in you and me.

Asian women feel comfortable with the *Sophia* tradition, the tradition of spirit and wisdom. If the gnostic gospel is canonized, the Asian Christians would have a much, much better time. In the gnostic gospel, for example, Jesus says "If you bring out what is within you, what is within you will save you. But if you do not bring out, or cannot bring out, what is within you, what is within you will destroy you." That is very Asian.

I met an Asian Jesus in the gnostic gospel. God is within us. So can you imagine were I born in the second or third century, I would be burned to death? But you should remember that Christianity actually came from Asian culture. My question is what does it mean to be fully Asian and fully Christian?

J.W-K.: Do you still stay connected to the Presbyterian Church? You were ordained in the Presbyterian Church?
C.H.K.: No, I started my ordination process in the Presbyterian Church and I stopped doing it because if I am ordained, I will have more censorship rather than freedom to speak, so I stopped the ordination process.
J.W-K.: When did you stop?
C.H.K.: After Canberra [where Chung spoke at the World Council of Churches gathering]. I feel that I'd become so notorious and infamous — I don't need any more harassment from the institutional church.
J.W-K.: Were you disappointed to quit?
C.H.K.: No. I don't believe in ordination, theologically. Actually I wanted to

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Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

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be ordained for political reasons, because women cannot really have power in the church. But I start to wonder, what do I want to do if I have a power in the church? [She laughs.] So I said, OK, it's not worth it. I want to be a prophetic theologian. I am standing at the margin rather than center of the church.

J.W-K.: So are you connected with any denomination?

C.H.K.: I am a member of the Korean Presbyterian Church.

J.W-K.: Do you see a value in being connected to the Presbyterian Church?

C.H.K.: Yes, because whether I like them or not, they are my community of faith. They rely on the same metaphors and symbols. I grew up with them and I still see a lot of potential — not in the institution — but in the people in the church.

J.W-K.: Tell me about the 1998 *Kairos* document that you're working on.

C.H.K.: In the year 1998 there will be the commemoration of the 500th anniversary of when Vasco de Gama landed on Asian and African soil, so we are having a very ambitious project.

A group of Asian and African Christian theologians and social scientists are involved. They want to actually make calculations of the value of all that the Europeans and Westerners took from us in the last 500 years.

We have several demands. The first is the cleaning up of all our debt, which we claim is not actually *our* debt. They took from us, then they loaned us very little money out of all this big money, but charged us enormous interest. There is no peace with this debt.

The second thing we ask is to return all our art from the British Museum, the Metropolitan Museum ... They stole this from us. They just took it and put it in their museums. I hope we have an international court.

This is the most cutting edge of theology now, because we are not only working against colonialism, we want to lift up resistance. We are not just victimized — triumphantly we survived and we liberated ourselves. We want to honor the spirituality which we have. So this is a time for making a foundation of liberation for the next generation and for honoring all these people, our ancestors, who went ahead of us.

J.W-K.: How are you working with Africans?

C.H.K.: We get together every three years. Then for two weeks we meet in Sri Lanka. The Center for Society and Religion is sponsoring it. This summer we wrote a draft of the *Kairos* document. We will get together in the Philippines this coming February and we will refine it then.

We are also planning an international street theater that will present a theological and political play. We plan to make a caravan, a moving theater on a truck, that can go everywhere in the world.

We need a lot of support from churches to sponsor us. A lot of money, a lot of actors and artists will be involved. This is the time for change — *metanoia* — for first-world people *and* third-world people, because in the name of development we follow the same idol, manna, money. In Korea, we got money and we started to lose our soul. Korean companies do awful things all over the world.

We make it very clear in our document. We are not just accusing the first world for what they have done. Instead, we believe in karma — what goes around comes around.

What happens in Western society now — the sense of depression and spiritual emptiness and young people getting lost — I think it is what they are getting after 500 years of oppression.

J.W-K.: You know how I see it in this country? I think it's bizarre that magazines in the supermarket have recipes and advertisements for phenomenal food — and our supermarkets are full of food from around the world — but the same magazines are obsessed with dieting. You get excess and diets right in the face all the time. In fashion styles we hold up people who are very thin, like those who are hungry in the countries from which we take the food. We are a culture that brings in more food than we need and then faults Americans for eating it.

C.H.K.: Could be it's a set-up! Make the people eat. Then they feel so terrible — make people lose. All this diet industry and all this food industry benefitting from each other.

J.W-K.: People in this country have eating disorders. It goes together as a piece. If we only had the food that is indigenous or that we paid a fair price for, maybe we wouldn't have a psychosis around food.

C.H.K.: We are telling the people in the first world, this is a joint adventure. We have compassion for you. You are suffering like us. We must ask, who benefits from our suffering?

In the first world maybe what you need is the theology of letting go. And maybe the theology of letting go will eventually become a liberation theology of the first world. I cannot see how — without this letting go — you have any empty space to worship God or spirit.

Most gods and goddesses in Asia are people *who have lived a life of compassion and justice. It's a Christology from below. That's why we don't have this obsession with virginity or sinlessness.*

J.W-K.: Are you hopeful for the future?

C.H.K.: We talk a lot about the 21st century. I really want a different century,

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you know. [Laughter.] Many visionaries in Korea, in the beginning of the 19th century, said the 21st century will be amazing.

Most of them say the new millennium will be transformed by feminine energy, women's energy.

The key factor in people's lives will be spirituality and creativity. We will have a real battle among different spiritualities.

J.W-K.: Steve Charleston, Bishop of Alaska, believes that in the next century, the church is going to become really vibrant through the leadership of women and minorities. [*Witness,* 4/94]

C.H.K.: The mainline church is triumphalistic, based on colonialism and the crusades. This church is bankrupt — supporting slavery, dictatorships, colonialism. What kind of moral authority do they have?

I'm sure a real insurrection of the subjugated knowledge and voices will change the future. Life-giving spirituality will come from people who have suffered a lot but did not destroy themselves — people who know how to handle suffering. Like gold, they went through so much fire. They have something to tell. I don't want to glorify suffering. It's not because of suffering — but the fact that they have survived. And more than survived.

The content of theology will be radically changed in our lifetime. Not like a broken record, repeating all this stuff — compassion — over and over again. But theology based on real life, giving to people in the concrete situation. No abstract theology.

J.W-K.: Speaking of new theology, what do you make of the response that people have had to the Reimagining conference? [*Witness,* 7/94]

C.H.K.: I think it's great. They're really starting to recognize the creativity and power of the women's community. I look at it as a sign of *hope* because people feel that this is a real threat. I think they are challenged.

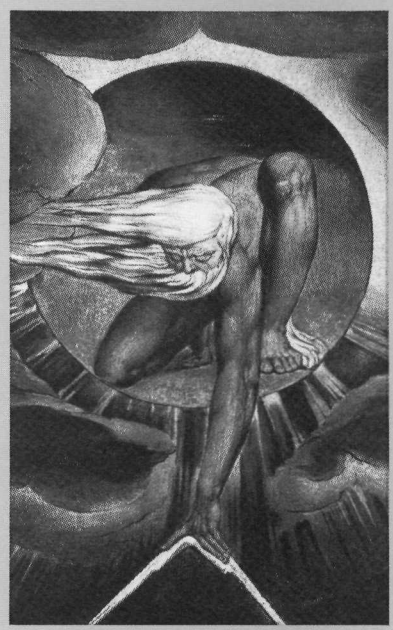
I'm sure a real insurrection of the subjugated knowledge and voices will change the future. Life-giving spirituality will come from people who have suffered a lot but did not destroy themselves — people who know how to handle suffering. Like gold, they went through so much fire. They have something to tell. ... It's not because of suffering — but the fact that they have survived.

You know what is a real difference? There was no attitude of apology, no attitude of referring to some authority, nor were they reacting against patriarchy. They just dropped all this — they said what they do and what they feel. They don't care any more. I felt really free.

But we have to be vigilant too, because with this Reimagining conference, conservative groups are gathering together to destroy all this new theology. But I look at it as the last defense they have. They cannot do it, because it's just like the power of water. The water's gathering more and more — it will become ocean soon. How could you fight against the ocean?

Maybe they will try hard — I want to tell them, "Don't waste your time, it will come anyway." TW

Witness Video Offer!



One Lord, one faith, one baptism?

The Witness is now offering its 75th Anniversary video package for $40!

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The content is taken from a conference held at Trinity Episcopal School of Ministry where *Witness* readers had a chance to articulate their vision in the face of passionate questions from Trinity's students and faculty.

By examining the authority of scripture, the traditional way, multiculturalism, and feminism, as well as issues of faith, sexual orientation and racism, participants could evaluate whether we share a Lord. This video allows viewers to express their views within the context of passionate Episcopalians on opposite ends of the spectrum.

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Media-tions

by Nkenge Zola

MEDIA-TIONS: Forays into the Culture and Gender Wars, by Elayne Rapping, South End Press, Detroit, 1994.

Elayne Rapping's decades-long foray into culture and gender in media offers valuable analysis of popular culture as generated in the U.S. But it is not enough.

Clearly a sophisticated observer, the author eschews crude tendencies assessing "the media" as The Monolithic Enemy. Quite accurately she presents "evidence of feminism's successful struggle to change gender representation, as a significant part of the broader struggle to change gender relations in the material world." She identifies daytime television, particularly soap operas and talk shows, as a significant auger out of which women producers and creative talent have emerged, while tackling the issues promulgated by women activists outside of the television industry, be those issues spouse abuse, date rape, AIDS, career versus family hassles, or interracial relationships. And Rapping identifies her perspective as one issuing from a straight, white, middle-class woman.

But for this reader, it is insufficient.

Media is an amalgam of artificial construction. It's not "real." No matter the worthiness of the effort, what is presented on radio, in books, newspapers, films, on television, in computers and video games, is not the original point of experience. Participants, which we all are, choose to relinquish the possibility of our own experience with a given subject to producers, talent, engineers, directors, writers, whom we allow to mediate for us.

"People" are diminished to "consumers," "audience," "buyers," "crowds," and "spectators" for some unseen-one's financial enrichment. What is known as popular culture could also be called market place culture.

It is a reflection of the schism we have created between ourselves and the natural world of which we are a part. As Jerry Mander so precisely identifies in his essential collection published as *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television* (Quill, 1977), "Our environment itself is the manifestation of the mental processes of other humans. Of all the species of the planet, and all the cultures of the human species, we 20th-century Americans have become the first in history to live predominantly inside projections of our own minds. ...The role of the media in all this is to confirm the validity of the arbitrary world we live in."

Two-hundred-eighty-six pages of text reflect Rapping's consideration of the spoken, written and acted content of media. She writes, "No we haven't made a feminist revolution ... But we are in the game and we have more chips than we started with."

This is a weak conclusion for such extensive effort. It leaves me ruminating upon the dilemma of melanin-dominant people, gay folks and just about every other identifiable portion of the U.S. population puzzling over whether or not we should be happy with what "*They* give" us; whether we should fight to keep the door open regardless of the machinations fostering the demise of individuals and neighborhoods and nations.

For Rapping's book to have been useful as feminist gender critique she would have had to call for suspension of the pop culture industry. Then perhaps the underlying issues of media affect could be probed; the robbing of experience, the intention to place images in the minds of recipients which the recipient may forever reference. Had the author addressed some of these issues, rather than producing another work accepting media as a neutral element of life that we can make work, MEDIA-TIONS would have elevated the level of discourse.

How would Rapping's book have been more useful as a feminist critique of media?

1. Spiritual consequences: What are the spiritual consequences of sitting in front of a box emitting light and sound energy into the physical body? What happens when a human being gives over her or his attention and focus to the workings of another person without having a chance to interact with the creator of the work?

2. Nature: All of the phenomena with which we interact derives from the natural world. Without nature there is no life. How about a few essays on the departure of media systems from water, earth, wind, fire?

3. Technology: Generally not a creation of women, can the hardware actually reflect a feminine perspective? Can the cameras, acts of writing, editing, acting be critiqued by women without acknowledgement that the mechanisms derive from a particular western male tradition in human evolution? Why not start from the position that neither guns nor television are neutral?

4. Ambivalence: What of the continuing necessity of feminists, and melanin-dominant women, children and men, gays and lesbians, and the entire American electorate to refuse to play along with the "lesser of two evils" program? TW

book review

Nkenge Zola is a reporter for WDET public radio in Detroit.

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Catrina Ganey

In choosing to be an actress, I can show the many faces of God's children and God's life.

Parables and theater

by Marianne Arbogast

Theater is powerful and dangerous, New York actress Catrina Ganey believes. It's an unparalleled medium for conveying truth — or fleeing it.

It is a calling frequently born of pain.

"Whenever I see a brilliant actor, I want to know how they grew up," Ganey says. "There is a gift and a craft to being an actor, but it's not just talent that makes you brilliant. Sometimes it's your own wounds.

"When I was a little kid, it was a way of escaping my life. I grew up in inner-city Washington, D.C.. I was never considered to be pretty, so boys never chased after me. I found that I could imitate people, make people laugh. It was a way of gaining acceptance, getting people to like me."

Though she enrolled in a high school program for students interested in medicine, a science teacher soon discerned her real gifts.

"I was the class clown, always joking," she recalls. "I could never do experiments like everyone else, I had to be Dr. Frankenstein. The teacher finally said, 'Get out! Go to the drama department down the hall.' I've been there since."

Ganey studied theater at Earlham College in Indiana, then Howard University. In her junior year at Howard, she won a scholarship to study Shakespeare in London. After graduating *magna cum laude,* she went on to earn a master's degree at the University of Michigan.

Working for 11 years in Detroit theater companies, Ganey also threw herself with characteristic energy into human rights and racial justice work. She visited South Africa in 1987, then put together a dramatic presentation which she took to churches and community groups.

After the break-up of a close relationship and the murder of a friend, Ganey worked her way out of a severe depression by volunteering in a hospital emergency room. This led her to a CPE (clinical pastoral experience) residency and chaplaincy at Detroit's Children's Hospital.

"Those were five of the best and most profitable years of my life," she says. "I had to deal with my own pain and wounds before I could deal with anybody else's. I had used acting and levity as a way of avoiding pain."

In 1993, Ganey directed a production of "The Great White Hope," winning a Page Award nomination for best director/outstanding producer. The audience included actress Jane Alexander, whom Ganey had adopted as her mentor while still in college. Alexander's husband, who had directed the original Broadway production of the show, challenged Ganey to take the risk of moving to New York, where she could seriously pursue her career. Now, she says, "acting is my profession, not something I do 24 hours a day."

But Ganey stresses that it is not all applause and flower bouquets.

"It is *not* a glamorous profession — you can be wearing a sequinned gown one day and picking up garbage the next. It's a very hard profession. It's always intense, and you are very vulnerable. So many actors go to drugs, sex, suicide, anything to escape the pain of constant rejection."

At the same time, the profession offers

Witnesses, the quick and the dead

Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness.*

a chance to reach hundreds of people with a message they might not otherwise hear.

"It's far from falsehood. In choosing to be an actress, I can show the many faces of God's children and God's life, and hopefully get people to understand what our lives are all about. You don't have to *do* Christian theater. Theater *is* ministry.

"Jesus used parables and stories as a way to get people to understand the kingdom of God. If you read the parable of the prodigal son, it's a theatrical story.

"A church service is a ritual and it's theatrical. If you look over what made a service good, it was the choir, how the pastor vocalized the sermon, how it flowed from beginning to middle to end. When a pastor puts together a sermon, he may not call it acting but he is pulling together a theatrical program. That doesn't mean it's less sincere or not inspired by God."

Ganey now teaches drama at LaGuardia Community College in Long Island, and supplements her income with temp work on Wall Street.

She is active in a Presbyterian church in her neighborhood, where she has twice been invited to preach.

In February, Ganey won rave reviews for her portrayal of "Blues Speak Woman" in a regional production of *Spunk,* a play based on the work of Zora Neale Hurston.

"When I was on stage, singing songs, I would look out and see all these smiling faces. For a few minutes I felt I was able to lift up their spirits, to be a vessel for the spirit of joy." TW

December issue:

Family Values

Christmas offer!

To encourage readers to give *The Witness* as a Christmas gift, we will send donors a custom-made, rubber-stamped Advent calendar for each gift subscription. The calendars make great gifts in themselves.

Designed by managing editor Julie A. Wortman, the calendars are ironic and faithful. This year's theme is the *Magnificat.* Wortman's 1993 Advent calendar, on the theme *For we like sheep...,* won an award at the Episcopal Communicators' conference last June. Copies of it are also available upon request.

(Wortman and Anne Cox have started a business, The Ministry of Rubber (MOR), and are selling rubber stamps which they have designed and crafted. If you'd like a MOR catalogue, send Wortman a note at *The Witness.*)



Order a $20 Christmas gift subscription to *The Witness* now (we'll send a card announcing the gift in December and start the subscription in January, 1995) and see who hears the good news.

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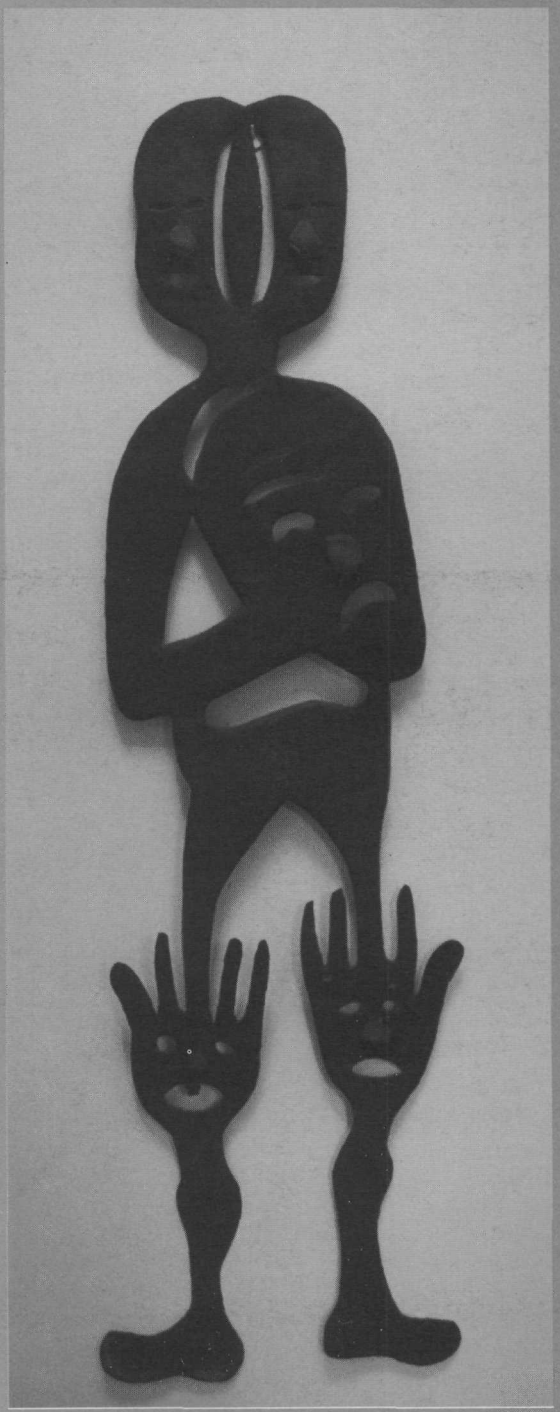
Just as the slaves of pre-independent Haiti had to first realize that slavery was not a natural condition and that a change in the political structure of society would transform the conditions of life there, so too Haitians proclaim that we do not simply happen to be poor and oppressed, but that this poverty and oppression is largely a problem of the way that society is organized. In theology of liberation we call it a social sin.

— Jean Bertrand Aristide



A Haitian metal sculpture Daniel Rodgers

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The Witness

Family Values

Volume 77 • Number 12 • December 1994

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1994



The Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest
Austin, Texas

Why I stay in my denomination

THE OCTOBER ISSUE both moved and inspired me. I believe even moreso that the tensions faced by the church are labor pains to greater wholeness and life, but we must continue to struggle, to find common ground, to have faith and walk humbly with our God.

This most recent General Convention evoked every emotion in me. The time of the prophets is now! We who love the Episcopal Church must continue to challenge, pray, support each other and know that the Holy Spirit guides us.

Patrick Francis Schwing
Cincinnati, OH

I HAVE READ "I WAS ONE OF YOU" and cannot remember being so moved by such a clear and succinct piece. Having been a deputy once, sat in the gallery on a few occasions and been a diocesan staff officer, I could feel (tangibly) everything she said. I hope it had a positive effect. Too bad it wasn't read to the House of Bishops.

Nan Peete
New York, NY

I JUST FINISHED READING Julie Wortman's articles regarding Convention. I have been a deputy since 1982 so have watched the ebb and flow over that time. I had a slightly more positive feel about 1994 than she expressed.

However, I write to correct an error which I have seen several times in your publication and since it has been nine months since the election of a bishop in Fond du Lac, it's time to correct the error. Bishop Russell Jacobs has worked with, accepts the eucharist from and will ordain women in the Diocese of Fond du Lac and he was very open about that *prior* to his election.

Constance Ott
Diocese of Milwaukee

Alternative ways of doing church

I am fascinated by your placement of articles in the August/September, 1994 issue. First comes the exciting article about the new forms of ministry that are taking place in Northern Michigan and then the report on the closing of the *Instituto Pastoral Hispano.*

You were either very insightful or the Holy Spirit was at work — or maybe both!

As I read the mega-message it is that while both were working with a new and exciting educational paradigm their goal was to continue with the existing paradigm for doing ministry. BUZZ — TILT— WHOOPS! The mega-message from Northern Michigan is that they do both education for ministry and ministry itself in a new way. BINGO!

If only we could learn once and for all that these are systemic issues that are all interrelated and you can't tinker with one without affecting the other.

Tom Tull
San Francisco, CA

[Ed. Note: Our impression is that the *Instituto* had the vision for new ministry but, without benefit of a diocese and bishop of its own, couldn't work the miracles being pursued in Northern Michigan. See the continuing commentary about the *Instituto* on pages 29-32 in this issue.]

SADLY, I WRITE TO INFORM that *The Witness* may have done some harm to the *Instituto Pastoral Hispano* with the article that appeared in your August/September 1994 issue *Por que no somos la Iglesia? Closing the Instituto Pastoral Hispano.*

Even after I had insisted that the *IPH* was not closing, in conversations with the editor, *The Witness*, on both the Table of Contents page and in the headlines of the article, proclaimed the closing of the *IPH*. As we began our Fall semester at the General Seminary, several of our contributors said that we had not heard from them because they had read in *The Witness* that the *IPH* was closed. Our students had to deal with questions coming from staff members at the General Seminary and others asking why they were still there since *The Witness* said the *IPH* was closed.

The *IPH* is involved in a very serious planning process: we have a serious financial crisis, but we are still offering classes and plan to have another graduation in January. We need the support of our friends and those who care about Hispanic ministry during this time. Neither the *IPH* nor the larger Christian community are well served by premature death notices!

Henry Atkins
President, *Instituto Pastoral Hispano*
New York, N.Y.

[Much harm has been done to the *Instituto*, but I wouldn't lay this at the door of *The Witness*. While you did make it clear in our August interview that you would try to continue some *IPH* classes this Fall, the language which surrounded the dismissal of the *IPH* staff was that the school was closing. In fact, you told me, "It was my understanding that Maria called Doug and told him there was not enough money to continue paying the bills and he said that it was policy to *close down*." — J.W-K.]

Haiti

I VERY MUCH APPRECIATED your brief editorial in the November issue of The Witness entitled, *Haiti — What then must we do?*

While opposed to U.S. military intervention/occupation of Haiti before the events of September unfolded, I remain so to this day and I continue to push for the immediate removal of U.S. forces.

Still, I am not without some doubts about the necessity to relieve the terror being inflicted on the starving people of Haiti.

I am still persuaded, however, that our intervention is absolutely NOT based on the welfare of the masses of the people, but on the protection of the profits of those who stand to gain from a return to "business as usual" after the departure of the American troops.

Best wishes for the continuing success of *The Witness* and its ongoing devotion to peace and justice.

Rudy Simons
Southfield, MI

Notice

Our printers are changing their technology. In the November issue there was an incomplete display quote and some typeface inconsistencies — this was their error. Things should be smoother this month.

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Advocating for the innocents

Like many of your readers — probably all of them — I am devastated by Susan Smith's recent murder of her two sons.

I happen to be one who reads the Daily Offices from the book of Common Prayer. Yesterday, when the horrible truth came out, these were the selections: "Save me, O God, for the waters have risen up to my neck. I am sinking in deep mire, and there is no firm ground for my feet. ... I have grown weary with my crying; ... my eyes have failed from looking for my God. ... Save me ... do not let me sink; let me be rescued from those who hate me." (Psalm 69) And: "'Jerusalem, Jerusalem [substitute Union, Detroit, New York), you that kill ... and stone those who are sent to you! How often have I longed to gather your children, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you refused!'" (Luke 13).

My cries of grief and rage and despair began to subside. But not my sense of the indifference of the church — of individual Christians, many of whom do works of mercy, justice, healing, righteousness.

If the church really LOVED God's children — of all ages, but I speak especially of "the holy innocents," there would be such an outcry from every pulpit, such a surge of demands upon our self-serving legislators (and, often, clergy), such town hall meetings, such demonstrations, such demands on budgets NOT to preach at welfare mothers and teenagers having babies but to cut back on selfish budget items and to provide more for sex education, counseling (therapy before terror), good food (against selfish fast-food) — and keep to families together with preventive intervention, that even the cynical media would respond.



Robert McGovern

I have yet to hear any right-to-life persons (and I'd like to be, if this were a consistently caring society) say (s)he would be glad to have her taxes increased, if it meant all these programs could happen.

For those who read the Daily Offices, may I suggest a substitution: in the Suffrages: "Let not the needy *or the innocents* be forgotten," and "Save your children, Lord." — one small daily reminder.

— Polly Rouillard, Fort Edward, NY

Classifieds

Education conference

Mark your calendars now! Announcing ... "Continuing in the Apostles' Teaching: Educational Ministries in the Episcopal Church."

This conference is designed for congregational and diocesan leaders concerned with creating environments that promote faith maturity among children, youth, young adults, and adults. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect theologically and gain practical skills through learning tracks, workshops, Bible study, worship, music, and fun!

Learning Tracks will be offered in the following areas: Children's Ministries, Youth Ministries, Young Adult Ministries, Christian Educational Ministries.

WHEN: April 25-29, 1995

WHERE: Y.M.C.A. of the Rockies, Estes Park, Colorado (airport: Denver)

COST: $200 (plus transportation)

SPONSORED BY: Christian Education Network, Treasure Kids!/Model Dioceses, Youth Ministries Network, and the Young Adult Ministries Office. Funding for this conference provided by the Episcopal Church Center.

For further information, contact one of these offices at the Episcopal Church Center, 1-800-334-7626: Children's Ministries, exts. 5222/5212; Youth Ministries, exts. 5169/5217; Young Adult and Higher Education Ministries, exts. 5267/5195.

Bishop Charleston book

A new collection of sermons and essays by Alaska's Bishop, Steven Charleston, entitled *GOOD NEWS from NATIVE AMERICA*, is now available for only $10. All proceeds from the sale of the book will go to support the mission of the church in Alaska.

Please make check or money orders payable to the Diocese of Alaska, 1205 Denali Way, Fairbanks, AK 99701. Inquiries about selling the book at a special price are welcomed. Ask for Mary Parsons, 907-452-3040.

Spanish-language quarterly

Anglicanos, the only quarterly Spanish-language mission publication in the Anglican Communion, is available for $6/year ($10/two years). Send check to *Anglicanos*, c/o Virginia Norman, Apartado 764, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

Classifieds

Witness classifieds cost 75 cents a word or $30 an inch, whichever is less. Payments must accompany submissions. Deadline is the 15th of the month, two months prior to publication. For instance, items received January 15 will run in March.

When ads mark anniversaries of deaths, ordinations, or acts of conscience, photos — even at half column-width — can be included.

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Since 1917

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Cover: Nativity *c. 1425, oil on panel, 34 x 28, by Master of Flemalle (Robert Campin?), Musee des Beaux-Arts, Dijon.*
Back cover: But pray to your God in secret, *by Dierdre Luzwick*

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Valuing the family

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

The ruin of a nation begins in the homes of its people.

— Ashanti proverb

On the heels of an election which purports to put family values in the center of the national agenda by withdrawing support for social programs and moralizing about people outside the heterosexual, two-parent norm, it's difficult to look at family values willingly.

At the same time, Susan Smith has dominated the headlines with her recent decision to drown her children presumably because life as a single parent was too hard.

We know that we need to take part in the national debate if there's any hope of making families flexible enough for people to live in safety. Enforced re-entry into what some vitriolic lawmakers consider to have been the lives of Ozzie and Harriet is not going to work.

This issue raises up several understandings and experiences of family. It underscores the need to broaden our definition of family so that it's realistic for each of us to be able to anticipate having one. It also offers an examination of the family as a principality. As Bill Wylie-Kellermann points out (p. 17), we can't enter the debate until we come to terms with the ways that the idea of family is manipulated by the culture and abused by the powers.

But when we do, we'll see that, at its best, what we want from our families hasn't changed much since we were children. We want to be loved and understood, supported in our efforts to stand firm or take risks to which we feel called. We want the children in our communities to be nurtured, fed and taught in ways that are healthy. We want the family to be strong enough to support members who for whatever reason don't fit the cultural norm. It's a reasonable hope, albeit fragile.

Nothing in our culture's emphasis on individual fulfillment and quick gratification prepares us for the work involved in maintaining families. Nor does the climate of commercialism and violence provide an environment where it's easy for people to hang onto their commitments and beliefs. It's the sense of threat and uneasiness in these times that allows for the rise of politicians who claim the elections were about "the three g's: God, gays and guns."

The threat is not imagined, although we contest these politicians' remedies.

Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund, said during the General Convention in August that we are in the midst of a civil war. Homicide is the third leading cause of death in children age five to 14 and *the* leading cause of death for African American male teenagers.

"Escalating violence against and by children and youths is no coincidence," she says, "It is the cumulative, convergent and heightened manifestation of a range of serious and too-long neglected problems." Where others would cite homosexuality and immorality, she lists "poverty, increasing economic inequality, racial intolerance, drug and alcohol abuse and violence in our homes and popular culture," although she does add children born outside the family structure and divorce.

Edelman puts a critical question: "Where are the family values in the richest nation on earth?"

The church, she says, is the one institution that can rise to the challenge. She preaches that adults can mitigate the influence of t.v. violence, choose against a faith in guns in favor of a faith in community and model lives free of addictions and domestic violence. She wants us to recreate neighborhoods where children can be raised within community.

"How many times have you pleaded no time when your own child sought your attention?" she asks. "How often did you write off the unruly and unresponsive child in your classroom, agency, or neighborhood because you didn't want to expend the energy or simply decided it wasn't your job or responsibility?

"The most important step each of us can take to end the violence that is tearing our country apart is to change ourselves, our hearts, our personal priorities, and our neglect of any of God's children, and add our voice to those of others in a new movement that is bigger than our individual efforts to put the social and economic underpinnings under all American children."

The work ahead in redeeming the lives of children-for-whom-no-one-has-time is huge — it's bigger, in fact, than railing against liberals and divorce.

It's a relief to know that we are not in this alone.

Rita Nakashima Brock writes about the power of *ecclesia,* the power of being loved, even when we don't know it —

continued on page 36



Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness.*

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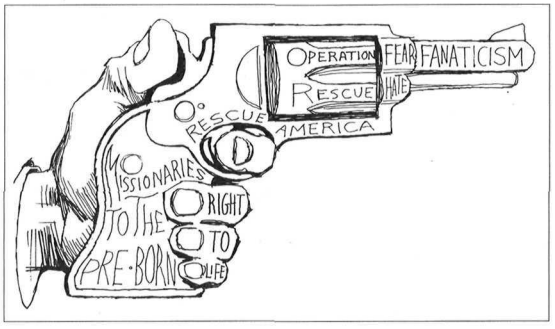
Toying with violence

by Walter Wink

Most of us no doubt deplore the recent murders of an abortion doctor and his unarmed bodyguard (a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel) in Pensacola, Fla. But many of us also regard Dietrich Bonhoeffer's involvement in the death plot against Hitler as a good thing. The fact that the anniversary of that plot fell in the same week that Paul J. Hill pulled the trigger may have escaped notice. But these two events are remarkably similar and it is sobering to examine the connections.



Eleanor Mill

Both Bonhoeffer and Hill were convinced that the persons they targeted for death were committing monstrous evils. Both accepted the premise that it is necessary to kill one person to keep him or her from killing many. Both considered assassination preferable to inaction or acquiescence. Both believed that one may have to choose a lesser evil as a way of avoiding a greater evil.

Bonhoeffer was, of course, far more sophisticated. He refused to justify assassination as the will of God. He acknowledged that his involvement in the death plot was a sin, and threw himself on the mercy of God.

Hill, on the other hand, claims that God inspired him to commit the murders, that they were justified, and that he has nothing to repent about.

Nevertheless, the point is that both were willing to engage in assassination as a way of eradicating evil in the world.

Once we accept assassination as our method, there is no easy way to draw the line. If we use it, we make it that much easier for someone else to use it, possibly against us.

This may seem like a curious place to bring in the golden rule, but its ancient wisdom is still instructive. We should not engage in assassination unless we are willing to be assassinated ourselves. We should not join a death squad to kill innocent civilians unless we are willing for our opponents to organize the same and kill our families as well.

Most of those who roundly deplore the action by Hill applaud the action of Bonhoeffer. They believe in selective violence — or, as one theologian put it, "good violence." The trouble is, others have a different idea of the good.

When anti-abortionists firebombed all three of Pensacola's abortion clinics on Christmas Day, 1984, one of those convicted of the crime described it as "a gift for Jesus on his birthday."

We criticize anti-abortionists for claiming to be "pro-life" and engaging in murder, or supporting the death penalty, or (a few years back) championing nuclear deterrence. Yet many of us have also not forsworn assassination. We simply want to see it applied selectively against our own list of victims. This is extremely short-sighted of people on the left, because the left suffers assassinations at roughly 10 times the rate as the right.

The nonviolence taught by Jesus and Gandhi and King (all assassinated) was not selective. It was principled. It was based squarely on the golden rule. But it's easier to pick and choose our victims. So before we judge Paul Hill, we should check ourselves. Perhaps we aren't all that different after all. We would just choose different victims. TW

Walter Wink, a contributing editor to *The Witness*, is Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Auburn Theological Seminary in New York. Artist **Eleanor Mill** is syndicated out of Hartford, Conn.

A challenge for the right

Paul Hill's recent conviction for murdering a doctor and volunteer in Pensacola, Fla., brings together most of the major issues of our time: abortion, civil disobedience, murder and the death penalty.

Walter Wink (above) challenges the ethics of the left. The questions for the right are the same — how can you champion "the sanctity of all life" but practice selective executions?

If an anti-nuclear activist killed an employee at the nuclear weapons plant where we vigil, we would call a moratorium during which to explore our understanding of tactics and non-violence.

We ask the same of NOEL, Operation Rescue and the rest.

— *J.W.-K.*

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Meterorites, 8/11/93

for Mike McEvoy

by Michael Lauchlan

Lay on your back, you tell us.
Just look up.
Siblings and kids, we've laid blankets
in right-center of the ballfield,
not far enough from street lights
for a great sky but the summer triangle
pops through — OOH BABEE!
A red tinged knife slits the ceiling of the world.
I MISSED IT! WHICH STAR FELL?
Just watch, you explain.
WHAT IF ONE FALLS ON US WHILE WE'RE LAYING HERE?
Uh-oh, you say. A meteor in Rosedale?
Above our faces, the air fills
with familytalk, with news.
Last summer a boy was killed
in this same wedge of greenspace
because he stopped a fight at a party.
Today, the shooter got forty to sixty.
LOOK AT THAT? WHERE? I MISSED IT!
A storm glowers from the northeast.
Strangers dally to chat in the dark
and everyone looks up.
Your father died in the last Perseid,
all of stretched out around him, waiting.
Your first ever verse made him astronomical.
HOW FAR IS VEGA?
25 light years.
HOW ABOUT THE SHOOTING STARS?
Right here. Right now.

Michael Lauchlan, a Detroit poet and teacher, is concluding his one-year tenure as poetry editor with this issue. The editorship of the poetry page rotates annually so we can include a variety of voices. Songwriter/composer Aná Hernandez will turn her talents to this page next.

Poetry

The Tooth Fairy's Reward: Time

by Michael Lauchlan

What did you think we did
with these loose ivories?
Pounded flat they wouldn't be nickels,
let alone the going rate.
No. We let time nest in them.
See the rough edge, the spot of blood
where this one broke from root and gum,
leaving a chamber tinged with pink.
See — roundly fluted porcelain sides
like an opening bud of bright bone,
and the top with its hint of a cavity,
its ridges and craters.
How much you've crushed
with this infant molar: granola tracks,
hard candy and lozenges,
that bit of chicken you spent
all day nudging with your tongue.
In this way it contains time, young lady,
and gives up its mystery to the trained eye,
as crackling of a wing-slapped maple tells
how great an eagle has escaped our view.

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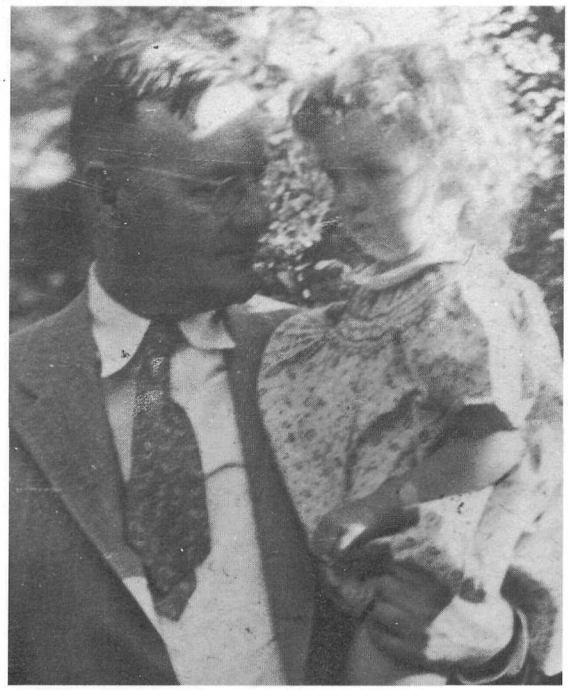
Solidly rooted, ready to fly

by Rosemary Radford Ruether

My family pattern was somewhat unusual, although it seemed "normal" to me because it was my reality. My parents married late, when my mother was 33 and my father 40. As I was the third of three daughters, my parents were the age of many children's grandparents, my mother being 41 and my father 48, when I was born.

My father was a civil engineer and during the Second World War, despite his age (mid-fifties) he went to France to oversee war projects with the Army Corps of Engineers. He contracted pneumonia there and almost died. In 1947 he went to Greece to direct the engineering work to rebuild the railroads and the Corinth Canal which had been destroyed by the Nazis as they left Greece. The family joined him there in 1948 and he died in Greece, due to a recurrence of pneumonia, in 1949. This meant that for much of my early childhood, my father was absent, away at war when I was between the ages of 5 and 9, and then for about six months when I was 11. I was 12 when he died.

My father was a "Virginian" of the old school who would leave a party if men began to tell off-color jokes that would "offend the ladies." My memories of him are of someone who was strong and principled, but who treated me with unjudgmental kindness. My mother adored him as a perfect paradigm of gentlemanliness, and I never heard them raise their voices toward each other. But he had traditional ideas about how young ladies should be educated and sent my oldest sister to Sweet Briar College in Virginia to become a Southern Lady. It was totally unsuitable to her. I don't know how he would have taken to a feminist theologian in the family, but he did not live long enough for me to find out.



Rosemary Ruether with her father, Robert Armstrong Ruether.

Several vignettes cluster around my memories of him. Father drew with consummate skill and sent Mother letters with sketches of European scenes done with the fineness of etchings. He darned his own socks with tiny stitches that looked like the sock had been rewoven. He loved sweets (in contrast to my mother, who grew up with a diabetic mother and treated sweets as something close to sin). During the two years he was home after the war, he and I used to go out monthly to see a National Geographic film in downtown Washington and then for ice cream sundaes afterwards. He always got hot fudge and I butterscotch. This was all the more delicious because we knew Mother would disapprove.

Once he and I drove down together to Fotheringay, the Radford family "place" near Roanoke, to visit his aged cousins, and he taught me how to read the map while he drove. He was a great story-teller and made up tales of Billy Bear and Betsy Bear who lived in the hills behind Fotheringay to tell us in the evenings before we headed off to bed. He was the sort of father that made a small girl feel like a princess.

My last memories of him are during several weeks in Greece when we were alone together while my mother took my middle sister to school in Switzerland. (My older sister had left Sweet Briar and was in school at the University of Montpelier in southern France.) He had decided to continue to work in Greece, and we went together to look at the house he planned to rent. There was the satisfying feeling of being special, of having all his attention for myself. Then in the middle of the night he woke me with an ashen face and told me to find someone to contact a doctor. He was dead two days later before my mother could return to Athens.

Some weeks before my father died I remember walking along a road in suburban Athens and thinking about the possibility of one parent predeceasing the other. I thought of the strengths of each, and then decided that mother could survive better without father than the reverse.

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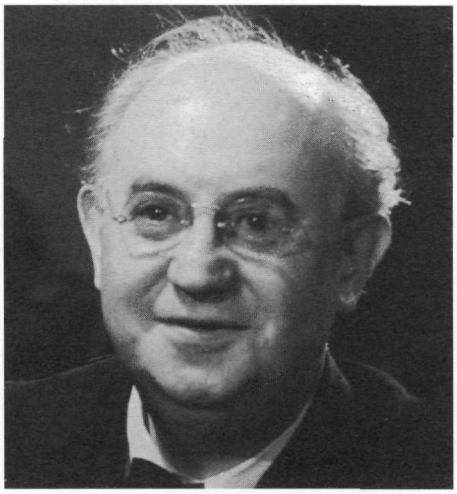
When he actually died quite suddenly some weeks later I felt pangs of guilt, as if merely thinking about his death had caused it. But then I decided it was an accurate premonition that also assured me that all would be well with mother as sole parent, despite her shocked sorrow at his death.

Mother and I returned to the Radford family house in Washington, D.C., where we had lived before. Aunt Mary, my father's sister, a single professional woman, moved in with us, to give mother a 'hand' with the house and family. My father's second sister, Sophie, was married to David Sandow, who was an architect, but who was also a fine amateur painter and musician, as well as a golfer. Uncle David became my second father, taking me on endless excursions to symphonies, the Washington National Art Gallery, which I came to know by heart, and also to play golf. Going over to Uncle David's house meant looking through his many art books, listening to his recordings of classical music, singing around the piano and being set up in his studio with oils and brushes to paint.

In 1952 my mother decided to sell the Radford family house in Georgetown and move back to southern California where she had grown up. Our leaving was painful for Uncle David who had tears in his eyes as we left. But in California I got to know a different mother, a mother who had grown up in Mexico, who spoke Spanish fluently and who reconnected with a circle of women friends from her earlier days. These women were all college educated, highly independent and socially involved.

For much of my early childhood, my father was absent, away at war when I was between the ages of 5 and 9, and then for about six months when I was 11. I was 12 when he died.

There was Helen, my mother's oldest friend from high school days, one of the founders of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, deeply involved all her life in supporting peace and justice causes, such as War Resisters and the Farm Workers. When Nixon's "Enemy List" was published, she was on it. I remember my mother and her friends all laughing and slapping Helen on the back, saying "We are so proud of you, Helen, you made the enemy's list." There was Aunt Betty, an artist and patron of the San Diego Art Gallery who, when in her fifties, had married an Englishman. There was Aunt Mimi, whose family owned horses and orange groves and lived a California way of life that was vanishing in the 1950s. She wore jeans, took me horseback riding and on camping trips in Baja, California (Mexico).



David Sandow, Ruether's uncle.

These then, are my childhood circle of "parents": Mother and Father, Aunt Mary, Uncle David, Helen, Aunt Betty and Aunt Mimi. Each of them helped parent me in crucial ways. I feel some part of my soul, some aspect of my expanding being, was nurtured through my relation to each one. My mother was the center, the unshakable *"terra firma,"* that gave me a solid sense of being rooted firmly in reality and yet encouraged to develop in whatever ways I found interesting. My father was the kindly nurturer, who made me feel deliciously special, but who passed in and out of my life in brief episodes.

Through my Aunt Mary I experienced the single woman who, to our great amazement, had been a policewoman. When we knew her she worked as a social worker in an orphanage. My Uncle David pointed me to the great worlds of art and music and taught me to play golf. Underneath his wry humor, there was a mystical sadness, drawn from the deep well of Jewish experience in Christendom. He loved Rembrandt, seeing in his darkly jeweled colors the reflection of his own soul.

My artistic interests were encouraged further by Aunt Betty and my outdoors sporting interests through Aunt Mimi. Helen took me to protest marches on behalf of peace and justice and made me recognize that all was not well in the social system called the United States. Through her I entered the civil rights and peace movements of the 1960s.

When I look back on my growing up, I don't feel like the child of a "single mother," although my mother was the sole parent through much of my growing up. Rather I feel richly parented through this circle of extended family. I come from these experiences of growing up feeling strongly that children need many parents. Certainly it is not enough for a child to grow up with only one parent. If that one parent is a woman trying to be both bread winner and parent, the task is overwhelming and unfair both to parent and child.

A household needs both economic and emotional sustenance from more than one adult. But even two adults helping

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each other maintain the household and raise a family are culturally and emotionally impoverished if they lack an extended family that can help the growing child expand in many directions; learning to think about social issues critically, to appreciate culture and to develop bodily skills in sports. Five or six committed mentors with different interests, personalities and worlds into which they can introduce children, encircling a stable, reliable center, feels right to me.

With this variety of parents, nothing was lacking, almost anything felt possible. For a time I toyed with the idea of being a professional baseball player or golfer or horsewoman. Then I thought I would be an artist and spent the middle years of my childhood and college years in art classes. Gradually I moved toward being an academic intellectual interested in historical origins of ideas and their social consequences. To become a feminist theologian concerned about injustice, war and racism and seeking to make a "better world" feels like fleshing out the soil in which I was planted and nourished from these many parents.

Fathering is "in" at the moment. With a surfeit of single mothers trying to raise children by themselves, often in poverty due to low female incomes and under the stress of trying to "do it all," people begin to ask once again, "Don't children need fathers?" Unfortunately this question is often asked in such a way as to scapegoat the women who are trying to "do it all" under impossible circumstances which were not of their choosing, rather than asking about the men who are the biological fathers of the children, but have declined to be real parent figures for them.

Do children need the male parent as much as the female parent? Do they need the particular gifts and strengths that males bring to raising children? My own sense is that in the circle of parenting figures children need relations to parenting men as well as parenting women. In a gendered world we interact and expand differently in our relation to women and to men. Both girls and boys need the experiences of being nurtured and mentored by males and females, although I can only speak about this from the perspective of a female.

The best parenting points to qualities of nurture and challenge, of being grounded and upheld and of being free to separate, that need to be integrated in a community of male and female parenting figures that can help a child feel trusting and solidly rooted and so also free to fly.

The parenting I received from my own father, brief as it was, was precious to me, as was the creative mentoring from my Uncle David. However, my sense is that girls in particular (and I think also boys, although I can't speak about that directly) do not need a binary set of male and female parenting figures that fall into stereotypical masculine and feminine qualities. We don't need to have only gentle nurture from females and only discipline and intellectual, physical and cultural challenges from males.

None of my parenting figures fell into such stereotypical masculine and feminine specializations. Each was different and unique, but also whole. If anything my father was the nurturer, my mother the disciplinarian. My uncle tenderly taught me music and art, golf and a touch of the mystical; my aunts gave me social, cultural and physical challenges.

As my soul expanded with each of these parent figures, I also experienced the complexity of the worlds into which they led me, the many-sided integration of loving support and challenging discipline. I also learned to think of men and women as complex wholes, each of whom had made their own integrations of the qualities of receptivity and agency, feeling and critical thinking, the aesthetic, the ethical and the mystical. It is this expansive mentoring in the many ways of being a full human being that I think children need to grow well. The best of parenting gives children many attractive models from which they can fashion their own growth and identity.

In short, fathering is not a specialty of males and mothering a specialty of females. These terms point out qualities of nurture and challenge, of being grounded and upheld and of being free to separate, that need to be integrated in a community of male and female parenting figures that can help a child feel trusting and solidly rooted and so also free to fly. TW

Welcome the Child

Welcome the Child: A Child Advocacy Guide for Churches is a newly released resource examining children's standing in Scripture, their realities in this country today and directions in which the churched might move to provide effective advocacy. The book is accessible and designed for parish use.

Published by Friendship Press and the Children's Defense Fund, *Welcome the Child* can be ordered (for $9.95 plus shipping) by calling 202-662-3652.

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Family values: only for the privileged?

by Julie A. Wortman

A couple of years ago the daughter of a family in our middle-class suburban neighborhood moved back into her parents' home with her young son. I don't know the circumstances that caused the daughter to return home, but I can guess — I know the possibilities first-hand. A friend of mine who is in her sixties will be moving in with her daughter at the end of this month because the money from a job severance package has run out and she still hasn't found new employment; another friend has become the legal guardian of her two grandchildren because her unpartnered daughter cannot offer them emotional stability or health insurance coverage; and last summer my own godchild's parents were able to ease a transition in their lives through the genorousity of relatives who gave them a rent-free place to stay.

Society tends to believe that families in which members take care of one another in times of need are to be valued. A family, after all, is supposed to be where, no matter what, you know they will take you in.

Unless, of course, you are extremely poor.

"It's often held against the person who offers the help," says Kathy Evans a full-time volunteer with the U.S. branch of the Fourth World Movement, an international anti-poverty organization. "If you're in public housing, the housing officer or social worker is likely to object if you've taken in a relative because your living conditions are now too overcrowded."

Fourth World Movement activists like Evans — some of whom themselves are living in poverty — have, since the group's founding in France in 1957, been working to stand in solidarity with the "Fourth World," those in every country who live in intergenerational poverty, especially extreme poverty.



Laura Patterson

Fourth World Family Congress delegates Patricia McConalogue of Scotland and Gavino Yucra Tunqi of Peru delivering a delegates' message at the United Nations last October. Participants came from 45 countries and included both persons living in poverty and grass-roots anti-poverty activists.

In this International Year of the Family, the Movement has been focusing on ensuring that those living in poverty aren't deprived of the right to maintain strong family ties. For 10 days last October, the group sponsored a Fourth World Family Congress in which more than 300 delegates from Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas — people living in poverty as well as persons helping to fight poverty — participated. They worshiped at New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine and honored those living in extreme poverty at the United Nations. They lobbied on Capitol Hill and spent time building a sense of mutual solidarity. (Delegates' travel costs were paid for by concerted money-raising campaigns at home; housing in the U.S. was provided by local hosts.)

Donna Primrose, the founder/director of a day shelter called Our Place Drop-In Center in Bellows Falls, Vt., and a delegate to the Congress, tells of an English delegate whose children were taken away from her, not because she was abusing them, but because she was poor. Her children were placed in a foster-care facility where she fears they are now being abused.

Primrose says this story illustrates a simple reality — that while poverty may not be a moral failing or a crime, society often treats it that way. To change that perception, Primrose says, "you have to do away with the ignorance of the people who have the power and the money. The people who run my town are so negative about the poor. They stereotype them as irresponsible and unfit — I've even overheard some of these leaders calling the poor 'welfare bastards.'"

Superficially, such stereotyping can seem justified, the Fourth World Movement's Evans admits. She cites the example of poor parents in the U.S. who choose not to enroll their pre-schoolers in educational programs like "Home Start," where teachers come into young

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children's homes to help them prepare for school. They might seem not to have their children's best interests at heart, she says, but notes that "most poor people would be afraid to have someone come into their house and see how they live — they'd be afraid that someone would come take their children. The lives of those who receive government assistance are very public — the rest of us can hide what we do and how we live."

According to participants in a United Nations seminar held in conjunction with the Family Congress, "Poverty hinders the ability of people to benefit from their fundamental rights and to exercise their responsibilities in their communities."

Responsibilities like caring for their families.

As Evans points out, extreme poverty is not just about a lack of money. "People living in extreme poverty lack all sorts of securities — work, housing, self-confidence, literacy, medical care and ignorance of how to work the system," she says. In the more than 35 years that Fourth World Movement volunteers have been collecting the stories of the poor, Evans says, they have noted that people living in extreme poverty "come from a background where expectations for a better life are not there. We see the Fourth World as a people — a people lacking basic social tools."

"People living in extreme poverty lack all sorts of securities — work, housing, self-confidence, literacy, medical care and ignorance of how to work the system. They come from a background where expectations for a better life are not there." — *Kathy Evans*

And among the skills Fourth World people might never have learned, says Primrose, is parenting. At age 19 Primrose herself spent a period of time caring for her three children in, successively, a corn crib, a tent and an abandoned car. A divorced high-school dropout, she had a crisis on her hands. But unlike people who have lived in extreme poverty all their lives, Primrose was rich in self-confidence, vision, motivation and social skills, managing to get herself a college education (her welfare caseworker allowed her to continue receiving benefits if she could work out financial aid and child care — the college helped her with the former and a local minister helped

Our children are our blood

... Many of us,
from Asia, Africa, Europe,
Australia and the Americas,
have lived in extreme poverty all our lives,
just like our parents.
We have experienced the same suffering and humiliation.

We are the children of men and women who have faced up to hunger, homelessness,
mistrust and violence.
We know how our parents struggled, often alone,
to keep our families together.

We are families who survive
in makeshift shelters,
in shanty towns, abandoned buildings,
welfare or bed-and-breakfast hotels,
under bridges, in old cars,
even in caves.

One of our greatest fears
is to spend the night out of doors,
so we do all we can so that no one
is alone on the streets after dark.

We are people who exhaust ourselves
doing unofficial, undeclared
and irregularly paid work:
on rubbish dumps, in parks and factories,
on farms and in mines.
All too often, to feed our families,
we have to look for work away from home.

We are weakened and humiliated too
by long periods without work,
by having to beg
and depend on the charity
and goodwill of others.

Our children are our only wealth.
It is especially for them
that we want a different life.
All our hopes are for their future:
in schools where they will really learn,
in jobs where they will sense
they are building the modern world.

Many of us have known
the unbearable suffering
of having children taken away,
and placed in institutions,
adopted, stolen and even sold,
just because we are poor.
Sometimes, all we have
is a photo, a toy,
or a piece of clothing they have worn,
and these things
we keep very close to us.

In spite of everything,
our children are our blood;
they are part of our family
and always will be. ...

— excerpted from the "Message of Fourth World Delegates to the Fourth World Family Congress," offered in honor of the victims of extreme poverty at the United Nations October 17, 1994.

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with the latter) and, eventually, a well-paid teaching job. Her three children are now in their thirties — a lawyer, a music teacher and a contractor.

"I met a young, poor couple from the Netherlands at the Congress," Primrose says. "They had three children and she was pregnant. 'Teach us how to take care of our kids, don't take them away,' they said. I think that's the big message people want to put across: 'You need to listen to us to find out what we need.'"

Evans agrees. "People in poverty have knowledge and experience that is useful. And they are already making efforts to improve their situation." But policy-makers need to listen.

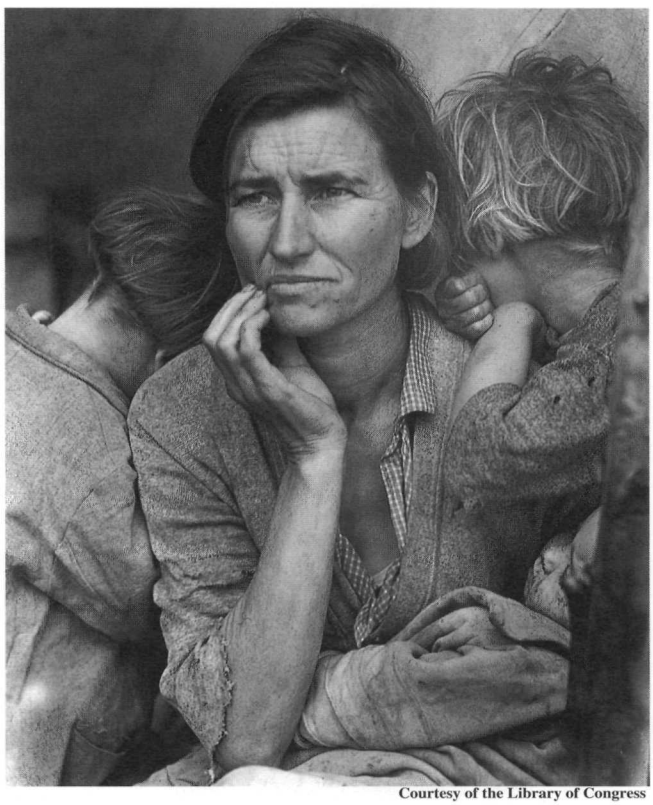
Her Home Start example is a case in point. "People in poverty could have told the people who designed that program that they wouldn't welcome teachers coming into their homes — a neutral site, like a community center, would have been better."

Drawing from data gathered during experimental projects, Fourth World Movement activists say that to be effective, assistance must be comprehensive and long-term — what programs accomplish with some people in two years will take three, four or five years when the very poor are involved.

"When people have suffered deprivations for so long, any given program needs to be comprehensive and to simultaneously address the main areas of life which give basic security to a family: housing, health, education, work and income," a 1993 article in the Movement's newsletter, *Perspectives*, states. "Experience has shown over and over again that to be able to work or take advantage of any training, people need a minimum of stability in their lives."

While people in poverty have little power to change the way governments approach assistance, those who haven't been completely broken by their situation *can* organize, a basic Fourth World Movement tenet. Shirley Jordan, for example, a Fourth World Family Congress delegate from Covington, La., works with a support group for parents and children in her neighborhood. "We get together with a bunch of kids, help read stories to them, help them with their homework, have dinner for them at the park," she says. A single parent with daughters aged 13 and 15, Jordan has worked in a nursing home for the past 13 years, but she knows she's living on the edge: "I live from paycheck to paycheck. I don't have any kind of medical benefits — it's hard when your child gets sick."

Through support groups like Jordan's and through events like the Fourth World Family Congress that bring the concerns of the poor to the United Nations and Capitol Hill, the participants are not only fighting the "poverty of isolation" which so often accompanies economic poverty because shame and fear lead many to be secretive about their lives, but also tapping into the self-affirming energy that comes from realizing that, despite how little they might have materially, they still have something to contribute to one another and to the larger human-rights battle.



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Migrant Mother, Nipomo, California, 1936, by Dorothea Lange

"The delegates to the Fourth World Family Congress will go back to their lives and materially nothing will have changed," says Evans. She refers to the English delegate whose children were taken away from her. "That mother will be returning to the same situation — and that's hard. But she will go back with a feeling of solidarity. She can be useful — she has something to give, even if it's only to speak up and tell her story."

It doesn't seem like much, this telling of stories, especially in light of last month's state and local elections in which political candidates made it clear they would reduce budget deficits on the backs of people who were characterized, one way or another, as social free-loaders. In the rhetoric, "welfare mother" sounds like a dirty name, not a family value.

But the Fourth World Movement community is hopeful.

"Maybe you're not going to turn peoples' lives around, you are up against so many social, economic and political forces that keep people poor," admits Movement volunteer Evans. "But to give up means that another generation will be broken as well." TW

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David — a child of the heart

by Denise Sherer Jacobson

Denise and Neil Jacobson were asked, in 1985, to adopt an infant who was believed to have a physical or developmental disability (though it was later found that he does not). The Jacobsons, both of whom have cerebral palsy and use motorized wheelchairs, agreed. Their son David is now 8 years old.

Just a few more blocks, was the foremost thought on my mind as I saw the corner of 51st and Broadway up ahead. My back ached badly now and David, sitting on my lap at this hour of the late afternoon, felt as heavy as the 40 pounds he weighed.

We passed the entrance to Grand Auto and neared the rounded corner of Broadway and 51st. It was not one of my favorite crossings. Traffic came from all directions. Lights and arrows changed at the blink of an eye. Cars breezed through the narrow right turn-off between the curb cut and triangular island that I had to reach before crossing the wide thoroughfares of either Broadway or 51st.

David bent over the armrest of my chair watching the wheels go around. The motion had fascinated him ever since he was a baby. He seemed to be leaning a little further than usual, and I thought about saying something, but the right turn lane was clearing. I saw our opportunity to make the first leg of that precarious crossing.

I started, only to be stopped — just as we made it to the edge of the island — by the piercing shrieks of my son. He sprung upright. I was all ready to scold him for doing whatever it was he knew he shouldn't be doing while we were in the midst of crossing the street until I saw the drops of blood dripping down onto the sleeve of my pink jacket, my pants, and my chrome footrests. He held up the middle finger of his right hand. It was drenched with blood.

Instinctively my palm pressed forward on the joystick so we would be clear of traffic. My wheelchair squealed laboriously up the curb cut and then rested. I ignored the ominous squeal and examined David's finger to see if it was still all there, knowing that if it wasn't I'd have to start looking for a little piece of finger. The wound was pretty deep but the fingertip was still there, joint and all.

"It's gonna be okay, David," I tried to soothe above his hysterical cry.

On the corner we had just come from, I spotted a young girl wearing the plaid uniform of St. Theresa's high school. She was on her way over.

"We can go back in there and wash it off," she suggested, nodding in the direction of Grand Auto.

I coaxed him to go with her and, very unlike him, he went without protest.

As I watched them disappear, I suddenly questioned my decision: Should I have let him go? This wasn't the only way into or out of that building — what if she took him out another exit?

There seemed to be very little forward power on the right side of my wheelchair. I had to back up the slight incline of the doorway. Once I got on the flat vinyl surface I could turn. I approached one of two bored-looking women at the counter.

"Where's the little boy?" I asked.

"Huh?"

I repeated. "Where's the little boy?"

"She wants to know where the little boy is," her coworker translated.

"Oh. They took him to the bathroom," she answered her peer.

"Where is it?" I demanded.

She disappeared down the aisle of car gizmos and white-walled tires. I creaked after her, having the first chance to glimpse down over the right side of the wheelchair. I was relieved when I saw what was wrong. The quarter-inch rubber drive belt had come off its track. It would be a cinch to fix, especially at Grand Auto!

"I don't think she could get back into the bathroom," I heard somebody say. "He'll be right out, anyway."

So she hadn't taken off with him! I breathed with relief, already thinking about whether I should take David home or call the doctor and find someone to drive us there. Or I could whiz us straight down College Avenue to the doctor's office a little less than two miles away. First, however, I needed my drive belt realigned or we wouldn't be going anywhere.

I was all ready to scold him, until I saw the drops of blood dripping down onto the sleeve of my pink jacket, my pants, and my chrome footrests.

There was a man standing nearby wearing a short sleeve white shirt and dark blue tie. He looked like he might be the manager, since all the other men passing me were in dark gray mechanics' uniforms. I opened my mouth to speak as soon as he glanced down at me, but he immediately averted his eyes, looking helpfully into those of a standing customer who had just approached.

Gritting my teeth, I swallowed and waited for him to finish. When he did, he

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started to turn away — just as I had expected.

"Sir. *Sir*. SIR," I persisted louder and louder until, when others started looking, he could no longer ignore me. "I need some help with my wheelchair."

I pointed down to the drive belt. He barely bent down to give it a look before calling over a man in overalls. Then he walked back behind the counter, leaving me to explain what needed to be done to a very intimidated auto mechanic. In the midst of my struggle to explain, David came out of the bathroom. His howling grew louder as he approached. I heard voices trying to console him.

"They'll be here soon. They'll make it all better."

"They" sounded ominous, but at that moment I was too involved to even ask who "they" were. David, his injured finger wrapped in a brown paper towel, stepped up on my footrests, straddled my left leg, and settled into my lap. Tears streamed down his cheeks. I wanted to comfort him, yet his cries were interrupting my attempt to direct the two mechanics now working on getting the drive belt back in place. I wanted my wheelchair working again, so that we could get out of there before "they" came. Unfortunately, both happened at the same time.

The woman clerk led the two paramedics to us. A blond-haired one squatted down in front of David. A bearded dark-haired one with glasses stood beside him, hands on hips.

"She his mother?" the bearded one asked.

Who the hell else would I be?

Someone answered yes.

"What's his name?" the one who squatted asked.

"David," I replied, as I glimpsed quickly at his name tag.

"David, can I see your finger?"

"No!" David howled through tears.

"David, honey, you need to show him your finger," I coaxed in a deliberately calm voice.

"It hurts to touch," David sniffed.

"I know," I said, "but right now, he just wants to look at it."

After carefully examining the finger, Kevin raised his eyes to his partner. "Here, take a look."

"Geez, looks like the tip of it is gone."

Could I have been wrong? I peeked over David's shoulder again. It still looked the same to me.

"He'll probably need stitches," the bearded one said. "Let's get him to the hospital."

"No," I protested immediately. "I'll take him to his doctor."

"We can't let you do that."

"Why not?"

"He needs immediate attention."

"I'll get there in 10 minutes," I lied.

The two paramedics gave each other wary glances, indicating they had no intention of letting us go anywhere. The blond one spoke. "We need to fill out some paperwork. Why don't I go get it and David can come out to get his finger bandaged?"

Instinctively, my arm tightened around David's waist, although he made no move to get up. In fact, he scooted back further into my lap.

"I'll go with you," I started to move.

"No, you stay here." His cajoling tone sounded very suspicious.



Leon, David and Denise Jacobson

When their tactic of trying to separate us didn't work, the paramedics pressured me again as they stood in the corner parking lot. "We need to take him to the hospital."

"And what about me?" I questioned. "How will I get there?"

The bearded one suggested, "We could call a paddy wagon for her."

"For her" meant they were still taking David in the ambulance. I couldn't let that happen. "No!"

I knew that if I let them take him, David's trust in me would begin to waver.

A small crowd had followed us outside. The paramedics had turned from me to have a *tête-à-tête*. They spoke in low voices, but as a lifelong eavesdropper I filtered out the traffic and the murmurs of onlookers to catch their words. "We'll have to call the police," the blond said to

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the nodding beard.

Like a bad dream, this was getting more and more out of control. I knew my credibility was nonexistent. I had to convince them to call somebody, somebody who could get them to see me as something other than a hysterical cripple.

"Look, call my doctor," I desperately demanded, getting them to at least look at me again. "Please, don't call the police . . . Call my doctor."

The repairman, who had fixed my drive belt, knelt on the other side of me. When I turned my head, his face seemed less than three inches from mine. He spoke in a tone as if he were admonishing a child. "You don't understand, he needs to go to a hospital."

"No, you don't understand!" I answered back in a voice from deep inside me, articulated with strength and clarity I never knew I had. "He's not going anywhere without me!"

I strained my head, searching the crowd for sympathetic eyes.

I made eye contact with the girl in the uniform again, who was looking somewhat forlorn at the trouble I was having, and, for the second time, she came to my rescue. Borrowing a small pad from the repairman and a pen from the bearded paramedic who was busily informing his partner (above my head) that he had just radioed the police, she wrote down the number I gave her and our last name. Then she disappeared.

A few minutes later, the girl reappeared into the small chaotic crowd and announced, "The doctor would like to speak to one of the paramedics!"

Suddenly, a hush settled over the crowd, as if everyone had been slapped into sense. The bearded paramedic went to take the phone call. The crowd dispersed, leaving the other paramedic to squat down to my eye level and finally speak to me as a human being.

"We'll do whatever the doctor says," the paramedic named Kevin now assured me. "If he wants us to take you to his office, we'll do it — even though we're really not supposed to. But he may want you to go to the hospital."

I was almost certain that we would end up being sent to the hospital if the other paramedic had described David's finger as he saw it. I intended to pursue an agreeable course of action. "How will we get there?"

His answer surprised me. He had actually thought it out. "We could lift David and you onto the stretcher and put your chair up front next to the driver's seat."

I felt an obligation to warn him that my wheelchair weighed 300 pounds without me. That wasn't a problem, he said.

The bearded paramedic returned and spoke to me. "The doctor said you probably should go to the hospital because he'll most likely need stitches and X-rays."

"Okay," I nodded, giving David a reassuring squeeze. "We're ready."

I provided Kevin, who rode with us in the back, with all the necessary information so that the company could bill us its standard fee of $300 for the 10-block ride I had never requested. We were all so calm now. I spoke so clearly; he understood me so well.

"It must be hard," he commented, looking at me with his blue eyes full of sympathy.

I'd heard that comment so many times and never really knew how to respond. The question reflects so many assumptions: How could someone like me meet the demands of an active child? How could a child not take advantage of the obvious physical limitations of his parents? People seem to get so caught up in what they can see that they ignore that which is invisible to them, the most important part of raising a child — the relationship between him and his parents. Suddenly, I knew how to answer that question.

"It must be hard," the paramedic commented. I looked straight into his eyes and said: "The hardest thing is having other people assume that I'm not capable of being a parent."

I looked straight into his eyes and said: "The hardest thing is having other people assume that I'm not capable of being a parent."

The sympathy in his face disappeared. "I'm sorry for what happened back there. Very sorry."

As if to make up for it even more, when we arrived at the hospital, he announced my maternal ability to every staff member we passed on our way to an emergency cubicle where David and I spent most of the next two hours.

David caught a second wind. He charmed the head nurse when she asked him his full name. "I have two," he told her. "One is David Jacobson and the other is David-the-Great!"

She couldn't stop laughing.

The X-rays showed no broken bones. A resident ordered David's finger to be soaked in an antiseptic solution. Another resident wrapped the finger in a medication-treated strip and then a gauze bandage. She gave David an injection and wrote a prescription for an antibiotic.

Tomorrow I would take David to Dr. Berberich. I wanted my own doctor to check his finger. I also wanted to gloat: Not one stitch! TW

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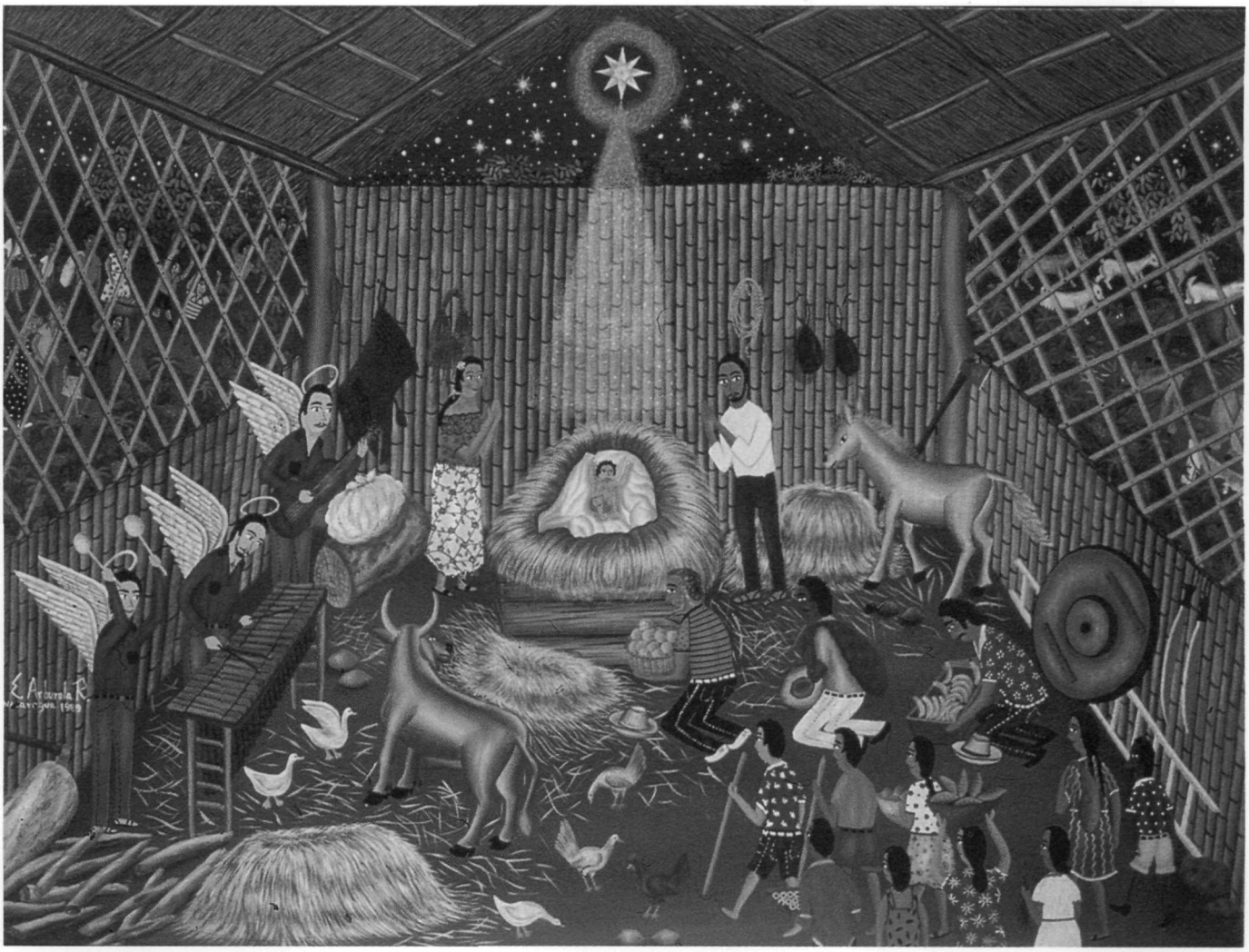

Noel! Noel! **by Edmundo Arburola**

Courtesy of the Nicaraguan Cultural Alliance and Quixote Center/Quest for Peace

Family: icon and principality

by Bill Wylie-Kellermann

The holy family is an icon of Christmas time. It is an image of humanity, speaking of God's love for and presence with us all. It stands virtually as the seasonal emblem of love. We must not forget, however, that this is love under pressure. Here is a family beset, a family in crisis. They must overcome the public shame of unwed motherhood. They are moved about by government order. They are foreigners without resources and shelter. They become the target of violence and flee as political refugees. In these and other ways the family of Jesus represents the experience of family today. It is beset by the principalities and powers.

However, if we are to defend the family and speak on its behalf, family itself must be numbered among the principalities and powers of this world.

Bill Stringfellow certainly counted it so — including it in one of those interminable and exhaustive listings of the powers that be: with all institutions, ideologies, and traditions, with the likes of the Pentagon, the Ford Motor Company, and Consolidated Edison, with sports, sex, technology, money, and a legion host of others. More than once he pronounced that he must write something on the topic: family as principality.

To name it so means to recognize in the family a social reality with a life of its

own, a God-given structure with a vocation to praise God and serve human life, indeed a creature accountable to judgement — to the sovereignty of the Word of God. It also means that we acknowledge the family as subject to the fall, as suffering a confusion and distortion of vocation, as regularly enslaving (instead of serving) human beings, capturing them in the bondage of death.

Amidst the call for attending to the family and its values — and I am one prepared to join that call — we best be thoroughly realistic about the fallenness of this "most basic social unit of human society."

A fallen system

One gentle way into this is via the therapeutic community's understanding of "family systems," let's say with respect to alcohol addiction. Years ago the alcoholic was treated in isolation as a solitary individual afflicted with a disease, a genetic or personality or behavior disorder. Subsequently, members of the family were brought into the treatment process for the sake of supportive relationships. But lo and behold, as theory and experience developed, these very family members were discovered to be "enabling" the addiction. The family member called upon for support turned out, often as not, to be codependent.

As family counseling has progressed, it's been recognized that the family is a configuration, a system of relationships. Even in its most dysfunctional state it operates to bind its members in a status quo, to hold and conform them to a "homeostasis." As Edwin Friedman names it, "the tendency of any set of relationships to strive perpetually, in self-corrective ways to preserve the organizing principles of its existence."

Healing, apart from addressing this entire system, is often misdirected if not futile. The one who is sick or addicted may be merely the place where the pathology of the whole system has surfaced. The people are in the pattern and the pattern is in the people. It operates with a kind of spiritual force. While "dysfunction" is hardly an adequate synonym for the distortion of the fall, it is not unrelated. One may be literally in bondage to a position in the dysfunctional pattern. Naming and seeing (and then breaking) that pattern are key to healing and freedom.

We acknowledge the family as subject to the fall, as suffering a confusion and distortion of vocation, as regularly enslaving (instead of serving) human beings, capturing them in the bondage of death.

Family and violence

Going a step further, such patterns are regularly replicated generationally in what therapists call the "family field." So it is that violence, particularly against women and children, and sexual abuse are not only handed down but carefully and systematically maintained. The family, in this regard if no other, presents itself as a fallen principality.

In *For Your Own Good: Hidden Cruelty in Child-Rearing and the Roots of Violence*, psychoanalyst Alice Miller recounts the internal and systemic mechanisms by which the "silent drama" of humiliation and abuse is played out from one generation to the next — often in the guise of discipline, which is to say, corporal punishment.

Because of their utter dependence upon adult family members, because their love and tolerance for their parents knows no bounds, children are completely vulnerable. Their sense of betrayal, their anger, even (as we now know) their painful memories can only be repressed to be discharged later in adulthood against others — most often their own family members — or themselves.

The statistics of family violence horrify. Some 1,200 children die each year from abuse or neglect. One in six Americans claims to have been physically abused as a child; one in seven report being sexually abused. Of the 11,000 handgun deaths each year in the U.S., the great majority of these occur within the family. Each day, four women die at the hands of their male partner. As the Surgeon General recently put things, "The home is actually a more dangerous place for women than city streets."

The family, called to love, to nurture and protect human beings, turns out to be often as not the very site of violence, raising up members of society readily conformed to the larger — even global — systems of domination. We are in the pattern and the pattern is in us.

A biblical view

The Bible is not unfamiliar with such patterns. When Phyllis Trible exegetes her biblical "texts of terror" for women, all but one of them arise from the violence of power in family relations. Moreover, in scripture the first murder, that seminal act whose consequences mushroom in myth and history, takes place among siblings of the first family of creation (Gen. 4:1-16).

Biblically, the legacy of family is plainly synonymous with patriarchy,

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Bill Wylie-Kellermann is a United Methodist pastor and editor of *Keeper of the Word: Selected Writings of William Stringfellow,* Eerdmans, 1994. Cards from the Nicaraguan Cultural Alliance, PO 5051, Hyattsville, Md., 20782; 301-699-0042. Artist **Marek Czarnecki** sent his work from Brooklyn, NY.

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though this is not (as much of the Christian family movement would suggest) grounded in the natural orders of creation but explicitly in the fall. The creation story clearly identifies the domination of men over women as a curse (Gen. 3:16), the consequence of disorder and confusion, a very emblem of brokenness.

The ancient Hebrew family bore little resemblance to the American nuclear family so often romanticized. It was an extended family and then some. The common Hebrew term is literally "house" as in "Abraham's house" (no small entourage moving to Canaan let alone trailing through history) or that most famous royal family field, the "house of David." As a social unit the Hebrew family embraced more than just those united by blood. It included servants and slaves, widows and orphans, resident aliens — all those who lived under the authority and protection of its head. Where there were several wives, a practice also related to the fall (Gen 4:19) though common in semitic culture and in Israel prior to the monarchy, the family clan would be clustered into distinct mother-centered circles.

In the gospels, the fallen character of the family is practically a theme. Walter Wink points out how often it is cast as a barrier to discipleship. Whoever comes without hating father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, cannot be a disciple (Luke 24:26). Is this a hard word or what?

Jesus' experience of his own family, where mentioned in the gospels, is most often recorded as a hindrance to his ministry (Mark 3:21, 31, even Luke 2:48 and John 2:4). At one point his family becomes convinced he's gone off the deep end and they come to fetch him home. He won't even go out to them, turning their intrusion to a teachable moment: Who are my mother and my brothers? ... Whoever does the will of God (Mark 3:33,35). Is Jesus not making a clean break with the bloodlines of patriarchy?



Marek Czarnecki

Neither was Saint Paul big on family. Among his notorious opinions in 1 Corinthians 7 one might extract some oneliners to render as principles of a Christian family movement. He does offer certain words of encouragement and advice. But read the chapter whole cloth and it's hardly an admonition to marriage and family. On the contrary, in preaching

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the radical urgencies of Christian expectation, Paul counsels a freedom from family's binding obligations and thereby from the driving anxieties of the whole world system. He may be, Wink suggests, closer to Jesus on this score than commonly acknowledged.

Family as image and idol

Idolatry is an issue here. Isn't it always whenever a principality blocks the call of God or becomes confused in its own vocation? When the family places itself, or is placed, above the good of its members, or the good of human life, it has become an idol supplanting God.

An example from the therapeutic realm again illustrates. In a dysfunctional family — be the issue alcohol addiction, spouse abuse, or incest — there is a tremendous pressure to keep up appearances, to preserve the family by projecting the image of normalcy. All members conspire to this conformity of appearance. Care of the image is made more important than the health and wellbeing of individuals, more important than truth. Denial and idolatry go hand in hand. The image is a lie.

The culture also sponsors images of family normalcy. Television images come to mind. In this respect we're still "playing old tapes" of *Father Knows Best*. In *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap*, Stephanie Coontz identifies the TV image around which a new configuration of family values coalesced in the 1950s. The happy homogeneous white suburban nuclear family which we all remember was uniformly portrayed in an array of programs. That image belied the diversity of experience and social reality of large segments of the population. It was a cultural exercise in denial. At the turn of that decade a third of the children in American families remained poor. African American families suffered the systematic brutalities of Jim Crow in the south and ghettoization in the north. Here in Detroit, when all "normal" TV families had moved to the suburbs, 10,000 black men crossed the city line to work in Ford plants in suburbs where not one of their families could relocate. And in an era in which gay baiting was nearly as common as red baiting, many people were forced into the family closet.

Amidst imperial culture in Babylon, the Hebrew family became a focal point of cultural resistance — the family-based festival of Passover was a vehicle of memory, grace, and survival.

Say it again: the image functioned as an idol.

This is pertinent in reflecting critically on the Christian family movement. There are some good things to say about that movement — and I will try to say a few further on. For the moment it is significant to note that much of what this movement yearns for is actually nostalgic worship of that cultural image. It would return in many respects to denial and conformity. It would urge family members to find their meaning, their justification (the theological term is used here advisedly) in the family itself. St. Paul would be more than wary of any such source of justification save in God's grace alone.

Consumption and political economy

In the post-War period it was women above all who were urged to locate personal worth and justification in the family. At least for the moment as the boys came home, Rosie the Riveter was being forced out of the plant. The family image was sold in government films. Babyboomers were getting born.

And for all the "durable goods," the stoves and automobiles of postwar industrial conversion, the family became the basic unit of consumption. The American Dream had a new emblem: the single family home with a car in the driveway. Think of Ozzie and Harriet holding conversation in the kitchen. That Hotpoint refrigerator (proud sponsor of the program) was nearly another character in the scene — the defining prop of any heartwarming American family. Or recall Richard Nixon's shrewd political instincts for taking on Nikita Khrushchev in the famous impromptu "kitchen debate." Here, he proclaimed, was capitalism's reply to communism. Never mind the nuclear bomb. We would bury the Russians beneath the superior conveniences of the nuclear family's buying power.

Here is the period in which the American doctrine of justification shifted from the "work ethic" to the "ethics of consumption." Though it initially fostered the nuclear family and claimed it as a locus, in the long run the consumption ethic is proving disastrous to family values and long-term commitments. Throwaway culture comes home to roost.

This is only one way of saying that, overall, the commercial principalities of capitalism have not been particularly kind to the family. They have broken it down, inside and out. Early American families were held together with a measure of self-sufficiency: the family farm, the cottage industry and family business. Industrial capitalism removed its members one by one from the home, turning them into wage-earners. The Victorian family, sometimes touted as another traditional image, was made possible and sustained by African American families torn asunder in the cotton fields, the child labor of the industrial mills, and the cheap domestic "help" drawn from immigrant families. The economic exigencies of the

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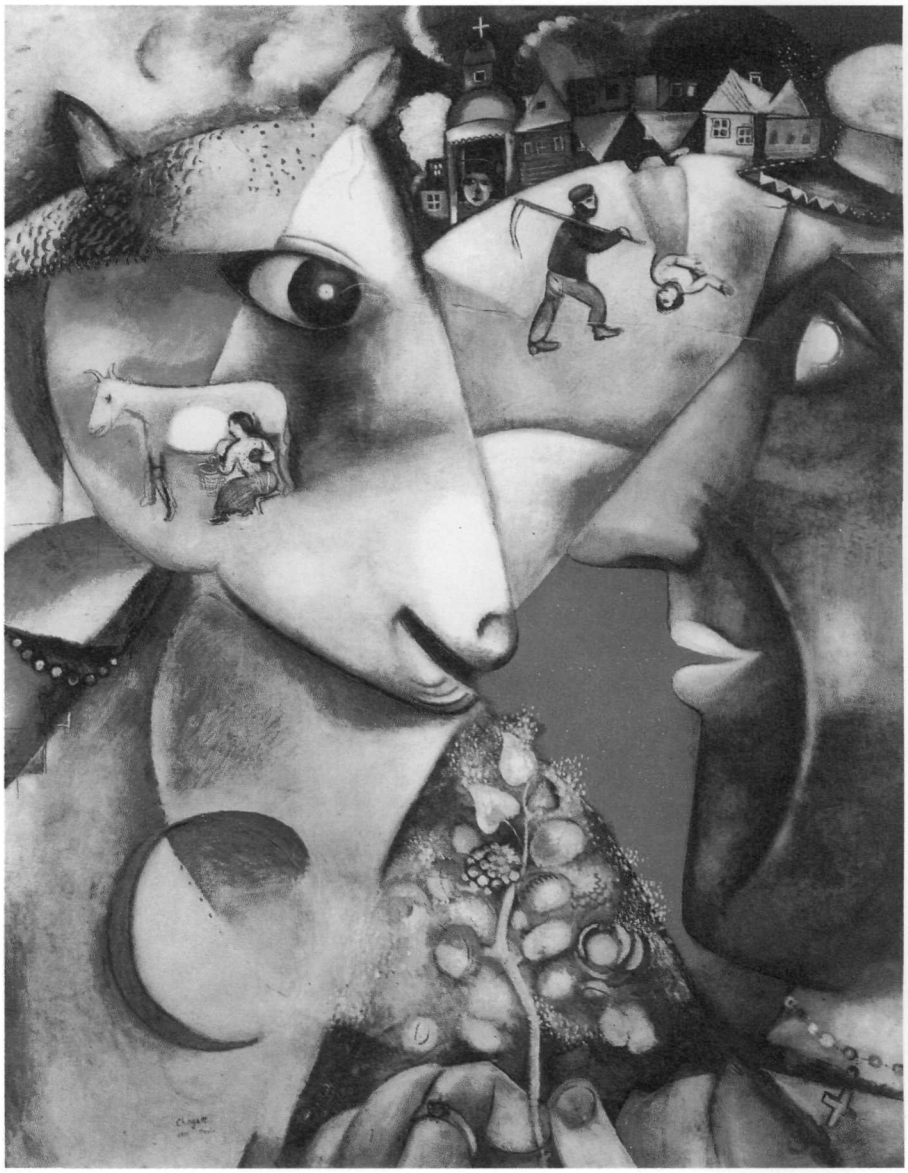
nuclear family have made the truly "traditional" extended and multigenerational family a thing of the past. The ethics of consumerism (now less and less focused on the home) have rendered small two-earner families the most common American variety. Such families have little time left for their children.

Refusing captivity

The families most ravaged by the economic powers are the very ones most often scapegoated for the family crisis, those in the black community. In the economic interests of chattel slavery this breakup was a conscious and systematic strategy of repression — to fracture kinship solidarity and render the lot more manageable. Capture and the middle passage did its work, the block in the slave market divided further, then masters would regularly dissolve and scatter families. African filial names and traditions were suppressed, forbidden, and replaced. Nevertheless, family became virtually a form of resistance and social survival. New forms of extended kinship and childrearing were improvised from African traditions. The "grandmothers" stepped forward as primary anchors. And "roots" were carefully tended to in oral memory and record.

Given the relentless assault of poverty linked with racism, given the mechanisms in which the regulations of the welfare apparatus often enforce family breakup, what is most astonishing is the utter resilience of the African American family. It has fulfilled its vocation serving human life. For this very reason worry arises when families seem to unravel.

In *Race Matters* Cornel West includes these same "sustained familial and communal networks of support" among the ingenious legacy of black foremothers and forefathers which have served as a buffer against despair. They "equip black folk with cultural armor to beat back the demons of hopelessness, meaninglessness, and lovelessness."



I and the Village **by Marc Chagall** Museum of Modern Art

West is concerned that these cultural shields are now failing. A deep and active despair he calls nihilism, driven by market forces and market morality, has penetrated even black families. This he regards as a spiritual crisis. He writes critically of conservative behaviorists who speak of values and attitudes in a vacuum, as if political and economic structures barely existed. However, he is equally citical of liberals who see things only in terms of economics and politics, remaining blind to cultural issues of meaning, spirit, personal responsibility. Beyond both he calls for a "politics of conversion," which remains alert to the structural conditions which shape peoples'

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lives (one might say: remains radically realistic about the fallen powers and authorities), but which meets the threat of nihilism head on as a matter of the heart, meets it locally and at home with nothing less than love.

A rightness of the right?

It may be that something similar lies beneath the best of the Christian family movement. To suggest this does not mitigate in the slightest the idolatry of nostalgia, the naivete concerning the family's place in an array of fallen structural powers, the homophobic ideal type which conforms and excludes, the principles of male headship which seek patently to reestablish patriarchy, or the narrowing of social obligation to a kind of self-interested privacy — all of these are deeply and perhaps essentially entangled. Still, goodhearted Christian evangelicals have become convinced that the family is in a cultural and spiritual crisis, that it needs renewing in its vocation, that time and long-haul commitment and personal responsibility will be required, that open and honest communication — even prayer and worship together — are key to this renewal. I dare say they are to that degree right. And that Christians of the left have been wrong in the degree to which they have utterly ceded the concern or simply re-upped in the culture war against "family values." Radical Christians ought truly to be family advocates, structurally alert to the assault it suffers, and nurturing its vocation in new and renewed forms through the politics of conversion.

I look around my own community committed to nonviolence and simplicity, committed to life in the city of Detroit, committed to the work of social transformation — and I am struck how much of our energies are devoted to life in families of one sort or another. Occasionally I admit worry that we are being domesticated by a familial principality (and need I say it's worth being realistically wary on that score). But marriage and family have my heart — they are to me a source of delight, a place of joy, as well as a discipline. And I am convinced that this concrete work of love is not a substitution but one and the same with our other commitments. We are better able to see society and the future from the viewpoint of our children and the children of others.

I testify from experience that we love because we first were loved. Through our families we can pass on the love we received (or break the cycle of violence)

Opting for hospitality

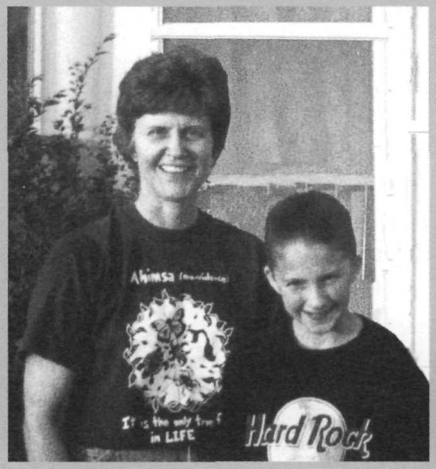
Last year, Pat Kolon sold her house, took her then 9-year-old daughter Emily to live in an inner-city shelter for homeless women and left her position as religious education coordinator for a suburban Detroit parish.

"When I taught baptism classes, I would say that baptism reminds us whose family we're part of, that family goes beyond bloodlines once we acknowledge God as the giver of life," says Kolon, a single mother. "I was saying it over and over, and finally I was hearing myself saying it and knowing its truth."

At Day House, Kolon and her daughter share a home with four other Catholic Worker community members and — at any given time — six or eight guests. She receives no salary and has no health insurance. More important than financial security, she believes, is that her daughter live among people acting on their faith, in a racially diverse setting.

Emily, an effervescent and outspoken fifth-grader, is frank about the pros and cons of her new home.

"I get to meet new people and help people out, and learn how problems are different for other people," she says. But "at first the bathrooms were yucky, and there were mice, and sometimes the guests will be wacko or make me upset."



When her next-door playmate expressed wonderment at her toys and pretty bedroom, she remarked that "Cassie must feel like I feel" at the home of a suburban friend.

Kolon, who never married, reflects that her single-parent status has been "one of the most painful but also the most freeing things for Emily and me. As a white middle-class woman there are a lot of constraints and assumptions about where we would live and what our lifestyle would be like if we were connected with a man." As it is, there's "a freedom in being able to say something as 'naive' as 'Where would Jesus be?' or 'What would Jesus do?' and make my choices according to my beliefs." — *Marianne Arbogast*

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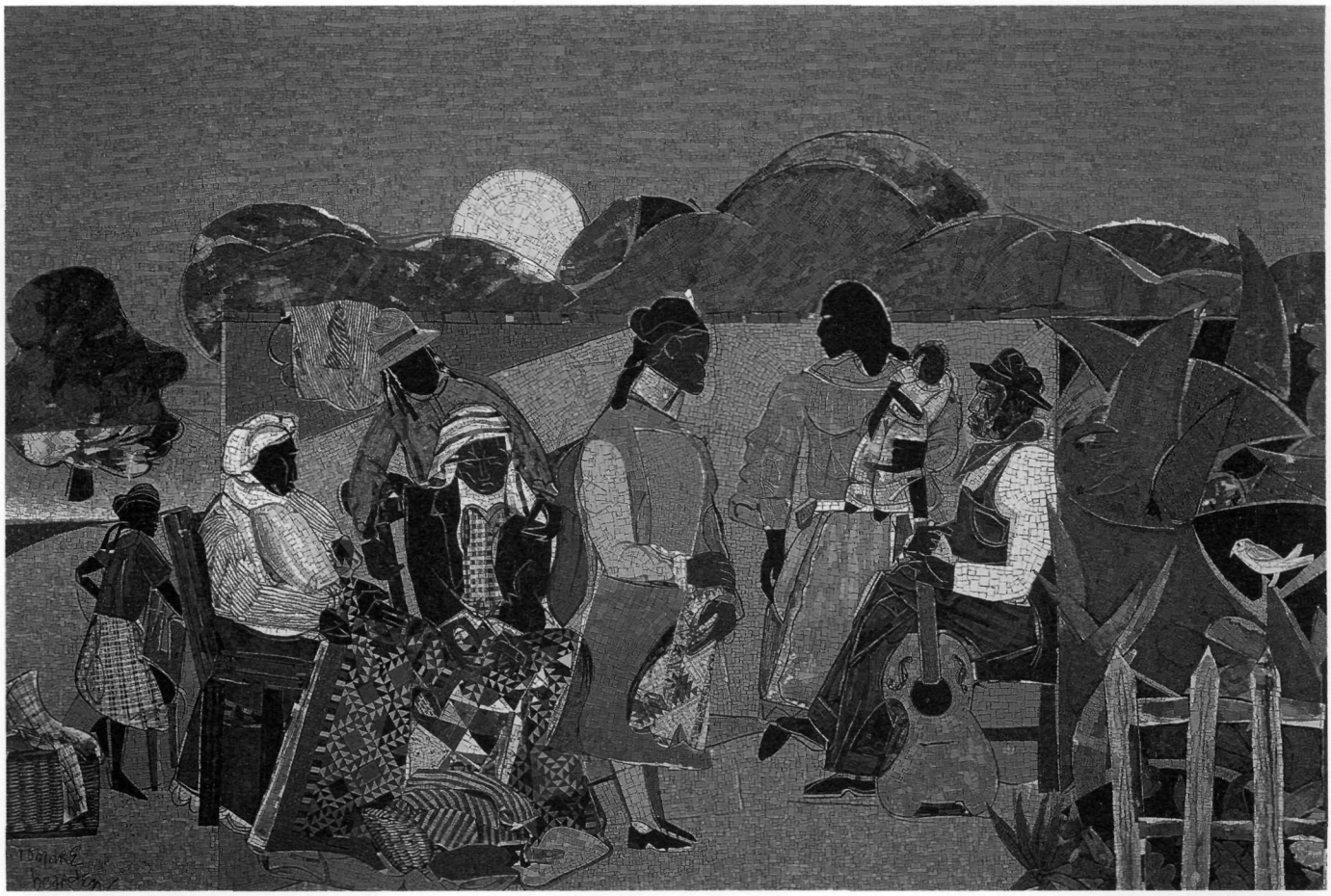

Quilting Time, **1986 by Romare Bearden**

Courtesy Estate of Romare Bearden

and thereby seed the future. Family is both means and end. (I have heard Rosemary Ruether identify, as a revolutionary effort, the time and involvement a new generation of feminist fathers gives to raising their children.) We resist the cultural breakdown of the century, by holding together. We honor the promises of partnership and marriage.

Resistance and transformation

Amidst imperial culture in the exile of Babylon, the Hebrew family became a focal point of cultural resistance. It rose to the crisis of history. In the absence of temple and state, the family-based festival of Passover was a vehicle of memory, grace, and survival. One thinks again of kinship networks bearing the humanity and hope of American slaves through a long dark time. How might the family in this our own imperial culture praise God and serve human life — serve all creation — as a circle of resistance? How can the unconditional love of long term commitments resist the market morality of consumption, resist the plague of materialistic individualism? How might new forms and ways of ordering family life and child-rearing seed a nonviolent future free of patriarchy and domination?

Jesus once uttered a strange promise: "Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father for the sake of the good news, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age — houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields with persecutions — and in the age to come eternal life" (Mark 10:29f). Houses and lands? It sounds like he had some new economy in mind. And this, inseparable from new patterns and definitions of family, must surely have been a scandalous pronouncement. It appears he described the "kindom" movement as precisely that, a new and renewed family — one not constituted exclusively on bloodlines. "Looking at those who sat around him, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother'" (Mark 3:31f).

Imagine families a very form of the gospel. TW

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***Beulah's Baby,* 1948, by Primrose McPherson Pascal**

North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, Purchased with funds from the North Carolina Art Society

"Generations of memory"

by Rita Nakashima Brock

The life-giving power of women is the seeing of sacred power in ordinary needful acts, in daily care, persistent presence, and embodied loving. Marilou Awaiakta's poem "Motherroot" describes this sacred power:

> Creation often
> needs two hearts
> one to root
> and one to flower.
> One to sustain
> in time of drouth
> and hold fast
> against winds of pain
> the fragile bloom
> that in the glory
> of its hour
> affirms a heart
> unsung, unseen.

What images will open our own eyes, so long clouded by patriarchal ideas and images? What enables us to touch, to smell, and to see here, and here, and here, and here, the presence of God, the motherroot?

Millions of the world's women have lived out love's fierce embodied commitments at great risk to themselves, perversely persisting against all odds. Erotic power, God incarnate, enters into life through the work of ordinary women, through our struggles and vulnerabilities. That power is born in our passion for physical and spiritual healing and wholeness. It is found in our protective embracing of relationships against powers of control and violence and destruction. Our passions feed motherroot; without it no society can survive.

I suggest as motherroot an image of God drawn from the story of my own life. Almost exactly a decade ago, I learned that I had a Puerto Rican father. I had grown believing my stepfather who brought my mother and me from Japan when I was six, was my birth father, my only father who had died in 1976. When my Japanese mother passed away, she left behind my adoption papers. They contained no information about my lost father.



Rita Nakashima Brock with her grandparents.

Through a series of bizarre coincidences, accidents and searching, I discovered his name and an old address in Dorado Beach, Puerto Rico. I went there to find what I could, not knowing if he knew anything about me, if he was alive or why such a secret had been kept from me for so long.

I found 10 aunts and uncles and many cousins who had hoped that I would be found some day. My father, who had left for Korea when I was six months old and had not contacted my mother for two years, was living in New York. My mother, after two years of silence from him, had cut all contact, which is why I did not know of him. I met him later.

In that visit to Puerto Rico, I found grandparents, a grandfather who prayed every night before he slept that he would see his first grandchild before he died. My grandmother did not pray. She was sure this child she loved only from a few faded baby pictures would someday be found. She was so sure I would come that she had pasted those pictures to her dresser mirror where she peered expectantly at them for 33 years. And my *Abuela Maria* was right.

I arrived unexpectedly one winter looking for a family I wasn't sure existed. It never occurred to me that they would be waiting for me with open arms. I was amazed to learn that a grandmother whom I did not know and who knew me only from faded photographs cared passionately that I would be well and that I would return.

My grandmother's commitment to loving me did not rest on my knowing her, but on her memory of me. *Abuela Maria* loved me though she was unknown to me.

To be loved even when we do not know we are being loved is the power of *ecclesia* in our lives to be called out by those who care. From *ek*, out, and *kalein*, to call, *ecclesia* is grounded in the Christian confession that God is love and we are to love one another. We must look for

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Rita Nakashima Brock is associate professor of the humanities at Harding University in St. Paul, Minn. This article is adapted from an address given at the Re-Imagining Conference in which Brock presented three images of God.

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The chosen baby

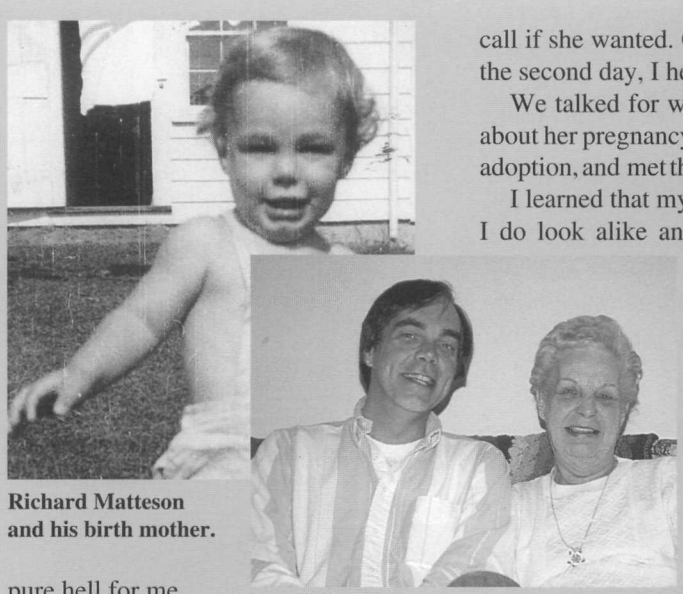
by Richard Matteson

I remember the day in July, 1953, when I was told I was adopted. I was given a book to read, *The Chosen Baby*, and then told that I was the boy, Peter, in the book. I was a smart kid, with a vivid imagination, and decided that my folks must have gone to a Supermarket of Babies and picked me off the shelf. I never decided what the criteria for selecting me were, but it seemed something akin to shaking melons or pinching peaches.

Sometime after the revelation, I started to feel that something must be wrong with me, that my mother didn't want me because of something I either was or wasn't or did or didn't do. "Not good enough" became part of my being. Coupled with thinking of myself as "The Chosen One," a complicated personality dichotomy started to exist.

Secrecy became a means of self-protection. I didn't want anyone to know that I was adopted. I was afraid that I would be labeled "different" or "bastard." I agonized over the Information Sheet we had to complete at school every fall. BIRTHPLACE jumped off the page at me. I thought I was born in Boston, but my Birth Certificate (altered at the time of my adoption) said I was born in Cohasset, Mass. Some years I listed Boston as my birthplace, others I wrote Cohasset.

My feeling of being rejected and abandoned by my birth mother translated into tremendous fear of it happening again, and manifested itself in separation anxiety. For years I was afraid to be away from my adoptive mother, convinced that when I got home she would be gone. The first days of school and summer camp were pure hell for me.



Richard Matteson and his birth mother.

How envious I was of kids who could look at a mother or father and know where they came from and who they looked like. I remember walking through the streets of the town where I grew up and looking into the faces of countless women, always wondering: Is she my mother?

My adoptive parents were, and still are, wonderfully supportive of my need to know.

I decided to actively search for my birth mother in February, 1992. I worked with an adoption search and support group located near Boston. The agency provided me with her current name and address, offering counseling and support, and suggested a letter format for initial contact. Great care was taken to word the letter in such a way that my identity would be known only to my birth mother.

"Dear Emma: It will be 45 years this coming June 22nd (my birthday) since we last saw each other in Cohasset, Massachusetts. My name is Dick Matteson; however, I was born a Peterson (my birth name.)"

I included brief biographical information and my phone number, asking her to call if she wanted. On the evening of the second day, I heard from her.

We talked for what seemed hours about her pregnancy, my birth and the adoption, and met the following week.

I learned that my birth mother and I do look alike and that I inherited many characteristics, including my musical talents, from her.

Emma and I have had many conversations about why I was given up for adoption. I was conceived shortly before she and my birth father divorced. She was living with her widowed mother, working full time and helping her mother keep up the house. In 1947, single mothers were frowned upon. As much as she wanted to raise me herself, she felt that it would be very difficult for all of us. At the time of my birth she chose not to see me, knowing that after one look she would be unable to give me away.

Emma remarried in 1953 and both she and her husband, Dick, wanted to locate me, but were told by a lawyer to forget it.

I recently asked Emma if she regretted giving me up. She told me that she had lived in hell for 45 years, wondering where I was, what I was like and if I was all right.

At our first meeting, we stopped in the lobby of Emma's apartment building so she could get her mail. A neighbor came into the lobby and I was introduced as "Dick, from Hartford." The neighbor looked from Emma to me and back again and asked: "Is he your son?" Emma smiled and said: "He is the son I always wished I had."

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images that bind us to each other more strongly in communities — *ecclesia* struggling for justice, for wholeness within ourselves, with each other, and with the earth — for passionate, committed loving. We must look to images that help us resist disconnection, alienation, denial and apathy. For we need each other beyond all speaking and more deeply than we know, at the core of our deepest motherroot, in our very body-selves, as *ecclesia.*

And this *ecclesia* of motherroot comes through flesh, through the legacies of bodies of our people who enfold us in a vast circle of kinship and care. Belonging to generations of a people creates a huge sea of memory that nurtures hope and love. This sea surrounds us with people who did not know us and whom we may *never* know. The imaginations and promises of generations of grandmothers and grandfathers who have called us out and remain in the memory of our legacies. God here and here and here — *ecclesia.*

To be a citizen of the world without generations of memory to anchor us to herstory and to the earth is to float without patterns, without dreams, without meaning — without *ecclesia.*

Without a people and their legacies, we live without those who made miracles and kept their promises, without those who held fast against winds of pain.

For each of us there have been thousands of people over many centuries and across many miles who have loved us without knowing us, hearts unsung, unseen. Their hopes and dreams for the future — their hard, gritty clinging to life sometimes against all odds — is their work to keep life going, to hold fast to the bonds of love and care. No one protecting the gossamer tendrils of love's fragile blooms can survive without *ecclesia.* And through our hopes and dreams, holding to life against all odds, we, too, pass on this legacy of loving to those who will never know us.

Because I was adopted by a stepfather, I have been given an additional legacy. It binds me to many other adoptees who struggle to understand the legacies brought to us by the suffering of our biological parents.

To have a people means to inherit an ambiguous, historical legacy, an enfleshed reality passed body to body, incarnate spirit to incarnate spirit.

Without people to belong to whether through birth or adoption, without those people whose hopes are like faded photographs on a dresser mirror peered at expectantly, the world is a cold, lonely, and hopeless place.

But *ecclesia* is not easy. While the world without *ecclesia* may be lonely, the legacy of our peoples includes the ghosts of those who loved us who are angels as well as the ghosts of those who murdered souls, who are demons. To have a people means to inherit an ambiguous, historical legacy, an enfleshed reality passed body to body, incarnate spirit to incarnate spirit, heart to heart, truth and pain grounded in earthly life. For all its ambiguities and tragedies, this affirmation of *ecclesia* is why my life is tied to the church — church that is defined in the broadest sense possible which includes the wild women, the marginalized, and the heretics, as well as the patriarchs. In the church I have a legacy of the lives of ordinary women. TW



Given by the Members of the Committee on Painting and Sculpture, the Philadelphia Museum of Art

***Three Nudes (The Aunts)*, 1930, by Julio Castellanos (1905-1947)**

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Same-sex unions

by Jennifer M. Phillips

[Ed. note: Jennifer Phillips was a deputy from Massachusetts to the Episcopal Church's 1994 General Convention. She offers the following theological reflection in response to what she considers the bishops' disappointing efforts to "continue the dialogue" on human sexuality.]

I have been blessed by the unusual experience of serving in a eucharistic community in which for nearly a century a large group of gay and lesbian parishioners have been a visible, welcome part of the congregation. Within this community are people from every socio-economic group who are urban and suburban, married and single, liberal and conservative, old and young, employed and unemployed, housed and homeless, mixed in background and living in a variety of household configurations. They reflect much of the diversity of God's creation. God has called us together in our variety to be a parish, a local instance of the Body of Christ, celebrating God's presence known among us.

Every household of the community — whether a person living alone, a couple, a person or persons raising children or caring for aging parents, groups of friends, or those making their home temporarily or permanently within a large institution — is called to order itself as a small church community in which God is made manifest,



hospitality offered and baptismal vows lived out. Over time, the wider community in its relationship with a household can discern whether that household shows forth God and builds up the community or not.

Where a household and its relationships are found to be violent, exploitative and destructive, the discernment of the community offers the discipline of healing, correction or conclusion. Where a household is discerned to be filled with love, respect, kindness and prayer, where it reaches out in care to others, where wrongs are forgiven and labor shared, the community rightly desires to return thanks to God for it. And when a couple find in one another a source of joy and comfort, strength in adversity, the knowledge and love of God, then they properly desire to return thanks to God for their relationship and to ask God's continued blessing and the community's prayerful support.

A blessing sets something apart as holy and revelatory of God by recognizing, affirming and giving thanks for the presence of the Blessed One from whom all blessings flow and by petitioning God for the continuance of God's grace. It is not a private matter, since it is the diversity of gifts that gives sanctity to the whole community and builds it up. Thus in our congregation we bless the offering of vows for religious life, a couple bringing their new baby into the community, civil marriages, water for baptism, the things and animals and people within a home, commitments to Christian service and the penitent after confession and absolution. Other congregations bless fishing fleets, foxhunts and farmlands.

Human experience of sexuality and gender comprises a vast spectrum. Those who fall outside the dominant categories often live lives of extraordinary suffering and ostracism. The church has not begun *to make room for them.*

In a eucharistic community, when many of the lives and relationships of members cannot be celebrated, where God cannot be publicly thanked for them and asked to assist them, the eucharistic body begins to unravel. Loving one another, members no longer desire to celebrate their own joys, knowing that their sisters' and brothers' similar joys may not be celebrated. Occasions of celebration become burdened by grief and ultimately members fall away from the table fellowship. Thus, the failure to recognize gay and lesbian households as places where God's faithfulness may be known diminishes the whole parish community, homo- and hetero-sexual.

Properly, at different times, the church revisits its understanding of suitable family structure, as in the Lambeth conversations about polygamy in the 1980s and the Episcopal Church's rethinking of its divorce and remarriage practices in the 1960s and 1970s. It will take time for the Episcopal Church to reach a generally common mind about matters of homosexuality, particularly as the fear and loathing of gay and lesbian people has made many areas of the church unsafe for them to give witness to the presence of God in their lives. In the absence of the visible witness of gay and lesbian households in their midst, congregations have difficulty altering their understanding.

A few congregations, like the one I serve, have a long history and strong testimony to share. We say gladly, "Christ has been seen and known to us, among us, in the breaking of the bread and the shared journey over decades." Our call to evangelize gay and lesbian people outside the church is strong and clear. But we cannot offer the invitation of the Gospel and then say, "but you must leave your intimate lives and loves, your deepest personal identities outside the door." Nor can we say to those baptized, "*Your* vocations to holy relationship, fidelity and service we will not honor," especially when their lives may be those that most show to us the activity of the Holy Spirit.

One final reflection, from my many years as a hospital chaplain. I have had

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the privilege of hearing the stories of the lives of many persons who have not fit the tidy categories of male and female: transsexuals, transgendered individuals, transvestites, those with ambiguous chromosomes (XXY, XYY), those with congenital genital abnormality, with hormonal dysfunction and those who have been traumatically mutilated — as well as gay, lesbian and bisexual persons. They have taught me that creation is far more various than I once believed. In humankind as in some other species, God has created more than just male and female.

This has been as transforming a realization for me as my discovery that the Newtonian construction of the physical universe I learned as a child has been radically revisioned by quantum and chaos theory. I stand in even greater awe of the Creator who has generated such complexity and elegance than I did of the God I thought of in Aristotelian and Platonic images back then.

Human experience of sexuality and gender comprises a vast spectrum. Those who fall outside the dominant categories often live lives of extraordinary suffering and ostracism. Many of them hunger for and seek God. They also strive for intimacy and community.

The church has not *begun* to make room for them, to see them created also in the image of God and to inquire how God may be calling them to shape holy lives! They have given me the gift of knowing a little more of the fullness of God, for which I am profoundly grateful and through which I have come to have a changed heart and understanding.

They have reminded me again and again, if you would know the face of Christ, look at your neighbor. Especially look at the one you imagine to be most different from yourself. You will see there the holy image of your blessed, redeemed, common humanity.

— Jennifer Phillips, who says she is most at home in the Anglo-Catholic portion of the Anglican tradition, is rector of the Church of St. John the Evangelist in Boston. A former hospital chaplain, she has written and published extensively on AIDS ministry and care for caregivers. This piece is a condensed version of a longer article on the same topic.



Marriage á la Mode, Signing the Contract **by William Hogarth (1743-1745)**

An hispanic/latino(a) agenda for the church

by Luis Barrios

[*Ed. note:* The Witness *has received a number of responses to our recent story on the* Instituto Pastoral Hispano *in New York (see the August/September 1994 issue). In November, we published several letters to the editor about the story and there is another letter in this issue. This piece by Luis Barrios and the one by Richard Shaull on page 31 are two further reflections on the church and its ministry with and among hispanics.*]

One of the historical realities that hispanic/latino(a) communities face at the present moment is what politicians are calling, "the hispanic/latino(a) challenge." There is an incredible effort in local and national political campaigns to attract our vote. With this in mind I think it is necessary to initiate a critique of our Episcopal Church, which does not have a "working agenda" to face the fact that we will soon be the second largest ethnic group in the U.S.

We must recognize that we worship in a church that is stricken with "institutionalized racism." But I also believe that in order to present a reliable agenda, we must stop putting all the blame on the dominant culture that controls and leads our Episcopal Church; we need to recognize that we also have to accept responsibility for not developing the appropriate mechanisms to stop these injustices. There is a strong need to develop our particular agenda, taking into consideration different expressions of theological praxis. This pastoral agenda will include, but is not limited to, the following: a theology of our identities, our Exodus and our exile — and a theology for urban ministry and our alliances.

Theology of identities

First, we need to destroy the myth of

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"hispanic culture" by recognizing the pluralism of the hispanic/latino(a) cultures and traditions. We are people coming from different countries and we represent a lot more than just Spanish language. We speak different languages and dialects. Despite those sociologists and anthropologists in the U.S. who have used the "hispanic umbrella" to classify and categorize all of us in a very disrespectful way, we are not one people, one race, one language, one tradition or one culture.

Once we recognize this reality in our "theology of identities," we have to develop mechanisms to preserve our individual and collective identities in a country that preaches a "melting pot" as a way of dealing with assimilation. This theology needs to include our brothers and sisters who identify themselves, with honor and pride, as chicanos(as), nuyoricans, dominicanyorks, to mention a few.

Another reality is the second and third generations that have grown up or were born in the U.S., for whom English is the dominant language. With this we are faced with the reality of doing hispanic/latino(a) ministry using the English language. Are we betraying our identities? I don't think so. I really believe that this is a reality that we need to accept and incorporate into our pastoral agenda.

However, in doing hispanic/latino(a) ministry I do see a strong need to include learning Spanish and/or English, with the understanding that being bi-lingual in the U.S. is one of the most powerful weapons that we need to learn how to use if we want to gain power. In my understanding, "English Only," a legal way to stop bi-linguism, is a racist project.

In our "theology of identities" there is also a strong need to take back our history by recognizing and accepting our diversities in all their magnitude. We are not going to build a critical mass of unity if we do not exorcise the demons of male chauvinism, homophobia and racism. In some way these three manifestations of partiality and prejudice have no respect for the blessings of diversity that God gave us in creation. We challenge the dominant culture in this country that discriminates against us because we are hispanics/latinos(as), and at the same time we build ways and odious explanations in order to discriminate against hispanic/latina sisters, hispanic/



Luis Barrios

latino(a) gays/lesbians/bi-sexuals and/or black hispanics/latinos(as). A serious social analysis of these issues will also help us to identify how class struggles frame our theological explanations to justify our prejudice and discriminations against the unity of the diversity in the body of Christ.

Theology of the Exodus

Second, in our pastoral agenda there is a need to understand and live the experience of the historical salvation that was given to us in the Exodus paradigm. We need to destroy those "magic responses" related to the explanation of a "world beyond" that perpetuates a kind of worship of the culture of poverty, without allowing us to fight and destroy the demons that create socio-economic injustices. The political dimensions of our faith need to be faced as we and other people live with the painful reality that socio-economic conditions continue to deteriorate in hispanic/latino(a) communities; the Puerto Rican community in particular remains among the poorest in the country. We cannot continue to say that by praying and going to church we are going to bring changes in these issues. Our response with social service programs in our churches (e.g. soup kitchen, shelter for the homeless, after school programs, senior citizen programs, drug addiction services, etc.) is also inadequate, because we are dealing with symptoms and not with the causes of the problems. If we do not add the conscientization component to these services so that people learn skills of social analysis, then we are perpetuating and patronizing the injustices of this political system. We must recognize that our ministries need to be attached to social actions developed by community organizations connected to broad-based leadership. Our goal is to improve people's quality of life by destroying injustices. This is what really happened in the Exodus where people experienced redemption in all its dimensions; religious, political, economic, psychological and social.

Another aspect of the theology of the Exodus in hispanic/latino(a) communities, particularly poor communities, is the incredible religious syncretism in which there is a manifestation of a combination of Protestant, Roman Catholic, cult beliefs and elements of other religions (e.g. Yoruba, Voodoo, etc.). Sometimes this mix is going to bring elements of magic and superstition that can function as a psychological escape. This escape in some way is the beginning of analysis and the wish to gain power. When it comes to developing ministries, we need to approach this diversity seriously to understand the component of cultural theology without underestimating the value of these beliefs. In other words, without destroying those elements that are necessary to keep people's hope and identities, we can rediscover in the particular ways that we worship God the real liberation that will empower people to bring significant changes without expecting magic solutions.

Theology of exile

Like the Israelites at Babylonia looking for their roots and the preservation of their identities in the exile, we need to do the same to explain the reality of how we came to this country and where we are going. We need to recognize that not all of

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An *Instituto* retro

by Richard Shaull

As a missionary in Latin America, I was greatly perturbed by the close identification of Christian faith and life with western culture, white western male ways of thinking and middle-class values. I was forced to see the inadequacy, for other cultures, of the models of church life developed over the centuries in Europe and North America. I concluded that the future of our mainline churches would depend, to no small degree, on our ability to recreate our theological heritage and re-invent the church within other cultural contexts. I spent four decades teaching in theological seminaries in Latin America and the U.S. but never found an institutional base from which to work toward that goal.

And then, in 1982, I met Enrique Brown, who convinced me that the *Instituto Pastoral Hispano* in New York might provide me with the opportunity I was looking for. I accepted his invitation and had the privilege of working with him and Maria Aris-Paul at the development of an alternative model of theological education for hispanics, one in which the experience and culture of hispanic women and men were valued. Our pedagogy started out with and built on their experiences in the communites and churches in which they were rooted.

One of my first tasks was to facilitate a weekly colloquium. In it, students related what they were studying in their basic courses in theology, Bible and history to their own life experiences and to the struggle of people in their communities.

I found the experience fascinating. A middle-aged woman who had been the victim of discrimination all her life because of her race, ethnic origin and gender, gradually got confidence in her ability to think, to speak and to provide leadership in her church. She demonstrated her transformation in a moving commencement address. Similarly, a man who had only a high school education and who at first felt incapable of expressing himself clearly in English or Spanish, became the one who often spoke words of wisdom in our discussions of theology and pastoral work.

As director, Aris-Paul related to the *Instituto's* students in such a way that they would find themselves constantly supported in this difficult process of growth and transformation. The *Instituto* became the place where women and men immersed in hispanic culture and history could read the Bible from their situation and from the perspective of the poor. It was a place where they could enter into dialogue with the heritage of faith in such a way as to re-create and re-articulate it. They became participants in the struggle to make the Gospel incarnate in the hispanic world. They made use of their own ways of thinking and drew on the resources offered by their culture and history as they studied the writings of European and North American theologians. They found much help in Latin American liberation theology; at the same time, they discovered that this theology, too, would have to be recreated to respond to the unique situation of hispanics in North America.

It was a place where students could enter into dialogue with the heritage of faith and into the struggle to make the Gospel incarnate in the hispanic world.

The *Instituto* also dared to work toward creating, within the Episcopal Church structure, an authentic hispanic community of faith, in which marginal people would not only feel at home but would have the space they needed to develop their own liturgies, order their ecclesial life and be agents of transformation in poor communities. One step taken toward this end was the effort of both teachers and students to immerse themselves more completely in the cultural world, the sufferings and the struggles of hispanics in major metropolitan centers. Our aim was to learn firsthand what it might mean to give shape to authentic communities of faith in the center of that world. For me this meant living with a team of women belonging to the Grail who lived and worked with the poorest people in the South Bronx. As I gradually entered into that world, I was profoundly changed by the experience and became convinced of the theological importance for students of becoming more involved in local community struggles.

Eventually, the *Instituto* was invited to move its office and classes from the Diocese of New York's cathedral to the General Theological Seminary. It turned out to be a wise move. We had complete freedom to have our own board of directors and develop our own program. At the same time, we were able to draw on the resources of the seminary's library, faculty and some of its courses. The presence of this hispanic community at the seminary, in turn, offered the seminary's students and faculty an opportunity to be in touch with Latin Americans and their cultural and spiritual perspectives.

Under Brown's and Aris-Paul's leadership, the *Instituto* took bold steps in re-inventing theological education for hispanics and learned a great deal along the way. I can only hope that those now responsible for hispanic work in the New York area will pay serious attention to what has been accomplished and build upon it.

— Richard Shaull is the Henry Winters Luce Professor of Ecumenics, Emeritus, Princeton Theological Seminary. He has also taught at seminaries in Brazil and Costa Rica.

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us came here for the same reasons or under the same circumstances. We can start by recognizing that our ancestors were the first people to take the lands from the Native Americans, some of whom are also our ancestors. We need not feel proud of this savage action, but recognizing it is a way of clarifying who came first.

Another point for this theology is that the first immigration of hispanics/latinos(as) to the U.S. resulted from politics of imperialism when the U.S. took more than half of the land that belonged to Mexico (e.g. Florida, Texas, California, Nevada, etc.). The U.S. continues the colonization of my country, Puerto Rico. These people never came to this country. They were moved to a "coerced exile." Other people came for "political exile," trying to escape from political oppression in their own countries, a reality that is not disconnected from socio-economic issues. Our brothers and sisters coming out of Cuba do not have any difficulty being recognized as "political exiles." However, it is not so easy for our brothers and sisters coming every day from the Dominican Republic, Mexico and El Salvador, to mention a few.

Sooner or later our ministries will need to challenge racist laws that classify our people as "illegal aliens." To be specific, residents of this country are the Native Americans. Everybody else came from some other place to occupy this land. Sooner or later in dealing with this theology of exile our ministries will need to recognize the need to create "sanctuaries" to protect the people of God.

Urban ministry

In order to bring back a church that feels and acts with the people, not for the people, we need to recognize that we are doing ministry in poor communities and that there is a strong need to develop non-traditional models for doing ministry and theological education.

We must not become only "sacramental priests"; this dangerously ignores the majority of people's psycho-social-spiritual lives. We can develop broad-based community ministry instead of parochial ministry. In this kind of relevant community ministry the church will find itself recognizing that there is always a need to create a "church of the people" in which liberation in all its magnitude can be experienced. The cornerstone for this kind of ministry is a teamwork approach in which the major goal is to empower lay people. This is God's project to destroy the culture of poverty at the same time that we empower its people to bring significant changes in the communities.

In addition to broad-based community ministry there is also a strong need to offer theological education in a way that is not going to give our people a second-class education. If we are going to criticize the traditional seminaries because they are not relevant to the needs that our people represent, we better do so with educational projects that will guarantee a popular theological education that will be of the same quality as any formal seminary. What we critique is the relevance, not the quality, of the theological education. The non-traditional model should include skills in social and political analysis, community activism, community organizing, urban politics, learning English and/or Spanish as a second language and the traditional courses, including Anglican history, theology and liturgy.

Theology of alliances

In the past we have made the mistake of isolating our struggle by not creating alliances. We need to recognize that not all white people are racist and that some of them are ready to become part of the struggle. By the same token, we can perceive that our struggle against discrimination is very similar to the struggle that our brothers and sisters in the African-American communities are living with. We must realize that the dominant cultue has been trying to get hispanics/latinos(as) and African-Americans to fight and compete against each other. When we fight one another, we are fighting the wrong enemy. The strongest alliances need to be formed with people that are suffering from oppression and alienation.

Some people in the dominant culture struggle with guilty feelings and decide that they are going to do ministry for hispanic/latinos(as). In other words, their ministry is based on helping themselves to feel better. These people can be encouraged to join our crusade of doing ministry in our communities. However, when it comes to dealing with their personal issues of believing that they need to rescue us, or save us because we are powerless, I become extremely suspicious. These are the people that get into hispanic/latino(a) ministry with the mentality that we need directions because we know nothing. They become "experts," "consultants," or "specialists" in doing hispanic/latino(a) ministry and at the same time replace us, the indigenous people. I strongly believe that in a struggle for justice, any person who is willing to fight for justice is always welcome. However, in a liberation experience, those who are living the painful reality of alienation and oppression need to take the power and control, in order to give some kind of indigenous direction that will safeguard the identity elements of that struggle. We cannot tolerate the perpetuation of a "welfare mentality" in our liberation struggle.

These considerations for a hispanic/latino(a) pastoral agenda are the result of prayers, meditations and struggles in my church. They are not the rules or the absolute truth. As a hispanic/latino person I give priorities to our hispanic/latino(a) agenda without any intention of being disrespectful or underestimating other struggles that we have in our church. Probably you may feel happy or angry about what you read here. I hope that I got you thinking; that is and will continue to be my intention.

—Luis Barrios is associate priest at St. Mary's Manhattanville Episcopal Church in New York City. He serves on the pastoral-care faculty of the Blanton-Peale Graduate Institute. This piece is a shortened version of a longer article on the same topic.

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Dr. Spock's views

by Chris Payden-Travers

A Better World for Our Children: Rebuilding American Family Values, by Benjamin M. Spock, National Press Books, Bethesda, Md, 1994.

Benjamin Spock begins his latest book with a chapter entitled, "Where I'm Coming From." That seems like an appropriate place for me to begin as well. A former pre-school teacher, I am now a parish priest serving a small, rural congregation in southwestern Virginia; my husband and I are the parents of two teenage daughters.

Both personally and professionally I care passionately about the kind of world in which our children live. From what is, in many ways, a fairly sheltered community, I see a world in which three young people from our parish have gone on anti-depressant medication in the past year, two of whom are struggling not with issues of being unpopular but with issues of trying to live up to their very popular public personas. My own daughters tell me stories of their friends' struggles with depression and anorexia. These are the stories of "comfortable" middle-class children. Earlier this fall the stories of children whose lives are marked by poverty and violence were before me as our parish participated in Children's Sabbath, an event sponsored by the Children's Defense Fund whose executive director, Marian Wright Edelman, addressed the 71st General Convention in Indianapolis this past summer.

Like Spock, I, too, am concerned about the present state of the world, and I, too, have spent time trying to understand why it is the way it is. Spock addresses those issues in a section titled "What We've Got." The subheadings of that topic include: "The New Social and Economic Realities," "Sex, Marriage and Family Life," "Violence and Brutality," and "Deteriorating Health." I did not find any startling new revelations in the above chapters, just a good summary of the problems we face.

Spock then moves to a discussion of "Back to Basic Values," specifically exploring: "What Happened to Our Standards and Beliefs," "The Roots of Idealism," and "Instilling Values." While I would agree with Spock's insistence that we desperately need to regain our sense of idealism and spiritual values and teach them to our children, I was uncomfortable with his definition of the optimal environment for learning those things: the traditional two-parent family unit. I believe that it is also possible to learn those things in a single-parent family, in a gay/lesbian family, in a communal living situation. So in reading this section I had to redefine Spock's concept of "the family" in order to appreciate his ideas.

While I would agree with Spock's insistence that we desperately need to regain our sense of idealism and spiritual values, I was uncomfortable with his definition of the optimal environment: the traditional two-parent family unit.

I personally found the last chapter, "Creating a Better World," to be the most interesting and challenging part of the book. Being a person who tends towards both idealism and impatience, I like to get to the solution of the problems, and Spock insists that it is primarily through political activity that the problems can be solved. And therein lies the challenge, for political activity takes enormous amounts of time — how do I, a full-time working mother, both follow Spock's "12 Steps to Building Strong, Positive Family Values" (pp. 147-150) AND be politically active at the same time? I obviously don't — some days I do one, some days the other. But that is all right because the responsibility for creating a better world for our children falls on ALL of us, not just on the biological parents of the children. In the liturgy of the Episcopal Church we are reminded of that responsibility every time we welcome a new child into the household of God in Holy Baptism when we promise to support that child in her/his life in Christ. From Spock's perspective, that is a promise to be a political advocate for that child.

I am not sure that this book will have a strong appeal for readers of *The Witness,* most of whom are already aware of the needs of our children. I think its real value lies in reaching the same people Spock reached in *Baby and Child Care:* mainstream Americans who have not devoted much thought to the problems and the solutions before us. If Benjamin Spock can activate THAT group of people with this book, he will have done our children — and the rest of us — a great service. TW

Chris Payden-Travers is rector of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Callaway, Va.

book review

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Making love manifest

by Marianne Arbogast

The family blessing rite at Benjamin Walters Sciaky's baptism held special significance for his parents: It was the first public, formal prayer offered over their life together.

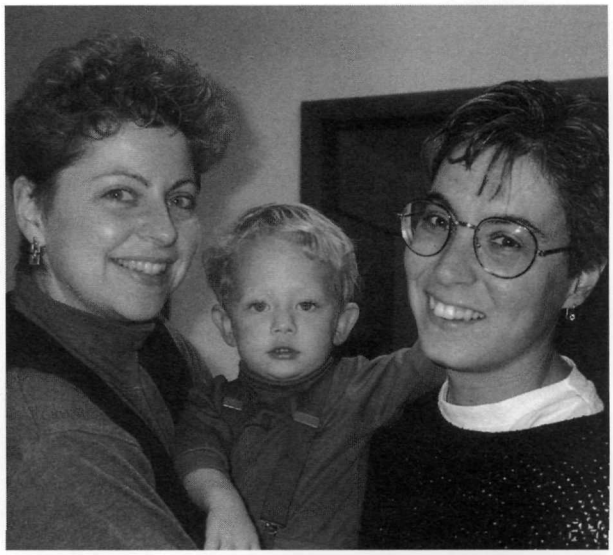
For Jennifer Walters and Alexandra Sciaky, Ben's arrival "made real something that was already the case," says Walters, now an Episcopal priest in the Diocese of Michigan. (Walters' ordination in August provoked a storm of controversy over Bishop Stewart Wood's willingness to ordain an out lesbian.) "The love we shared went beyond two people. Ben is one manifestation of that, but not the only one. The irony of the church being willing to baptize a child, but not bless our union, challenged me to think anew about how we think of people as individuals or couples, and only when there are children, talk of families. I believe it's a disservice to all families to create a model that's so walled-up."

Walters, Sciaky and 21-month-old Ben — who became their son through an open adoption — share a small home in a quiet Ann Arbor subdivision, which also serves as Walter's office for her ministry at Church of the Incarnation. A family/dining room with sliding glass doors opens onto a sloping, tree-filled backyard.

"We're doing as well as we are because we're not isolated," Sciaky said, settling Ben into his high chair as Walters prepared his lunch. "We have our church, community at our jobs, and our families of origin."

"Ben's birth mother is part of the family in some way, and his half-dozen godparents," Walters added. "People in the church are also invested in his well-being in a way I don't remember having as a child."

"The love we shared went beyond two people. Ben is one manifestation of that."
— Jennifer Walters



Alexandra Sciaky, Benjamin Walters Sciaky and Jennifer Walters.

Ben's birth mother, a single woman unprepared to raise a child, met Sciaky and Walters during her pregnancy through a member of their church who knew they were thinking about adoption.

"She was isolated, and relied on us a lot to be her friends," Walters recalls. "She hadn't met openly lesbian women before, but she was very open. At times it was confusing; we were mindful that it was her baby, and whatever her decision was, we wanted to support her."

By the time of her delivery in February of 1993, Ben's birth mother was clear that she wanted Sciaky and Walters to be his parents. They accompanied her to the hospital and served as coaches at Ben's birth.

For all three women, open adoption seemed a healthy alternative to secrecy.

"For a birth mother, open adoptions help to mitigate feelings of guilt and loss and having to keep a secret," Walters says. And she and Sciaky know that "the person who chose us chose us knowing who we were; we can have an open relationship."

Ben's birth mother visits regularly, and circulates photos with pride. His father, who had to be traced by court officials, hesitated to terminate his parental rights when he learned the child was a boy; but his own attorney persuaded him that, since he had no job or stable residence, he would be unable to care for a child. He has visited Ben just once, but Walters and Sciaky have assured him that he is welcome to get in touch at any time.

Ben, a blond, curious toddler in love with trains, has named Sciaky "Mommy" and Walters "Mommo." He spends morn-

Witnesses, the quick and the dead

Marianne Arbogast is assistant editor of *The Witness*.

ings with Walters, then goes to day care for the afternoons. Sciaky works full-time as a physical therapist, but would like eventually to cut back her hours. Saturdays are set aside as family time; a favorite outing is a trip to an area shopping mall, where "Ben thinks God lives in the fountain," Walters says.

"We're probably more equal caregivers than most heterosexual couples are," Sciaky says, noting that their differences have most often centered around "overkill or overlap."

"Like, 'I already did that nurturing — put him to bed!'" Walters laughs.

The struggles they speak of are those familiar to every new parent: lack of sleep, concern over day care arrangements, the adjustment to focusing their attention "24 hours a day on a little being who is totally dependent on you," Sciaky says.

Both women's parents have been supportive, though Walters says that their mothers "didn't rush out or worry about us the same way" they did when their other daughters gave birth. They attribute this to their mothers' assumption that with two women in the house, all would be well.

Not everyone has agreed.

Walters' grandmother told her that "two women have no business raising a child, especially a son;" and an old college friend sent her "a really scathing letter telling me we've done a really terrible thing in denying Ben a father."

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January/February issue:
Political Prisoners

She and Sciaky believe that, first and foremost, "kids need a loving home. Alexandra and I provide all the love we can give, all the wisdom we have — however much or little it might be — to nurture his goodness and happiness. To say that Ben has some particular challenges to face in the world is true — but if someone else had been his parents, he would just have a different set."

Sciaky notes that Ben is close to his godfathers, and will grow up knowing other children with similar families.

Walters feels that "it may be easier to be open to what Ben's going to be" than it would be with a girl. "People have told me that as the mother of a daughter, my buttons would get pushed more."

"To say that Ben has some particular challenges to face in the world is true — but if someone else had been his parents, he would just have a different set."

— Jennifer Walters

Walters and Sciaky began planning for Ben more than 10 years ago, as they laid the early, tentative groundwork for their commitment to each other. Though they had been best friends throughout college, it was not till several years after their graduations that each emerged from a personal struggle over sexual identity with a dawning sense of a call to share their lives.

For Sciaky especially, a large part of the struggle was the question of children.

"I was the oldest of five, and I expected to grow up to be driving a station wagon in the suburbs with a big family," she says. "This threw a wrench in the works." With the support of a nun at an Episcopal retreat center who counseled her to seek "what God wants for you," she came to believe that "we could be whoever we wanted to be, and who God wanted us to be, in a lesbian relationship."

Sciaky and Walters reached some shared conclusions: Though both would like to be parents, neither felt it necessary for self-fulfillment. They would not try to become biological parents, but would be open to adopting a child who needed a home.

"We prayed long and hard and thought long and hard," Walters says. The chain of events that brought them together with Ben felt providential.

Walters says that adopting a child has sensitized her "to the way our culture makes inappropriate distinctions." For instance, she says, reporters will mention that a child is adopted even when it is irrelevant to a story. "It diminishes the relationship families have," she believes. "The way families are shaped has always been more diverse than the picture that is presented."

But overall, the family has received "unexpected and delightful support," Sciaky says. "We had three baby showers, and sent out 95 thank-you notes."

They value those connections highly.

"An atomized family withers," Walters says. "An extended family is the only family that survives." TW

Want to include *The Witness* in your will?

Bob Eckersley, our former treasurer, will be happy to work with readers who can consider including *The Witness* in their wills. Eckersley's a CPA who is easy to talk to and has an interest in socialist thinking and justice issues. He can be reached at 717-346-8425.

Greening the church

The Greening of Faith — Part I: "Theology and Spirituality" (30 min.); Part II: "Ethics" (27 min.); Cathedral Films and Video, $29.95 each part.

If there is anyone out there who still wrestles with whether Christians and the church may have a meaningful role in the environmental movement, here are two videos designed to spell it all out.

In *The Greening of Faith*, the skillful video producer Jim Friedrich, together with Scott Miller, has made a thoughtful and serene presentation of the variety of concerns which illumine — and hound — the discussion of the relationship of church and nature. The natural photography and videography are of the usual high quality associated with Cathedral Films and Video.

Interviews with people from a variety of organizations, sacred and secular, are the backbone of these two videos; all, with the exception of a Native American woman, are white. Their comments range from the pithy and quotable to the more puzzling; saying, for instance, that nature is not a revelation *about* God but *of* God is less lucid than it sounds. Nevertheless, all the bases get covered and ample study guides that accompany the videos will help groups concretize the ethereal statements.

More than one speaker helpfully describes the Bible as having little to say explicitly about environmental care because such was not an issue in the day the scriptures were assembled. One woman insists that care for nature is present in Scripture, but that the church has tended to read past these tenets in the same way we have read past feminine imagery and women's history in the church.

The interviews are lovingly tied together with peaceful images of natural splendor and what has come to be called "new age" music. This allusion to a whole genre of serenity-based art is appropriate to the topic and is undoubtedly designed to invoke the reverence the speakers describe. An unfortunate side effect is that the several ideas begin to blend together, even when they contradict one another. As in the experience of monastic retreat, some are going to find their senses heightened and their awareness sharpened and others are going to fall asleep.

But sleepers, wake. There's meat in the salad. The tough issue of sustainable development is raised, with the insistence that the reversal of poverty and care for nature are not exclusive goals. And the brief exchange over whether or not nature is to be redeemed by Christ contains something for everybody to disagree with.

These videos are most stirring when they cry out for and posit a special role for the church in grappling with the environmental crisis. The journey the church will undertake will probably include more thunderstorms than limpid sunrises. But images and ideas, placidly presented, are a reasonable and helpful single step preceding a thousand miles.

— Bruce Campbell is a filmmaker living in New York City who spent many years working as a communications specialist at the Episcopal Church's national headquarters.

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even by ancestors no longer living.

Our ancestors — by blood or by faith — can offer a sanctuary in which we can do the work.

A friend of mine who struggles with a pattern of abusive relationships confided this to a great aunt in a nursing home. The aunt reciprocated by saying that her ex-husband was sometimes cruel. One night he came home drunk; she grabbed the baby and her mother, who was visiting, and they locked themselves in the bathroom. The aunt's mother, my friend's great-grandmother, said "I had no idea you were living with this." She took her daughter from the house and arranged that she never see the husband again.

There's a photograph of this matriarch with her adult daughters around her and it is powerful beyond words to know that in the blood-line is a strong woman who rejects abuse and can protect her daughters.

Blood lines of course aren't everything. Another friend recently examined a table of friends who have known one another for the duration of her life. Weathering 40 years, they have become family and she realized that her parents were not her favorite members. Being known and cared about by the others filled in holes that would have been gaping, if the nuclear family was the only reality.

Through time, backward and forward, run lines of blood and love. Coursing through them are the strengths and the fears of generations. We carry within us the stamp of those who preceded us. Whether we study them or take them for granted, we work with what they created. Likewise our own efforts will be felt through the seventh generation (as the American Indians tried to teach the Europeans).

Let's speak to these family values with enough compassion and hope that our voices can be heard over Rush Limbaugh's. TW

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Christmas offer!

To encourage readers to give *The Witness* as a Christmas gift, we will send donors a custom-made, rubber-stamped Advent calendar for each gift subscription. The calendars make great gifts in themselves.

Designed by managing editor Julie A. Wortman, the calendars are ironic and faithful. This year's theme is the *Magnificat*. Wortman's 1993 Advent calendar, on the theme *For we like sheep...*, won an award at the Episcopal Communicators' conference last June. Copies of it are also available upon request.

(Wortman and Anne Cox have started a business, The Ministry of Rubber (MOR), and are selling rubber stamps which they have designed and crafted. If you'd like a MOR catalogue, send Wortman a note at *The Witness.*)



Order a $20 Christmas gift subscription to *The Witness* now (we'll send a card announcing the gift in December and start the subscription in January, 1995) and see who hears the good news.

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